

Are You Wastewater-Wise?

Tips to Help You and the Environment

*In nature, everything
is connected to
everything else.*

BE ENVIRO-SMART. Buy environmentally friendly products, rather than household hazardous products, when possible. "Green" products have minimal impact on the environment. The product label is your best source of information. Look for the signal words; Caution, Warning, or Danger/Poison, which could indicate a toxic product (harmful upon contact, ingestion, or inhalation):

- Caution indicated the product is relatively nontoxic or slightly toxic.
- Warning means it is moderately toxic.
- Danger/Poison indicates it is highly toxic.



*What we drain or flush
in our homes or
businesses could harm
the quality of the
waterways we use for
recreation, fishing, and
other activities.*

IF YOU MUST BUY A HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS PRODUCT, CHOOSE THE LEAST TOXIC ONE AND USE IT PROPERLY. Many household cleaning, household maintenance, automotive, and lawn and garden products require special use and disposal. Some examples are pesticides, fertilizers, motor oil, antifreeze, paint thinners and solvents. Here are some tips if you must use a household hazardous product:

- When buying hazardous products, select the least toxic one
- Always follow label directions, using the least amount needed.
- Don't pour hazardous products into sinks, toilets or throw them into the trash. Use all the product for its intended use.

*Before you dispose of
something, think about
where it will eventually
go and the potential
effects to the
environment, as well
as to your home
or business.*

PROPERLY DISPOSE OF HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE AND PHARMACEUTICALS. Take unused products to a collection location or event designated by the Pueblo City County Health Department.

<http://county.pueblo.org/government/county/department/city-county-health-department/recycling-education>

CEASE THE GREASE. Everyday waste can cause damage, too. Fats, oils, and grease not only clog your arteries - they also clog your sanitary sewer pipes. Grease sticks to the inside of the sewer pipes, both on your property and in the street. Over time, grease can build up and block the entire pipe.

Blocked sewer pipes can cause backups and overflows, which could damage your home or business and the sewer system and harm the environment. Here are some tips to help prevent these problems and potentially costly repairs and maintenance for you:

- Don't pour grease into sinks or toilets.
- Scrape grease and food scraps from plates, grills, and pots and pans and put them in the trash.
- Put baskets/strainers in sink drains to catch remaining food scraps.



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SAFE ALTERNATIVES TO TOXIC HOME CLEANERS

The average home in America today has between 10-15 gallons of toxic products. The following is a list of safe alternatives to some of these toxic chemicals used in the home. Please be aware that, although these "home brews" may be friendlier for the environment, this does not mean they are safe for human consumption (even common materials such as vinegar can be harmful if consumed in large quantities). So treat these mixtures with care and keep them out of children's reach.

DRAIN CLEANER

Pour 1/2 cup baking soda into drain and follow with 1/2 cup vinegar or lemon juice (beware of a strong reaction from these two chemicals). Let the mixture sit for 15 minutes before rinsing with hot water. BEST BET: avoid dumping grease down the drain; instead, pour into soup can and throw it out on garbage day.

APPLIANCE CLEANER

Combine 1 tsp borax, 2 tbsp vinegar, 1/4 tsp liquid soap and 2 cups of very hot water in a spray bottle. Shake gently until everything dissolves; spray the mixture onto appliances and wipe with a rag.

OVEN CLEANER

Sprinkle oven generously with water, sprinkle with baking soda, sprinkle again with water. Let sit overnight and wipe up. If desired, wipe entire oven with liquid soap and rinse thoroughly.

CREAMY SOFT SCRUBBER

Combine 1/2 cup baking soda in a bowl with vegetable oil-based liquid soap, stirring into a creamy paste. Scoop onto a sponge and wash desired surface. Rinse thoroughly. If a disinfectant is desired, add borax; for heavy washing jobs, add washing soda.

WINDOW CLEANER

Shake up 1 tsp liquid soap, 3 tbsp vinegar and 2 cups water in a spray bottle. Use as you normally would.

FLOORS

Blend 1/2 cup liquid soap, 1/2 cup lemon juice, and 2 gallons warm water. Wash floors as usual

STAIN REMOVERS:

COFFEE STAINS – rub moist salt on the item

RUST STAINS on clothes – lemon, juice, salt, and sunlight

SCORCH MARKS on clothes – use grated onions

INK SPOTS on clothes – cold water, 1 tbsp cream of tartar and 1 tbsp lemon juice

OIL STAINS on clothes – rub white chalk on stain before laundering

PERSPIRATION STAINS on clothes – white vinegar and water

GENERAL SPOTS on clothes – club soda or lemon juice or salt

BATHROOM CLEANERS:

MILDEW REMOVER – use equal parts vinegar and salt

TOILET BOWL CLEANER – paste of borax and lemon juice, or just borax, left in toilet overnight and wiped out in the morning

TUB AND TILE CLEANER – combine 1/2 cup baking soda, 1 cup white vinegar, and warm water

POLISHES FOR AROUND THE HOUSE:

For CHROME – apple cider vinegar

For SILVER – mix 1 qt. warm water, 1 tbsp baking soda, 1 tsp salt, and a piece of aluminum foil

For COPPER – lemon juice and salt

For STAINLESS STEEL – mineral oil

For BRASS – Worcestershire sauce or vinegar and water

INSECT PROBLEMS AT HOME

Ants – red chili powder at point of entry into house

Moths – cedar chips

Fleas on pets – gradually add brewer's yeast to pet's diet

Nematodes in garden – plant marigolds

LIQUID FABRIC SOFTENER

Baking soda or borax in the rinse water

RUG & UPHOLSTRY CLEANER

Club soda

DECAL REMOVER (ON GLASS)

Soak with white vinegar

RUSTY BOLT / NUT REMOVER

Carbonated beverage / vinegar

SHOE POLISH

Banana peel

CAUTION:

Be judicious using any of these mixtures. Test on a small, hidden area when cleaning clothes, carpets, etc. As indicated earlier, these mixtures can be harmful if ingested or used carelessly. The easiest and safest way to manage household hazardous waste is not to make it in the first place. Choose less toxic products and products whose processing results in less toxic waste.