

## Green Cleaning non-toxic product factsheet

*Because there are alternatives...*

Our homes have lots of hazardous and polluting cleaning products. Over 80,000 chemicals have entered daily use since World War II, many are found in products we use in our homes and on our bodies. TV commercials advertise products containing undisclosed harmful chemicals - saying their products will make our lives “easier” and “healthier”.

**The truth is** - many common household products are made with toxic chemicals linked to a range of adverse health effects including reproductive, neurological and developmental harm, asthma, cancers and other diseases. The Alaska Community Action on Toxics Green Cleaning Service and workshops provide non-toxic alternatives.

**The good news** - try these inexpensive, easy-to-use, safer natural alternatives to toxic commercial products. They’re simple to make with the green cleaning recipes on the back of this paper for a variety of household cleaning tasks.

Green Cleaning Choices	Healthier Household Alternatives
<b>baking soda</b>	An all-purpose, non-toxic cleaner. Use to scrub, clean, deodorize, or soften water or fabric.
<b>Borax</b> (sodium Borate)	A natural mineral that kills mold and bacteria. An alternative to bleach, it deodorizes, removes stains and boost the cleaning power of soap. Caution: can be toxic to children and pets, keep out of their reach.
<b>lemon</b>	a strong acid that’s effective against most household bacteria
<b>white vinegar</b>	Use to remove mildew, odors, some stains, wax build-up and to cut grease
<b>washing soda</b> (SAL Soda is sodium carbonate -decahydrate)	Use to cut grease, remove stains, soften water, clean walls, tiles, sinks and tubs. Caution: Use carefully, washing soda can irritate mucous membranes. Caution: do not use on aluminum.
<b>Castile and vegetable based soaps</b>	Cleans everything! Biodegradable and unscented - in liquid, flakes, powders, or bars. Caution: Avoid using soaps which contain petroleum distillates.
<b>isopropyl alcohol</b>	Although this is an excellent disinfectant, it has been suggested to replace this with ethanol or 100 proof alcohol in solution with water. Caution: isopropyl alcohol buildup may contribute to illness in the body.
<b>hydrogen peroxide</b>	Use as an alternative to chlorine bleach. Caution: Wear gloves, may lighten colors.
<b>vegetable glycerin</b>	A byproduct of palm & coconut oil, add this preservative so green cleaners last longer.
<b>cornstarch</b>	Starches clothes and absorbs grease. Use in recipes to clean windows, polish furniture, shampoo carpets and rugs.
<b>citrus solvent</b>	Use to clean paint brushes, oil, grease, and some stains. Caution: may cause skin, lung or eye irritations in people with multiple chemical sensitivities.
<b>essential oils &amp; herbs</b>	For disinfecting and fragrance. Natural air fresheners. Add to cleaning mixtures as desired. Herb examples: hyssop, rue, mint, cinnamon (for fragrance) Caution: people with allergies or asthma should only use essential oils with care
<b>toothpaste</b>	A mild abrasive. Use spilled toothpaste to clean the sink!
<b>coffee grounds</b>	An abrasive, use for scrubbing dishes and as a deodorizer. Sprinkle over plants for pest control. Caution: coffee grounds are not good for septic systems.

# Green Cleaning Recipes

## Liquid Dish Soap

22 oz. liquid castile soap  
30 drops essential oil \*  
Citrus oils are super degreasers.

Use to replace antibacterial products containing **triclosan** which is linked to endocrine disruption, bacterial and antibiotic resistance, dioxin, contaminated fish and biosolids.

## All Purpose Cleaner

2 cups white vinegar  
2 cups water  
20-30 drops essential oil\*  
Hot water boosts cleaning power for tough jobs.

Replaces all-purpose cleaners containing **surfactants** like: **(APEs) alkyl phenol ethoxylates** and **(NPEs) nonylphenol ethoxylates**. These chemicals are also found in laundry detergents and stain removers. They may reduce embryo survival in fish and alter tadpole development.

## Hot All Purpose Cleaner

1 tsp. liquid castile soap  
1 tsp. borax  
2 TBS. vinegar  
2 cups hot water  
1/4 tsp. eucalyptus essential oil \*  
1/4 tsp. lavender essential oil \*  
Hot water boosts cleaning power for tough jobs.

Replaces all-purpose cleaners containing **(DEA) diethanolamine** a carcinogen, skin and respiratory toxicant, or **solvents like glycol ethers** which have been associated with low birth weight in exposed mice

## Window Cleaner

3 tsp. liquid soap  
3/4 cup white vinegar  
1/2 tsp. baking soda  
Combine in a spray bottle.  
Shake well before using.

Use to replace products containing **ammonia**, a severe eye and respiratory irritant that can cause intense burning pain, corrosive damage including chemical burns, cataracts, corneal damage, kidney and liver damage.

## Drain Opener

1 cup salt  
1 cup baking soda  
1/2 cup vinegar  
Pour down the drain, wait 15 minutes then flush with 2 qt. boiling water.

## Soft Scrub: stove, oven, bathtub, tile...

2 cups baking soda  
1/2 cup liquid castile soap  
4 tsp. vegetable glycerin  
5-10 drops lavender or tea tree oil  
Mix and store in a sealed glass jar for up to 2 years. Do you have a tough job?  
1<sup>st</sup> spray vinegar  
2<sup>nd</sup> let sit  
3<sup>rd</sup> follow with the scrub

## Soft Scrub: stove, oven, bathtub, tile...

5 cups grated castile soap  
1/2 cup baking soda  
1 tsp. borax  
6 cups hot peppermint tea  
1 tsp. eucalyptus essential oil \*  
Combine grated soap in a 3 qt. stainless saucepan with tea. Simmer 15 min. Add remaining ingredients.  
Store in a jug or squirt bottle.  
Shake before using.

Replaces oven cleaners, tub & tile cleaners containing **monoethanolamine**, which is also found in laundry pre-soaks, floor strippers and carpet cleaners. It may cause liver, kidney, reproductive damage, and depression of the central nervous system. Inhalation of high concentrations - when cleaning an oven for example - can cause dizziness or coma.

## Toilet Bowl Cleaner

1/2 cup baking soda  
1/4 cup vinegar  
10 drops tea tree essential oil \*  
Pour in toilet and scrub.

## Laundry Detergent

1/2 cup baking soda  
1/2 cup powdered Castile soap  
1/4 cup washing soda  
1/4 cup borax  
Mix well.  
Use 1/2 cup per load.

## Fabric Softener Sachet

1/2 cup baking soda  
1 TBS. arrowroot powder  
1 TBS. cornstarch  
1-3 drops lavender essential oil \*  
Mix, spoon onto a square piece of fabric, tie tightly.  
Add sachet to dryer cycle.  
Refill when fragrance fades.

Use to replace fabric softeners which contain **phthalates** - carriers for fragrance. Found in glass cleaners, deodorizers, laundry detergents & fabric softeners. Linked to adverse effects on male children, reduced sperm count in adult men, and increased allergic symptoms and asthma in children.

## Hardwood Floor Wash

1 1/2 cup water  
1 1/2 cup vinegar  
20 drops peppermint essential oil \*  
Combine in a spray bottle.  
Use sparingly, working on small sections of the floor.  
Dry-mop floor after use.

Replaces floor polishers containing **xylene**, a neurotoxin that can lead to memory loss, loss of consciousness and even death in extreme exposures. It may damage liver, kidneys, and the developing fetus. Found in some spot removers, floor polishes, and ironing aids.

## Gentle Wood Cleaner

1/2 cup canola oil  
1/4 cup liquid castile soap  
1/4 cup water  
Shake well before using.  
Apply a cloth, finish w/dry rag.

## Furniture Polish

1/4 cup olive oil  
1/4 cup white vinegar  
20-30 drops lemon essential oil \* or  
2 tsp. lemon juice  
Shake well before using.  
Dip a clean, dry cloth into the polish and rub wood in the direction of the grain.  
Use a soft brush to work polish into corners or tight places.