

Household Hazardous Products

Many products used commonly around the home are toxic to people and the environment. Some oven, drain, and spot cleaners, floor wax, and furniture polish are examples of potentially hazardous household products. The term “hazardous” means containing materials that are either toxic, flammable, volatile, corrosive, or could react with other substances to create hazardous materials.

➤ Alternatives

There are less expensive alternatives to using commercial cleaning products that are also safer for the environment and your septic system.

To Clean: ***Alternative:***

Carpets	To remove stains, promptly dab with a solution of vinegar and water. For odors and grease, mix 2 parts corn meal with 1 part borax, sprinkle, leave one hour and vacuum
Drains	Plunger, flush with boiling water, then ¼ cup baking soda & 2 oz. Vinegar and flush with boiling water again
Toilets	Toilet brush and baking soda; mild detergent
Greasy Hands	Baby oil, then soap
Furniture	1 part lemon juice, 2 parts olive or vegetable oil
Windows & Mirrors	Use 3 Tablespoons of vinegar with 1 quart warm water

<i>To:</i>	<i>Alternative:</i>
Make ammonia-based cleaners	Vinegar, salt & water mix for surfaces Baking soda & water for the bathroom
Make abrasive cleaners	Rub area with ½ lemon dipped in borax, rinse, dry
Make fabric softener	Add baking soda to final rinse
Make a laundry substitute for bleach	½ cup white vinegar or baking soda or borax
Make a disinfectant	½ cup borax in 1 gallon of water
Repel fleas	Add brewer's yeast to pet food
Deodorize	Use potpourri, candles, cedar shavings

➤ Disposal of Chemicals

1. Never dump household chemicals or other pollutants down storm drains. This water flows directly into local waterbodies without being treated.
2. Bring chemicals and leftover paints to Household Hazardous Waste Collection days. Call your municipal office for details.
3. Bring used motor oil to a recycling center and perform regular maintenance on your vehicle to prevent leakage of pollutants that will contaminate runoff.
4. Avoid washing cars with conventional cleaning agents in driveways where the run-off is not treated. Take vehicles to a car wash that disposes of the wastewater into a sewer system that will treat it before it is released into the environment.
5. If you have a septic system, make sure products are “suitable for septic system” before pouring them down the drain.