



**HAPPY EARTH DAY**



# Recreation Recycles

April 2021

## Safer, Healthier Cleaning



### Why Safer Cleaning?

Hazardous chemicals can often be found in common cleaning products. For instance, chlorine bleach and ammonia can cause asthma and irritate your skin. Fragrance chemicals and phthalates can cause headaches, ADD/ADHD, reproductive problems and other health issues. Triclosan found in some products can be an endocrine disrupter.

### Earth Tip: How to Dispose?

If you have old cleaners to dispose of, bring them to a Household Hazardous Waste Collection. Collections are held April—October; One in Middletown in the fall, but residents can go to other nearby towns as well. Find the list of collections on the City website:

<https://www.middletownct.gov/193/Household-Hazardous-Waste>



### Read the labels. Watch for Signal Words.

By reading product labels you can avoid buying cleaners that harm your health. However, because companies are not required to list ingredients, you may not be able to tell exactly what is in a product. Watch for the signal words to determine how dangerous the products are. If you must use these items, be sure to read the labels carefully and follow the directions.

Danger Level	Signal Word	What the label means
Most Dangerous	POISON	Highly toxic
Dangerous	DANGER	Extremely flammable, corrosive, or highly toxic
Dangerous	WARNING	Moderate hazard
Least Dangerous	CAUTION	Mild hazard



# Safer Cleaning Recipes



## All Purpose Cleaner

- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil based liquid soap
- Squeeze of lemon or splash of vinegar
- 1 quart of warm distilled water

Mix and apply. Wipe clean.

## Surface Scrub

Mix Baking Soda with a few drops of Castile Soap then add Hydrogen Peroxide

Mix in a small bowl to form a paste. Then rub on surface. Let stand a few minutes then wipe with cloth or old toothbrush.

## Toilet Bowl Cleaner

- 1/2 cup baking soda
- Vinegar

Sprinkle baking soda into the bowl, then pour vinegar slowly over the baking soda. Scour with a brush.

## Reusable Counter wipes

- 1 cup warm distilled water
- 1 tablespoon liquid Castile soap
- 1/2 cup rubbing alcohol
- 5 drops tea tree essential oil, optional
- 5 drops lavender essential oil, optional

Please cut up pieces of cotton cloth in a glass jar. Wisk the above ingredients together then pour over the cloths.



Earth Tip: Use a microfiber cloth instead of a sponge. Sponges harbor germs and cloths can be laundered.

## Be Careful! Never Mix:

- Ammonia and Bleach
- Bleach and Vinegar
- Vinegar and Hydrogen Peroxide



## Information for this flyer was gathered from:

CT DEEP—<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/P2/Individual/Household-Alternatives-for-Reducing-Toxic-Products-in-Your-Home>

Environmental Working Group—[www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners](http://www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners)

Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District Safer Cleaning: Reduce & Replace Toxins at Home Webinar 3/11/21

## Introduction

### Earth Day

Today we are talking about spring cleaning and “green” cleaning!

Many cleaners have hazardous chemicals in them and a lot of the time we don’t even know it. There is no requirement that ingredients of cleaners be listed, so that makes it even harder. But these chemicals can cause asthma, skin damage, reproductive harm, toxicity to animals and other harmful effects to our bodies, our pets and other animals and our environment.

There are signal words you can look for to see how dangerous a product is.

Poison—Means its is highly toxic

Danger—extremely flammable, corrosive or highly toxic

Warning—means it is moderately hazardous

Caution—least dangerous.

Now, we may not be able to stay away from all of these all the time, but if you do use something with this warning, be sure to read the label to make sure you use it right. That will make a difference and ensure that you use it as safely as possible.

You can look to purchase safer alternatives. Look for third party certification labels to identify a safer product. The EPA has a Green Seal and Ecologo that evaluate and test products for health and safety.

There’s also a variety of cleaning products you can make yourself with safer ingredients such as vinegar, hydrogen peroxide, rubbing alcohol, water, baking soda, lemons, etc...

Today I’m going to demonstrate two of my favorites.

All Purpose Cleaner

Scouring Powder

Toilet bowl cleaner

- **Cleaning** – removes dirt, debris, grease, and germs. Cleaning can physically remove germs from a surface, but doesn't kill them.
  - **Sanitize** – reduces the number of germs on a surface to an acceptable level, this reduces the risk of spreading infections.
- Disinfect** – kills the germs on surfaces so there is no risk of spreading the infection

Hydrogen peroxide is a safer alternative to bleach.

Natural Disinfectants:

Vodka

Lemon

Hydrogen peroxide

Essential oils

Rubbing alcohol



**SAFER  
CHOICE**

**Meets U.S. EPA  
Safer Product  
Standards**