


Household Hazardous Waste Guide

In our fast-paced society, we place great value on the quickest and easiest solutions to everyday tasks. Often these solutions involve products that contain hazardous ingredients. These products can cause health problems during use and storage, and environmental damage if disposed of improperly. Here are some alternatives to commercial household products. These methods have been tried and found effective; in many cases, they are also less expensive than commercial products. We've accumulated these suggestions from numerous sources. Special thanks to the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District, Waukesha County HHW, Dane County Clean Sweep, and the Wisconsin Waste Reduction Coalition for their suggestions.

A successful product exchange service is offered to Dane County residents by the Clean Sweep Household Hazardous Waste Collection and Product Exchange, located on Fish Hatchery Road just north of the Beltline Highway. Many types of household products are received by Clean Sweep and offered free to consumers for reuse. Clean Sweep requires that incoming products be unused (uncontaminated) and contained in the full or nearly full original container. Products not offered for exchange are photographic chemicals and toxic bioaccumulating substances.

The attached table highlights products used in our homes which may be toxic to humans or the environment. We have offered less toxic alternative recipes for many of these products. Please note the following symbols designating proper disposal for waste products.

Product Handling Symbols

- ✕ Accepted by Clean Sweep and offered for Product Exchange.
- h Toxic substance, properly dispose at Clean Sweep.
- F Flush with plenty of water down the sanitary sewer system.
-  Dispose of dried solids in the trash for disposal at the sanitary landfill.
- x Recycle


NOTES:

- Never mix products containing ammonia with those containing bleach.
- Solvent-containing products have the words "flammable", "combustible", or "contains petroleum distillates" on the labels. Products with acetone, xylene, and methylene chloride should be saved for collection.
- Products containing heavy metals, including cadmium, chromium, copper, lead, nickel, zinc, and mercury should not be disposed in the sanitary sewer system or solid waste.

- Products containing mercury or mercury salts are extremely toxic and should be handled with great care until they are delivered to Clean Sweep. Mercury-containing products include: fever thermometers, pre-1983 latex paints, dial thermostats, thimersol, mercurochrome (merbromine), medical batteries, older button batteries, waste dental amalgam.
- Clean Sweep does not accept fluorescent lamps at this time. We suggest PKK Lighting in Middleton for their complete recycling service of fluorescent lamp mercury wastes and metal and glass components.
- Test each recipe on a small corner or section of item first.

* Designates the need to keep the substance away from children and pets.


CLEANING PRODUCTS

Product	Hazardous Properties	Hazardous Ingredients	Waste Disposal	Alternative Recipe
Drain Cleaner	Causes burns, toxic	Sodium or potassium hydroxide	✗ F	1/2 cup of baking soda followed by 1/2 cup of vinegar. Let stand for 15 minutes, then pour a tea kettle of boiling water down the drain. Repeat if necessary. Periodic use will keep drains running freely. Seriously clogged drains may require a mechanical snake. use will keep drains running freely. Seriously clogged drains may require a mechanical snake.
Cleanser	Causes burns, irritant, toxic	Trisodium phosphate, ethanol	✗ F	Straight vinegar, vinegar and salt, or a paste of baking soda and water are all effective grease cutters. Borax* sprinkled on a sponge or lemon wedge removes spots.
Aluminum Pan Cleaner				After removing as much substance as possible, fill pan with one quart of water and 2 Tbsp. cream of tartar. Bring to a boil and simmer for ten minutes. Rinse well.
Window Cleaner	Toxic	Solvents	✗ F	Equal amounts of vinegar and water, mixed in a spray bottle. Apply with a soft cloth and dry with a squeegee or newspaper. Washing windows on a regular basis will prevent excess grime build-up. A solution of 1/4 cup rubbing alcohol in 1 quart of water will remove hair spray residue. prevent excess grime build-up. A solution of 1/4 cup rubbing alcohol in 1 quart of water will remove hair spray residue.
Furniture Polish	Flammable, toxic	Petroleum distillates, nitrobenzene	✗ 	Olive oil or almond oil for all wood surfaces. Apply with a soft cloth, rub in, let stand for several hours, then polish with a soft, dry cloth to remove any residue.

Wood Floor Cleaner	Flammable, toxic	Petroleum distillates, nitrobenzene	✘ 🗑	Castile soap or vegetable oil-based soap (Murphy's oil soap) Vinegar and water. Follow package directions.
Multi-Purpose Cleaner	Causes burns, oxidizer	Sodium hypochlorite, muriatic acid	✘ F	1 tsp. peppermint castile soap, 1 tsp. Borax*, and a squeeze of lemon in one quart of water. Vinegar, salt and water for surfaces. Baking soda and water for the bathroom.
Oven Cleaner	Causes burns, toxic	Potassium or sodium hydroxide, ammonia	✘ F	Mix 2 Tbsp. of castile soap and 2 tsp. Borax* in two cups of water. Apply and let sit for 20 minutes. Remove with a copper scrubber or green scouring pad. If the food is really baked on, follow up with a non-chlorine cleanser (Bon Ami) or a baking soda, salt, and water paste for added abrasion. A quarter cup of ammonia overnight. Regularly cleaning your oven with baking soda and water will eliminate the need to use noxious oven cleaners.
Bleach Cleaners	Causes burns, oxidizer	Sodium or calcium hypochlorite, sodium or potassium hydroxide	✘ F	Use powdered not liquid bleach.
Toilet Bowl Cleaner	Irritant, causes burns, toxic	Muriatic (hydrochloric) acid, oxalic acid, paradichlorobenzene, calcium hypochlorite	✘ F	Sprinkle baking soda in the toilet, then scrub with a toilet bowl brush. For badly stained toilet, make a paste of lemon juice and Borax*, apply, and let sit for 20 minutes before scrubbing. To remove water line marks, pour in 2 cups of white vinegar and let stand overnight.
Tub and Tile Cleaner	Causes burns, oxidizer	Sodium hypochlorite, muriatic acid	✘ F	Sprinkle baking soda on a sponge or green scouring pad. Add vinegar to remove rings or soap scum.
Shampoo: Upholstery, Rug, and Carpet	Irritant, causes burns, toxic	Naphthalene, perchloroethylene, oxalic acid, diethylene glycol	✘ F	Mix 1/4 cup liquid dishwasher detergent with 1 cup of warm water in a large bowl and beat to a dry sudsy foam. Apply and scrub vigorously with a scrub brush. Let dry and vacuum. Dry cornstarch sprinkled on rug and vacuumed.
Silver Cleaner	Causes burns, toxic	Acidified thiourea, sulfuric acid	✘ 🗑	Line the bottom of a glass container with a piece of aluminum foil, shiny side up. Add one tablespoon of baking soda, one tablespoon of salt and enough boiling water to cover your silver pieces. Wait a few seconds, then remove, rinse and dry silver. Tarnish is left on foil. To minimize water spots, always towel-dry.
Decorative Metal Cleaner (for brass, copper or pewter)	Causes burns, toxic		✘ 🗑	Combine 1/2 cup of salt with 1/2 cup white vinegar. Add enough flour to make a paste. Apply and let sit 15 minutes to one hour. Rinse thoroughly without water and after cleaning to prevent corrosion. Salt and vinegar should not be used on metals which have a lacquer coating. after cleaning to prevent corrosion.

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Grease Stain Remover	Toxic, flammable	Solvents		Sprinkle immediately with corn starch or corn meal. Wait until the grease is absorbed and then brush it away.
Protein Stain Remover (eggs, blood, grass, milk and baby formula)	Toxic, flammable	Solvents		Soak immediately in a solution of 1 cup Borax* in cold water for at least 30 minutes. Or, try club soda with lemon juice. Wash as usual.
Fruits and Vegetable Stain Remover	Toxic, flammable	Solvents		Soak immediately in cold water. Wash with detergent, not soap.
Non-washables Stain Remover				Test this method on an inconspicuous area first as it may lighten the fabric color. Sponge with cold water or club soda. Isopropyl alcohol will remove wine stains and some types of ink. A small amount of Borax* on a sponge can be used to remove spots from upholstery.
Disinfectants	Toxic			More information is needed about agents used to eliminate microorganisms. An evaluation of 1/2 cup Borax* in 1 gallon of water is necessary.

PAINT PRODUCTS

Product	Hazardous Properties	Hazardous Ingredients	Waste Disposal	Alternative Recipe
Enamel or Oil-Based Paints	Flammable, toxic	Mineral spirits, aliphatic hydrocarbons	✗ h	Latex or water-based paints, avoid aerosol sprays.
Latex or Water-Based Paints	Flammable	Phenyl mercuric acetate, resins, esters	✗ 	Limestone-based whitewash, casein-based paint, avoid aerosol sprays.
Rust Paint	Flammable, toxic	Methylene chloride, toluene, petroleum distillates	✗ h	Unknown
Thinners and Turpentine	Flammable, toxic	Acetone, methylethylketone, alcohols, petroleum distillates	✗ x h ✗ x h	Use water with water-based paints, avoid unnecessary brush and roller cleanup.
Furniture Strippers	Flammable, toxic	Methylene chloride, acetone,	✗ h	Sandpaper, steel wool, water-based strippers.


		methylethylketone, xylene, toluene		
Wood Preservative	Toxic, flammable	Chlorinated phenols, copper or zinc, naphthenate, creosote	✗ h	Unknown: for new construction use recycled plastic "lumber" or rot-resistant wood species.
Stains and Finishes	Flammable, toxic	Mineral spirits, ketones, halogenated hydrocarbons, naphtha	✗ h	Natural earth pigment finishes, rubbing oils, water-based finishes, latex paint.

ODOR CONTROL

Product	Hazardous Properties	Hazardous Ingredients	Waste Disposal	Alternative Recipe
Sinks and Garbage Disposals				Pour 1/2 cup baking soda down the drain with running water. Put lemon halves or peels down the disposal with running water and turn it on.
Air Fresheners				Simmer whole spices such as cinnamon sticks, cloves, allspice. Hang an orange or apple studded with cloves in small spaces. Herbal potpourri in bowls.
Cooking Odors				Place white vinegar in a shallow bowl or saturate a paper towel with vanilla extract.
Odor Control				Baking soda in the refrigerator, freezer, cat box, bottom of garbage can and sprinkled on rugs. Matches and candles.

PESTICIDES AND HERBICIDES

Product	Hazardous Properties	Hazardous Ingredients	Waste Disposal	Alternative Recipe
Fungicides	Toxic	Captan, malathion, anilazine	✗ h	Do not over-water plants, keep areas clean and dry.
House Plant Insecticide	Toxic	Methoprene, malathion	✗ h	Weekly showers in the kitchen sink will prevent insects from becoming established. When necessary, spray with solution of 1 Tbsp dish soap in 1/2 gallon

				water.
Garden Insecticides	Toxic	Carbaryl (sevin), aldicarb, DDT, aldrin, endrin, dieldrin, heptachlor, chlordane, parathion, diazinon	✗ h	Insecticidal soap, import predators such as ladybugs and ground beetles.
Rat and Mouse Poison	Toxic	Lead arsenate, calcium arsenate, strychnine, warfarin	✗ h	Live traps, remove food supply, chopped bay leaves, cucumber skins.
Ant and Roach Killer	Toxic	Carbamates, organophosphates	✗ h	For roaches, use traps or baking soda mixed with powdered sugar. For ants, use red chili pepper, Caulk and seal cracks to keep pests out. Wipe out cupboards to remove food sources.
Flies				Use flyswatter and flystrips. Use screens, protective clothing, creams and lotions.
Mosquitoes				Drink nutritional yeast or take in tablet form during summer months. Encourage predators: bats, martins, chimney swifts.
Fleas				Nutritional yeast, vitamin B and garlic tablets. Pennyroyal ointment. Herbal collar. Keep pets clean. Vacuum thoroughly and regularly and change vacuum bags often.
Mealy Bugs or Scales on Plants				Apply rubbing alcohol directly to the colonies with cotton swab.
Fertilizer, no weed killer			 / compost	Waste Disposal: consume at home, purchase in usable lots sizes, offer to a friend for use.
Fertilizer, with weed killer			✗ h	Waste Disposal: consume at home, purchase in usable lots sizes, offer to a friend for use.

AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS

Product	Hazardous Properties	Hazardous Ingredients	Waste Disposal	Alternative Recipe
Antifreeze	Toxic	Ethylene Glycol	x	Unknown Recycling note for the do-it-yourselfers: inquire of your automotive repair shop or quick oil change center for recycling acceptance.

Gasoline, fuels	Flammable, toxic	Benzene, xylene, toluene	h	Unknown
Transmission Fluid	Flammable, toxic	Hydrocarbons, mineral oils	✗ h	Unknown
Brake Fluid	Flammable, toxic	Glycol ethers, heavy metals	✗ h	Unknown
Used Motor Oil	Combustible, toxic	Hydrocarbons: benzene, metals	x	Unknown
Batteries	Causes burns, toxic	Sulfuric acid, lead	x	Unknown
Carburetor Cleaner	Flammable, toxic	Hydrocarbons, solvents	✗ h	Unknown
Degreasers	Flammable, toxic	Hydrocarbons, solvents	✗ h	Unknown
Windshield Washer	Toxic	Solvents	F	Unknown