

As nice as it is to be surrounded by pretty plants and flowers, few of us would choose to live in a greenhouse, what with the heat and humidity—not to mention the glass walls! But more and more of us are opting to live in a “green house,” a.k.a. a home that helps conserve Earth’s resources. A quick and easy way to start making your home more planet-friendly is to switch to non-toxic, biodegradable, and chemical-free cleaning products. It will benefit not only the planet, but your family’s health, too.

Many of the typical products we use to keep our homes neat and tidy contain volatile organic compounds (VOCs). But don’t let the name fool you. This “organic” doesn’t mean chemical-free, it means “chemical-free”—in other words, pollutants we inhale every time we spray or scrub. They also end up in the oceans via our drains and sewers, which can’t be good news for fish or swimmers. And that’s not all. Most household cleaners contain still more chemicals, many of which are easily absorbed by the skin. No one can say for sure if everyday cleaners will lead to long-term health problems, but some of their components have been linked to infertility, miscarriages, brain and nervous system damage, kidney malfunction, and asthma.

So, given the choice, if you can play it safe and do good by the environment, why not try it? At the very least, choosing a “cleaner” household cleaner will give you peace of mind when your 3-year-old wants to “help” by sponging down the kitchen. **P&C**

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Eco-friendly cleaners can protect the environment and your family’s health
by Cambria Gordon

The “Green House” Effect

read on
Green Clean: The Environmentally Sound Guide to Cleaning Your Home
by Linda Mason Hunter and Mikki Halpin
Green This! Volume 1: Greening Your Cleaning
by Deidre Imus

extreme clean! A few of our favorite eco-friendly products:

Method All Purpose Surface Cleaner Naturally derived ingredients are non-toxic and biodegradable. <http://www.methodhome.com/products>

Seventh Generation Toilet Bowl Cleaner Phosphate- and chlorine-free, unlike most toilet bowl cleaners, which contain acids and, believe it or not, petroleum. http://www.seventhgen.com/our_products

Ecover Natural Dishwashing Liquid Made from plant-based ingredients in a factory that’s nearly 100% emission free. <http://www.ecover.com/us/en/products/>

Planet Ultra Power Laundry Detergent Just one of the certified non-polluting household products developed by Planet in conjunction with an environmental scientist. Plus, it’s hypoallergenic. <http://www.planetinc.com/products.htm>

