

## **Environmentally Friendly Alternatives to Household Cleaners**

Everyday household cleaners can be toxic to the environment and your health. Follow some of these suggestions to protect not only yourself but the environment too!

**\*It is recommended you test these environmentally friendly alternatives on a small area to see if you are satisfied\***

### **All Purpose Cleaners**

Mix 50ml baking soda, 100 ml white vinegar in 2 litres of water for a general purpose cleaner. Mixing 50ml of baking soda in 1 litre of warm water also makes a mild general purpose cleaner.

Sprinkle baking soda on a damp cloth for surface cleaning.

### **Furniture Polish**

Mixing 2 parts vegetable oil and 1 part lemon juice makes good furniture polish. Small water stains may be removed from wood furniture by rubbing gently with a peanut.

### **Windows and Glass**

Wash windows with a mixture of 1 part white vinegar and 3 parts warm water and wipe with a newspaper (discard newspaper in the Green Cart). For more stubborn spots and streaks use undiluted vinegar.

### **Tub and Tiles**

Wet tub and sprinkle with baking soda. Rub with a damp sponge or cloth. Rinse thoroughly. To remove heavier film build-up on bathtub and tile apply full-strength vinegar to a sponge and wipe. Use baking soda as you would a scouring powder and rinse thoroughly.

### **Faucets & Showerheads**

To remove deposits from metal showerheads remove the showerhead and boil for 15 minutes in a mixture of 100ml vinegar and 1 litre of water. To remove deposits from plastic showerheads soak in a solution of 1 part vinegar and 1 part hot water for 1 hour.

### **Toilet Bowl**

Sprinkle baking soda as you would a scouring powder and scrub with a toilet brush.

### **Clogged Drains**

Pour 100 ml baking soda down the drain, add 100 ml of vinegar and cover if possible. Let set for a few minutes then flush with a kettle of boiling water.

### **Metal Polish**

- **Gold:** Clean with toothpaste and a soft toothbrush.

- **Silver:** Apply a paste of baking soda and water. Rub, rinse and polish dry with a soft cloth. To remove tarnish from silverware, sprinkle baking soda on a damp cloth and rub the silverware until tarnish is gone. Rinse and dry well.

### **Stainless Steel**

To clean and polish stainless steel, simply moisten a cloth with undiluted white vinegar and wipe clean. Can be used to remove heat stains on stainless steel cutlery.

### **Chrome**

Wipe with a soft cloth dipped in undiluted white or cider vinegar.

### **Paint Usage Tips**

Use latex or water based whenever possible. Soften hard paint brushes in hot vinegar for a few minutes. Then wash paint brush in soap and warm water and set out to dry.

If an oil-based paint is necessary, buy a reduced pollution solvent-based paint with an environmental choice logo on the label. Clean brushes using a solvent.

### **Pest Control**

- **Ants:** Set barriers of bone meal or powdered charcoal where ants are entering. Generally, they will not cross barriers.
- **Flies:** Scratch the skin of an orange and leave it out; the citrus acts as a repellent. Hang clusters of cloves to repel flies.
- **Chinch Bugs:** Chinch bugs prefer short grass so set your mower to leave your grass longer. Drench problem area with a mixture of one capful dishwashing soap in bucket of water. Lay a piece of white flannel over drenched area and the bugs will cling to it as they try to get away from the soap. After fifteen minutes, vacuum the flannel or hose it off into a bucket filled with insecticidal soap.