

# SAFE ALTERNATIVES TO COMMON HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS

Household

Hazardous

Waste

Many everyday household products contain hazardous chemicals. When you dispose of these products in the storm drain, sink or garbage, the chemicals can end up in local water bodies or groundwater.

This list of alternatives is provided to help you make responsible decisions about the safe use and disposal of household products. By trying some or all of the alternatives, you will help Marion County move toward a goal of hazard-less waste.

**These few supplies can replace many cleaners:**



Baking Soda      Warm Water      Borax      Lemon Juice      Toothpaste  
 White Vinegar      Liquid Soap      Salt      Club Soda      Olive or Almond Oil  
 Flour      Baby Oil      Skim Milk      Margarine      Rubbing Alcohol

For this .....	Try this .....
All purpose cleaner	1 tsp liquid soap, 1 tsp borax, 1/4 cup vinegar, and 1 quart warm water. Or 1/4 cup white vinegar with 1 quart warm water.
Brass polish	Paste of equal parts vinegar, salt and flour. Be sure to rinse completely afterward to prevent corrosion.
Car battery corrosion removal	Baking soda and water
Chrome polish	Vinegar
Coffee cup stain removal	Rub with moist salt or baking soda.
Copper cleaner	Paste of equal parts vinegar, salt and flour. Be sure to rinse completely afterward to prevent corrosion.
Crayon mark remover	Rub mark with toothpaste and a damp cloth. Do not use on non-vinyl wallpaper.
Decal removal	Soak in hot water if practical; otherwise use white vinegar.
Dishwashing	Washing dishes by hand with a liquid soap or mild detergent is preferable to using strong electric dishwasher detergents. Look for detergents without phosphates or chlorine.
Disinfectants	Mix 1/2 cup borax with 1 gallon of boiling water. Or undiluted white vinegar.
Drain cleaner	Try plunger first. Then pour 1/2 cup baking soda down, then 1/2 cup vinegar; wait a few minutes, then follow with 2 quarts boiling water. Repeat if needed. If this fails, rent or buy a drain snake. Use solution weekly to prevent buildup.
Furniture polish	Olive oil or almond oil
Garbage disposal deodorizer	Used lemons or baking soda
Grout and stain cleaner	Paste made of baking soda and water, clean with toothbrush, spray with vinegar and water mix and after foaming is finished, rinse with water.
Handcleaner: paint/grease	Baby oil or margarine, then wash with soap and water.
Laundry detergent	1/2 cup white vinegar or baking soda or borax per load. Or laundry soap or a liquid detergent with low or no phosphate. A tablespoon of vinegar in the rinse increases the brightness.
Linoleum floor cleaner	1 cup white vinegar plus 2 gallons water
Linoleum floor polish	Polish with skim milk (it doesn't smell, milk evaporates!)
Mildew remover	A non-chlorinated scouring powder cleans mildew stains from grout. Scrub hard.
Moths (in clothes)	Thoroughly clean any used clothing or furniture before introducing into home. Wash woolens before storing; store in tight container with cedar chips, newspapers or lavender flowers (instead of mothballs). Vacuum rugs, behind and under furniture. Shake out woolens periodically.
Oven cleaner	As a preventive measure, cover the oven bottom with a sheet of aluminum foil. Clean up spills promptly. To clean, use baking soda, soap and water with a copper scrubber and lots of elbow grease. Or use a non-chlorinated scouring powder or non-caustic oven cleaner.
Paint (oil-based)	Latex paint, avoid aerosols.
Porcelain stain removal	Brush with baking soda
Refrigerator deodorizer	Open box of baking soda
Rug/carpet cleaner	Sprinkle baking soda, then vacuum. Or clean immediately with soda water or baking soda paste, then vacuum.
Scouring powder/abrasive cleaner	Baking soda or borax. Or rub area with 1/2 lemon dipped in borax, rinse and dry.
Silver cleaner	Rub gently with baking soda and damp sponge (large objects). For small objects place in pot of water on stove with small piece of aluminum foil; add 1 tsp baking soda and 1 tsp salt; boil 2-3 minutes. Or rub gently with toothpaste on a cottonball.
Stain removal	Depends on type of spill. Treat as quickly as possible and blot as much liquid as you can with paper towel or cloth (don't rub). For most stains, safest to try cold water first, then hot water with a little detergent.
Stainless steel cleaner	Baking soda
Toilet bowl cleaner	Baking soda or borax or soak with white vinegar
Tub and tile cleaner	Use vinegar (full-strength) on a sponge, then use baking soda as a scouring powder. Rinse well.
Vinyl floor cleaner	1 gallon warm water and 1/2 cup white vinegar or 1/4 cup borax
Wine stain removal	Water or rubbing alcohol
Window cleaner	1/2 cup vinegar in 1 quart warm water, wipe with crumpled newspaper.



**Marion County Public Works - Environmental Services**  
 555 Court Street NE, P.O. Box 14500, Salem, Oregon 97309  
 503-588-5169

# Five Steps To Protect Your Family's Health And The Environment

Many common household products may be hazardous to your family's health and the environment. Play it safe - try the steps below.

- 1.** **Avoid household products marked "Danger".** Look for the word "danger" on cleaners, polishes, paint strippers, and pesticides. "Danger" means the product could poison you, cause serious damage to your skin or eyes, or easily cause a fire.
  - Choose products marked "caution" or "warning", or better yet, products that don't need warnings.
  - Choose water-based products, such as latex paint, white glue and water-based paint stripper.
- 2.** **Reduce your need for yard and garden pesticides.** Pesticides are poisons. Besides killing bugs and weeds, they may also poison children, irritate eyes or skin, cause cancer or kill birds and fish.
  - Build healthy soil by adding compost or aged manure and using slow-release organic fertilizers.
  - Buy plants that will grow well in this climate and in your yard, they use less water and pesticides.
  - Try nonchemical products to control pests, such as teflon tape for root weevils or soap and water solution for aphids.
- 3.** **Recycle used motor oil.** Water from storm drains is not treated and oil could end up in our streams and lakes, threatening fish and birds. Used motor oil can be picked up curbside along with other recyclables or can be taken to various locations, including the North Marion and Salem-Keizer transfer stations, to be recycled. For a list of these locations, call Marion County Department of Solid Waste Management.
- 4.** **Use less-toxic cleaners** Some cleaners contain very hazardous ingredients that can burn your eyes, skin or lungs. Look for safer name brand substitutes at your local grocery store, or use simple alternatives. There are many everyday household products we all keep on hand that can be used for cleaning without doing damage to the environment, such as: water, vinegar, baking soda, borax, mineral oil, newspapers, and rags. (see other side for safe alternatives)
- 5.** **Dispose of leftover hazardous products properly.** Careless disposal of hazardous household products in a storm drain or sink can pollute local groundwater. If you throw them in the garbage, the chemicals can endanger collection and disposal workers. (see disposal methods listed below or call the Marion County Department of Solid Waste Management)

## How To Dispose Of Household Hazardous Waste

<u>Product *</u>	<u>Hazard</u>	<u>Proper Disposal **</u>
Weed killer, insecticides, slug bait, rose dust, mothballs, flea and roach powder, etc.	Poisonous	See Trash Disposal Requirements below. Or, take to Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection site. For location of the site nearest you call Marion County Department of Solid Waste Management (MCSW).
Empty pesticide containers	Poisonous residue	Rinse container three times. Save rinse water and use as full-strength pesticide. For container, see Trash Disposal Requirements below.
Wood preservatives	Poisonous and flammable	See Trash Disposal Requirements below. Or, take to HHW collection site. For location of the site nearest you call MCSW.
Paint	Flammable	Use up leftover paint: give a wall an extra coat or use as a base coat on another project. Latex paint: Put out for curbside pickup (maximum 2 buckets per week) or take to Salem-Keizer Transfer Station. If only a small amount is left (one inch or less), open can and let liquid evaporate outdoors, away from children and pets. Dispose of can in the trash (leave lid off). Oil based paint: See Trash Disposal Requirements below.
Paint thinner, rust remover, turpentine, furniture stripper, other solvents	Flammable	Reuse by letting the contaminated liquids sit in a closed jar until particles settle out. Strain off the clear liquid for reuse. For the remaining sludge, see Trash Disposal Requirements below.
Used motor oil, transmission fluid, gear oil, and brake fluid	Poisonous and flammable	Recycle at curbside or take to transfer station
Antifreeze	Poisonous and flammable	See Trash Disposal Requirements below. Or take to HHW collection site. For location of the site nearest you call MCSW.
Car batteries	Corrosive	Trade in for new battery or take to transfer station. Call MCSW for locations.
Drain openers, oven and toilet bowl cleaners, bleach	Corrosive and poisonous	See Drain Disposal Requirements below.
Furniture polish, spot removers	Flammable	See Trash Disposal Requirements below. Or take to HHW collection site. For location of the site nearest you call MCSW.
Small engine fuel	Varies	Prevent fuel from breaking down by using a fuel additive for long-term storage. See Trash Disposal Requirements below. Or take bad fuel to HHW collection site.
Hobby chemicals from crafts, lab sets, photography, etc.	Poisonous and flammable	Call MCSW for disposal of specific chemicals.
Swimming pool Chemicals	Corrosive and poisonous	See Drain Disposal Requirements below.

### Special Handling Requirements

#### Trash Disposal

- Liquid Materials:
1. Wrap container in absorbent material (kitty litter, sawdust, disposable diapers, paper towels, old rags, etc.)
  2. Place the wrapped container in a heavy-duty plastic bag.
  3. Dispose with other household refuse.
- Dry Materials:
1. Do Steps 2 and 3 above.

#### Drain Disposal

If your home is on a central or city sewage system, flush down the toilet or wash down the drain with at least 3 gallons of water. If your home has a septic tank, do not pour down drain or toilet. Do not pour down a storm drain. See Trash Disposal Requirements.

\* Use up according to label directions or offer to others who can use them.

\*\* Marion County Public Works - Environmental Services, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and some cities offer HHW collection events. For dates and locations of these events call Marion County Public Works - Environmental Services at (503) 588-5169 or DEQ at (503) 378-8240 ext. 269. For the location of the nearest HHW collection site call Marion County Department of Public Works - Environmental Services.