

## Detoxifying Your Home

### **Five steps you can take:**

1. Read labels when shopping
2. Ventilate
3. Use green cleaning supplies
4. Renovate right
5. Keep pesticides out

### **Five steps you can take to protect children's health:**

6. Stop using lawn pesticides
7. Avoid feeding tuna to your children
8. Switch to organic apple juice and apple products
9. Use green cleaning supplies
10. Get a water filter for your drinking water

### **In the Kitchen**

- ❑ **Water Filter** - reverse osmosis under counter unit, activated carbon block or distillation. Local source is The Wellness Store [www.wellnessstore.net](http://www.wellnessstore.net) or the internet store [www.espwaterproducts.com](http://www.espwaterproducts.com)
- ❑ **Protect your water supply** – dispose of hazardous waste properly
- ❑ **Use Non-toxic Cleaners** – (nothing with a poison sign) Good brands include Seventh Generation, Nature Clean, Ecover, Shaklee, Melaleuca, GTC, Soap Factory AA5 Concentrate, Arm & Hammer Washing Soda, Down East - All-Purpose Cleaner, ECOgent - General Purpose Cleaner and Stain Removal. Make your own (see handout). For healthy alternatives for other products such as carpet cleaners, bleach, floor polish, laundry, shoe polish etc, see <http://lesstoxicguide.ca/index.asp?fetch=household>
- ❑ **Organic meat, organic dairy and organic fruits and vegetables that are most-sprayed:** These include Apples, Celery, Cherries, Grapes, Grapefruit, Lettuce, Nectarines, Oranges, Peaches, Pears, Peppers, Potatoes, Raspberries, Snow peas, Spinach, Strawberries (most contaminated produce types). 15 Least Contaminated foods (less important to have organic): Artichokes, Asparagus, Avocados, Banana, Beets, Sweet Corn, Cauliflower, Cranberries, Eggplant, Endive, Kiwi, Leeks, Mangos, Onions, Papaya, Parsnips, Pineapple, Squash, Sweet peas, Zucchini
- ❑ **Follow CHEC's Safe Fish Chart when feeding fish to pregnant women and children** <http://www.chechnet.org>
- ❑ **Minimize or avoid soft plastic, never microwave in plastic.** Use glass tupperware, glass baby bottles, wood or metal bowls/cutlery for infants and paper sandwich bags. Avoid PVC and 3,6 or 7 plastic.

### In the Bathroom

- ❑ **Shower or bath chlorine filter.** Sprite brand is inexpensive and very effective. Local source is Pure Water Station 586-415-1498.
- ❑ **Healthy shampoos, creams, suntan lotions and personal care products** such as Aubrey Organics, Alba, Avalon Natural Products, Burt's Bees, Badger , Trillium Organics, Terressentials, MUNCHSKINS , Garden of Eve Lily of Colorado, Toms of Maine, Hyland's Inc., Weleda, Kiss My Face Corp. EO Products, Jason, Zia Natural Skincare Ecco Bella , J. P. Durga, Desert Essence, and Dr Bronners. Check your existing brands in this interactive guide <http://www.ewg.org/reports/skindeep2/index.php>

### In the Bedroom

- ❑ **Close windows** to street & open windows elsewhere
- ❑ **Use HEPA filters** on vacuums, furnaces, air conditioners
- ❑ **Improve air quality with plants** such as Heart leaf philodendron (philodendron scandens), Elephant ear philodendron (philodendron domesticum), Green spider plant (Chlorophytum Comosum), Lacy tree philodendron (philodendron selloum), Aloe vera, Golden pothos (epipremnum aureum), Chinese evergreen Aglaonema Modestum, Mini-schefflera (bassaia arboricola), Peperomia (peperomia obtusifolia), Peace lily Spathiphyllum "Mauna Loa" , Snake plant (sansevieria traifasciata), English Ivy (Hedera Helix), Areca Palm (Chrysalidocarpus Lutescens), Chrysanthemum, Dracaena (Janet Craig, Marginata, Mass cane/Corn Plant, Warneckii), Boston fern (Nephrolepis Exaltata).
- ❑ **Avoid synthetic carpets**, use washable rugs over wood, tile or cork.
- ❑ **Avoid dry cleaning** – Use laundering rather than dry cleaning. Use a small home steamer for suits. Hand wash. If you must use conventional dry cleaning, remove plastic bag and hang clothes outside or in an area separate from living quarters to encourage evaporation of solvents. This could take up to a week but will be faster the warmer it is

### In the Living Room

- ❑ **Minimize flame retardant exposure** in mattresses, computers, TV's, carpeting, household furniture and flooring by reusing/buying second hand or consult buying guides at <http://www.safer-products.org/page.php?p=hous&s=cosm>
- ❑ **Limit formaldehyde exposure** in many carpets, durable press drapes, particleboard and adhesives
- ❑ **Only buy plastic toys if they are PVC or phthalate free-** (PVC, polycarbonate/PC, #7 or #3 recycling code). Avoid dollar store toys and toys with kiddie meals. Phthalate-free teethingers and rattles include Chicco, Little Tikes, Evenflo, Gerber, Hasbro, Safett I'st, Fisher-Price, Shelco, Playskool, Mattel, Arco, Tyco & The First Years. PVC-free toys are made by Baby Vision, Early Start, Little Tikes, Primetime Playthings, Tiny Love (except Discovery Lane), Brio, Gerber toys after 2000, Playskool, Viking

Toys, Sassy (except vinyl photo albums), Lego (except Scala dollheads).  
Safer toy companies include

- **Choose wood or cloth toys**, glass baby bottles and feeding utensils that are wood, ceramic or metal.

### **In the Basement**

- **Avoid mould & mildew** by ventilating properly, using dehumidifiers where needed and maintaining humidifiers
- **Carbon Monoxide** detectors on each floor, especially near furnaces, heaters and stoves
- **Radon** testing of the foundation – 3 month radon detectors are most accurate
- **Non toxic pest control**  
Do it yourself  
<http://www.beyondpesticides.org/alternatives/factsheets/index.htm> or or hire a professional  
<http://www.beyondpesticides.org/safetysource/index.htm>

### **In the Garden**

- **Pesticide free lawn care** – Choose a pesticide-free lawn care company (in Michigan A1 Organic Lawn Care 248-889-7200).  
Note that it is common practice for mainstream companies to advertise “organic” or “green” care options where they use an organic fertilizer but still use pesticides and pre-emergent poisons. Don’t be deceived! For how to question providers see  
<http://www.beyondpesticides.org/lawn/factsheets/faq.htm> Do it yourself with some easy lawn tips.  
<http://www.toxicsinfo.org/Lawn/HealthyBeautifulLawn.htm>
- **Play sand** can contain asbestos if its from quarry rock (eg. Premium Play Sand, Kiddies Fun Sand) or silica if too finely ground. Get washed beach or river sand.
- **Avoid or care for pressure treated wood in porches/gardens to minimize arsenic exposure**  
An inexpensive test kit can be ordered at  
<http://www.ewg.org/reports/poisonwooddrivals/orderform.php>  
Best (but most costly) option is to replace arsenic-treated wood structures with safer alternatives (wood with arsenic-free preservatives, cedar, or recycled plastic composite). Or, seal the wood at least every six months with standard penetrating deck treatments. Replace sections of potential high exposure like handrails, steps, or deck boards with non-arsenic alternatives. Wash your hands and your children’s hands after every exposure to arsenic-treated wood, especially before eating. Keep children and pets away from the soil beneath and immediately surrounding arsenic-treated wood structures. Do not store toys or tools under the deck. Arsenic leaches from the wood when it rains and may coat things left

there. Do not use commercial “deck washing” solutions. These solutions can convert chemicals on the wood to a more toxic form<sup>1</sup>.

#### **In the car**

- Have your infant car seat inspected for correct installation and choose a “low toxicity” rated car seat from [www.healthycar.org](http://www.healthycar.org)
- Consider a used car, which will have lower flame retardant and phthalate levels. <http://www.ecocenter.org/toxicatanyspeed.shtml> has different brands and their toxicity levels and <http://www.safer-products.org/page.php?p=hous&s=auto> has overall ratings.

#### **Resources**

“Household Detective Book” by Children’s Health & the Environment Coalition  
“The Safe Shopper’s Bible : A Consumer’s Guide to Nontoxic Household Products” by Dr.David Steinman& Samuel S. Epstein  
“Home Safe Home” by Debra Lynn Dadd  
“Chemical-Free Kids: How to Safeguard Your Child’s Diet and Environment” by Allan Magaziner, Linda Bonvie, Anthony Zolezzi

#### **Websites**

<http://www.beyondpesticides.org>  
<http://www.organiclandcare.net>  
<http://www.safer-products.org>  
<http://www.chechnet.org>  
<http://www.childrenenvironment.org>  
<http://www.ewg.org>

Environmental home and office consultations are available through Melissa Cooper Vachon 248-545-4852.



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