



# Your own "Green" House Tips on how you and Somerset County can go "Green" together

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## Looking at the world through Green-colored glasses

Going "green" is fast becoming a global fact and scientific evidence shows that this generation will have the greatest impact on the environment within the next 50-100 years.

Recently Somerset County took the first step in becoming a leader in helping with the growing energy crisis with the formation of the Somerset County Energy Council

with an eye toward embark upon environmentally friendly building design and tackling energy efficiency matters.

While the internet is full of energy saving information, Leadership Somerset, Class of 2008, thought that residents could use a source of information with tips on how to save energy, money and the planet that was

all in one place and geared to the everyday consumer.

There are many ways to begin a green lifestyle, and not all of them have to be complicated or costly. Pick out the ones that suit your everyday life and begin saving money and the earth.



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## What you can do right now at no cost



The Freecycle Network™ is made up of people who are giving (and getting) stuff for free in their own towns. Each local group is moderated by a local volunteer and membership is free.

When you want to find a new home for something -- whether it's a chair, a fax machine, piano, or an old door -- you simply send an e-mail offering it to members of the local

Freecycle group.

Or, maybe you're looking to acquire something. Simply respond to an offer, and you just might get it. After that, it's up to the giver to decide who receives the gift and to set up a pickup time for passing on the treasure.

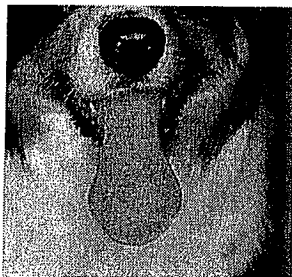
One main rule: Everything posted must be free, legal, and appropriate for all ages. The mission of Freecycle is to build a

network that reduces waste, saves resources and eases the burden on landfills while enabling the members to benefit.

To Join the Freecycle community to go [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org) put in your town and hit enter.

A list will be generated of local Freecycle networks. Choose one to join.

## WAYS TO GREEN YOUR PET - Tim Pino, Contributor



If you're going green around the house, don't forget the dog. There are plenty of ways to help "Green" your pet along with your life. Here are some tips to help:

Choose pet food without the chemical preservatives BHA, BHT and ethoxyquin, vary cats' diets to limit their exposure to mercury in seafood, and choose organic or free-range ingredients rather than "by-products."

Use a reverse osmosis, faucet-mounted, or pitcher filter to remove contaminants before filling your pet's water bowl.

Replace older foam pet bedding, and replace or reupholster furniture with exposed or crumbling foam where flame retardants are found.

Vacuum often with a HEPA-filter vacuum, and take off your shoes at the

door to minimize your pets' exposure to toxic chemicals in house dust.

If you suspect your deck was made with arsenic-treated wood, treat it with a sealant every six months and don't let pets play or sleep underneath it. Wash with mild soap and water, but never power wash! It can loosen pollutants that can harm your pet.

Don't get optional stain-proof treatments on couches, carpets and car upholstery--they're loaded with perfluorochemicals.

Avoid nonstick pans. An overheated nonstick pan can kill pet birds, and it gives off chemicals that may be bad for other pets and people too. Try cast iron instead.

Care for your lawn without using insecticides, which may cause nervous system damage in pets that walk on the treated lawn, eat the grass, or breathe in the chemicals

Use kitty litter made of plant sources like wheat or recycled newspaper. Clay-based kitty litter is strip-mined, causing extreme

environmental damage during extraction.

Get biodegradable, compostable doo-bags for when you go on walks with your pooch--or just reuse bags like plastic newspaper wrappers.

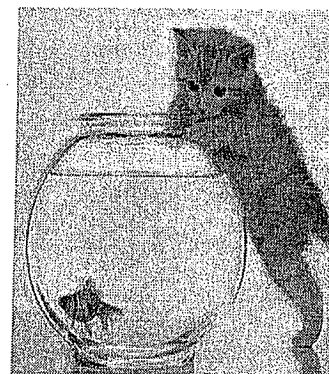
Not only are flea collars generally ineffective, they're also a source of constant toxic exposure for your pet and family. A safe, easy homemade flea repellent: cut 6 lemons in half, boil in a quart of water, steep a few hours, then strain the solution into a spray bottle. Spritz your pet's fur, taking care not to spray near the eyes. Don't spray anything in your pet's face; apply spray to the hand and then rub it on the fur.

Try a mild baby shampoo intended for human use instead of a pet product. Just like human products, pet grooming product manufacturers aren't required to test their grooming products for safety--but unlike human products, they're not even required to list ingredients on labels.

*"Try a mild baby shampoo intended for human use instead of a pet product."*

These days, you can buy everything from hemp dog Frisbees to organic catnip to biodegradable pooper scoopers, and the eco-friendly pet product industry is expected to hit nearly \$1 billion in sales by next year.

You can make your pet green without using a paintbrush. Throw the planet a bone by thinking before buying and using natural products



*"There are over 66 million pet cats in the United States; approximately 35 percent are kept exclusively indoors."*

## New to "Going Green"?



### Here Are Some Small Steps You Can Take to Start Kathleen Harris, Contributor

Responding as an individual to environmental issues can seem overwhelming.

What can I as one person do? But if we each take small steps to save energy, the combined savings can make a difference – without making a big difference in our lifestyles!

#### *Small steps to consider:*

Shorten the time you spend in the shower – try for five minutes instead of the usual ten or fifteen.

Shut the water off while you brush your teeth.

Insert faucet aerators and high efficiency showerheads that use less water and reduce the amount of energy used

to heat hot water.

Use a water-filter pitcher or an in-sink faucet filter and drink tap water instead of buying water in plastic bottles.

Use biodegradable and plant-based dishwashing powder.

Use a programmable thermostat to lower the temperature in your house if nobody is at home during the day. (A change of just 2 degrees makes a difference in terms of carbon dioxide emissions!)

Consider wearing your shoes more than once before you put them in the laundry.

When you do laundry, wash full loads and use cold water.

Regularly clean the lint filter on your clothes dryer – a dirty lint filter means the dryer has to use more energy to dry your clothes.

Eat less red meat and help reduce the amount of grain and water that goes into meat production. (7+ pounds of grain and 3,360 gallons of water are needed to produce one pound of beef!)

If you are purchasing a new computer clothes more consider

a laptop which will use about half the energy of a desktop PC. Look for models with the federal government's "Energy Star" rating.

When shopping, look for paper products made from recycled paper, fruits and vegetables that were grown locally, and clothes made from organic cotton or bamboo fibers.

Bring your own reusable bags to the store when you shop



## Save Trees – Cut Down on Junk Mail!

Kathleen Harris, Contributor

How much of the junk mail that you get at home goes right into the recycling bin? How many trees could we save if we all cut down on junk mail? If you would like to make a start toward saving trees by reducing the amount of junk mail that shows up in your mailbox, visit the Federal Trade Commission's website at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) and follow these links:

Click on the "Consumer Protection" bar Put your

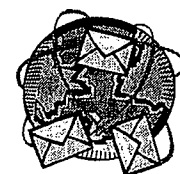
cursor over the words in the side bar "Telemarketing and Telephone Services"

Click on "National Do Not Call Registry"

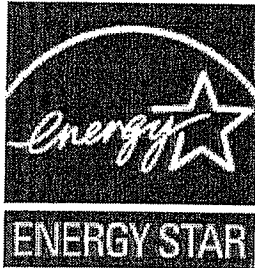
Scroll down to the "Consumer Alerts" section at the bottom of the page and click on "Unsolicited Mail, Telemarketing and

Email: Where to Go to Just Say No" Using this website you will be able to "opt-out" of having pre-approved credit offers sent to you, notify the three major credit bureaus that you don't want your personal information shared for promotional purposes and take yourself off direct mail marketing lists for five years

*"You can make a difference. By cutting back on the amount of junk mail you receive you reduce the need for new landfills, help save the environment and reduce your garbage collection bills and taxes."*  
--Mother Earth News



## Are you a "Star"? - Kathleen Harris and Kathy Quick, Contributors



If every American household serviced their heating and cooling systems and changed their air filters, inspected their ducts for leaks and programmed their thermostat for energy savings while they're away or asleep, we would save more than \$14 billion in annual energy costs while preventing 160 billion pounds of greenhouse gases, equivalent to the emissions of 14 million cars.

If every American household added insulation to their attic, we would save nearly \$1.5 billion in annual energy costs and prevent nearly 25 billion pounds of greenhouse gases, equivalent to the emissions of 2 million cars.

If every home office product purchased in America this year were ENERGY STAR qualified, we would save \$200 million in annual energy costs while preventing almost 3 billion pounds of greenhouse gases, equivalent to the emissions of 250,000 cars.

If each desktop and monitor in American homes was to sleep when not in use, we would save \$1 billion in annual energy costs while preventing more than 15 billion pounds of greenhouse gases, equivalent to the emissions of 1 million cars.

If every refrigerator, dishwasher and clothes washer purchased in America this year were ENERGY STAR qualified, we would save \$650 million in annual energy costs while preventing 4.5 billion pounds of greenhouse gases, equivalent to the emissions of 350,000 cars.

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Department of Energy have been working together since 1992 to help consumers identify energy efficient products. Products that have earned the Energy Star have met the strict energy efficient guidelines developed by these two agencies. Product guidelines are in place for major appliances, office equipment, lighting, home electronics, and more. The EPA also gives stars to new homes and commercial/industrial buildings

Information about Products in more than 50 categories that have earned the Energy Star rating.

Home Improvement recommendations for reducing energy bills and making your home more energy efficient and comfortable.

Information about New Homes that are, according to the guidelines, at least 15% more energy efficient than homes built to the 2004 International Residential Code and include other energy-saving features that typically make them 20-30% more efficient than standard homes. A search tool allows you to find builders in your community that construct Energy Star homes.

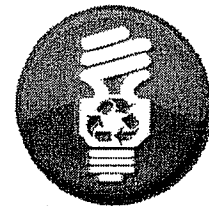
Tips for applying the Energy Star approach to Buildings and Plants where we work, worship and go to school. This part of the website provides strategies, tools, and links to expert help, training programs and networks of business people who are successfully using energy efficiency best practices.



## Take the ENERGY STAR Pledge

To do my part to save energy and combat global warming I will:

✦ Replace at least one light in my home with an ENERGY STAR qualified one



✦ Set or program my thermostat to save energy while asleep or away from home

✦ Have heating and cooling equipment tuned-up by a professional

✦ Change air filters

✦ Seal leaks and repair any holes in the duct system

✦ Seal the home's outer walls, ceilings, doors and floors with caulk, spray foam or weather stripping

✦ Add insulation to the attic

✦ Choose ENERGY STAR qualified equipment for the home office

Choose Energy Star qualified equipment for kitchen and laundry

## Recycle your compact fluorescent light bulbs - *Kathye Quick, Contributor*

While compact fluorescent light bulbs are a proven way to save energy, improper disposal of the bulbs creates a hazard, because they contain small amounts of mercury.

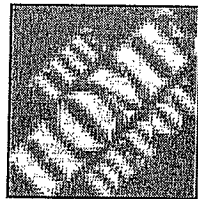
Recycling them just got easier.

Home Depot, the nation's second-largest retailer announced that will take back old compact fluorescents in all 1,973 of its stores in the United States, creating the nation's most widespread recycling program for the bulbs.

Until now, consumers had to seek out local hazardous waste programs or smaller retail chains willing to collect the bulbs for recycling. The Environmental Protection Agency has been looking into putting bulb drop-off boxes at post offices,

but those plans are not final, and across most of the country, recycling the bulbs has been inconvenient at best. Industry professionals estimate that the recycling rate is around 2 percent.

Home Depot's program, which will accept any maker's bulbs, will bring relatively convenient recycling within reach of most households. It is estimated that 75 percent of the nation's homes are within 10 miles of a Home Depot.



**Recycle your CFLs at these Home Depots in and around Somerset County.**

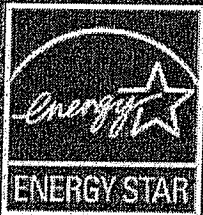
Bridgewater Rt. 202  
736 Rt. 202 South  
908-252-0101

Bridgewater Rt. 28  
400 Promenade Blvd.  
732-469-5883

Watchung  
1515 Rt. 22  
908-222-7700

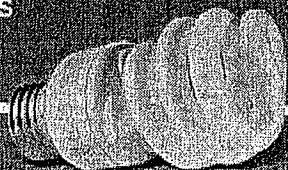
Raritan  
244 Highway 202  
Flemington  
908-782-2577

South Plainfield  
3100 Hamilton Blvd.  
732-752-5900



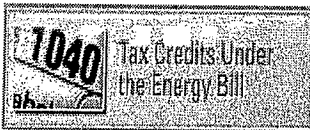
### Help Save Our Planet While Saving Money

ENERGY STAR® qualified products can help conserve energy and water and lower your utility bills



## Energy tax credits - Kathye Quick, Contributor

*"As of December 31, 2007, most of the residential tax credits (windows, doors, roofs, insulation, HVAC, and non-solar water heaters) expired. You have until April 15, 2008 to report these credits on your 2007 taxes. The tax credit for solar water heaters and solar panels remains in effect through December 31, 2008."*



*"On February 27, 2008, the House passed \$18.1 billion in renewable energy tax incentives (H.R. 5351), including an extension of the tax credit for energy-efficient home improvements. The bill is similar to the one passed last year, which was ultimately removed from the 2007 Energy Bill, signed into law in December 2007. This bill must still pass in the Senate, and be signed by the President to become law."*

A tax credit can provide significant savings. It reduces the amount of income tax you have to pay. Unlike a deduction, which reduces the amount of income subject to tax, a tax

credit directly reduces the tax itself. You must refer to the final Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules to determine what qualifies for the tax credit.

### Efficient Cars

Tax credits are available to buyers of hybrid gasoline-electric, diesel, battery-electric, alternative fuel, and fuel cell vehicles. The tax credit amount is based on a formula determined by vehicle weight, technology, and fuel economy compared to base year models. These credits are available for vehicles placed in service starting January 1, 2006. For hybrid and diesel vehicles made by each manufacturer, the credit will be phased out over 15 months starting after that manufacturer has sold 60,000 eligible vehicles. For vehicles made by manufacturers that have not reached the end of the phase-out, the credits will end for vehicles placed in service after December 31, 2010

Even though a manufacturer has certified a vehicle, a taxpayer must meet the following requirements to qualify for the credit:

1. The vehicle must be placed in service after 12-31-05 and purchased on or before 12-31-10.

The original use of the vehicle must begin with the

taxpayer claiming the credit.

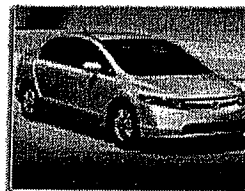
2. The credit may only be claimed by the original owner of a new, qualifying, hybrid vehicle and does not apply to a used hybrid vehicle.

The vehicle must be acquired for use or lease by the taxpayer claiming the credit.

3. The credit is only available to the original purchaser of a qualifying hybrid vehicle. If a qualifying vehicle is leased to a consumer, the leasing company may claim the credit.

4. For qualifying vehicles used by a tax-exempt entity, the person who sold the qualifying vehicle to the person or entity using the vehicle is eligible to claim the credit, but only if the seller clearly discloses in a document to the tax-exempt entity the amount of credit.

5. The vehicle must be used predominantly within the United States.



### Solar Energy Systems

Tax credits are available for qualified solar water heating and photovoltaic systems. The credits are available for systems "placed in service" from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2008. The tax credit is for 30% of the cost of the system, up to \$2,000. This credit is not limited to the \$500 home improvement cap.

### Special Offers and Rebates from ENERGY STAR Partners

To encourage customers to buy energy efficient products, ENERGY STAR partners occasionally sponsor special offers, such as sales tax exemptions or credits, or rebates on qualified products.

The New Jersey Office of Clean Energy is offering rebates on Central Air Conditioning and Electric Air Source Heat Pumps based on Energy Efficient Ratios (SEER and EER)—see website for specifics.

Several manufactures – Jenn-Air, KitchenAid - GE – Asko Appliances and Amana – offer rebates on specific appliance models.

## The Walking School Bus - Claudia Slaughnessy, Contributor

A walking bus is a group of schoolchildren who, chaperoned by two adults (a "Driver" leads and a "Conductor" follows) walk to school, in much the same way a school bus would drive them to school. Like a traditional bus, walking buses have a fixed route with designated "bus stops" and "pick up times" in which they pick up children.

The concept of the walking bus was invented in 1998 by Hertfordshire County Council and was first used at Wheatfields Junior School in St Albans, United Kingdom in 1998 [

Walking Buses have remained popular in the United Kingdom and have recently gained a level of popularity elsewhere in Europe, North America and New Zealand. Proponents of walking buses say that its aims are to:

- Encourage physical activity by teaching children the skills to walk safely, how to identify safe routes to school, and the benefits of walking
- Raise concern for the environment
- Raise awareness of how walkable a community is and where improvements can be made
- Reduce crime and take back neighborhoods for people on foot

- Reduce traffic congestion, pollution, and speed near schools.
- Share valuable time with local community leaders, parents, and children

### WALKING SCHOOL BUS GUIDELINES FOR ORGANIZERS

Map the route the walking-bus will take. Choose the safest route with the fewest and safest streets to cross and pick places where there are sidewalks or paths separated from traffic if possible. Pay close attention to traffic signs and signals related to pedestrians.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend 1 adult for every 6 children. One adult can walk with more kids who are over 10 years of age. For 4-6 year olds, 1 adult for every 3 children is advised.

Have parents walk with their children and/or sign consent forms.

Go over basic safety rules with the children.

Make sure the students know you are in charge.

Have a plan for dealing with disruptive students.

Plan how to cross streets depending on the number of children and the type of street. Avoid busy, high-speed or multi-lane roads. Think about how to cross, such as two by two or four across. Give children exiting the street room to enter the sidewalk area.

Wear bright colors and use retroreflective materials. Walk leaders and children can wear fluorescent vests. In bad weather, visibility is even more important.

Children are not miniature adults. They often act before thinking. They have one-third narrower side vision and can't judge speed. Since they are shorter than adults, they can't see over cars and bushes.

Remember that adults are role models for children's behaviors.

The rewards can be great. Walking school buses help create lifelong safety skills.

A Walking School Bus can be as informal as two families taking turns walking their children to school or as structured as a planned

route with meeting points, a timetable and a schedule of trained volunteers.

For more information visit:  
[www.walkingschoolbus.org](http://www.walkingschoolbus.org)



*"A variation on the walking school bus is a bicycle train where a group of children and adult leaders ride their bikes together to school."*



For more information visit:



Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center

## What is "Green Cleaning"? How do I go Green?

- Linda Levitt Contributor

Green cleaning involves the use of products that are the least toxic to people, animals and our planet. It is possible to find or make these products that are healthier, often cheaper and yet they will still do a good job of cleaning and disinfecting. If you wish to buy green products, you should be looking for ones which say they are non-toxic, biodegradable, phosphate-free, contain no dye, chlorine or hypochlorite, use recycled packaging, bulk packaging, natural fragrances and which have full disclosure or labeling of both "active" and "inert" ingredients. For additional information, please visit:

NJ Environmental Federation, Peggi Sturmfels, 732-280-8898, [psturmfels@cleanwater.org](mailto:psturmfels@cleanwater.org)

Dierdre Imus Environmental Center for Pediatric Oncology, 201-336-8071, [www.dienviro.com](http://www.dienviro.com)

Center for the New American Dream, [www.newdream.org/cleanschools/safelist.php](http://www.newdream.org/cleanschools/safelist.php)

Environmental Choice Program, [www.environmentalchoice.com](http://www.environmentalchoice.com)

NJ Green Schools Program, 732-528-0016, [www.globallearning.org](http://www.globallearning.org)

Before we get into the cleaning products themselves, there are several suggestions to develop environmentally friendly kitchens:

- use less water and don't let the water run while you do dishes, brush your teeth or walk away to get a cup from another room
- use cloth napkins and towels instead of paper
- buy your items in bulk – this uses much less packaging
- choose organic products, if possible
- buy local products and produce; this reduces transportation costs and fuel and supports your local farms and businesses
- use reusable storage containers, plates, cups, etc.
- don't leave your refrigerator door open for long
- thaw food before you cook to reduce your cooking time

Most detergents [dish & laundry] are made from petroleum, a nonrenewable resource. Other ingredients are not easily biodegradable and are harmful to

wildlife after they do down your drain. Fragrances in our cleaning supplies and fabric softeners contain chemicals that have been linked to cancer and may impair women's reproductive systems. These fragrances may also trigger asthma, allergies, headaches and eye irritation. Many ingredients become dangerous when combined, and you often won't find any warning labels to alert you to this phenomenon.

According to a 2000 World Health Organization report, antibacterial soap is helping to promote the growth of resistant bacteria. Chlorine bleach, common in cleaning and laundry supplies, is highly caustic, can be fatal if swallowed, and can wreck havoc in the world of nature after it runs down your drain. It also must never be mixed with any ammonia product as this will result in a highly toxic gas.

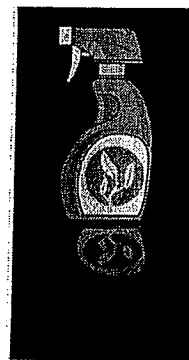
The first step to greening your home is, weather permitting, open your windows and let the fresh air in! Replace artificial air fresheners with fresh flowers. If you'd like to choose greener alternative to your traditional cleaners, air fresheners and the like, do be a savvy consumer:

"Just because a product says it's natural doesn't mean it's nontoxic," according to the CEO of Seventh Generation, a producer of environmental friendly household products. "Because no standards exist, claims such as 'nontoxic,' 'eco-safe,' and 'environmentally friendly' are also meaningless, according to Consumers Reports' Eco-labels website." If you would prefer to buy alternatives to the traditional cleaning & laundry products, look for environmentally friendly ingredients that also perform. Substitute

~ grain alcohol for butyl cellosolve as a solvent

~ coconut or other plant oils rather than petroleum in detergents

~ plant oils eucalyptus, rosemary or sage rather than triclosan as disinfectants



## Green Cleaning in your Kitchen and Bath

- Linda Levitt Contributor

Replace antibacterial soap with thorough hand-washing with plain soap & warm water. Wash about 2 minutes.

White vinegar will kill bacteria, mold and viruses and can be used on kitchen surfaces and even toilet seats!

To kill the dreaded food-borne pathogens [E coli, salmonella], use very hot, soapy water to thoroughly wash all utensils, cutting boards, and any surfaces on which you placed raw meat or eggs. While you can use wooden cutting boards for fruit, vegetables and cooked products, only use non-porous cutting boards for raw meat and poultry.

To scrub sinks, tubs, countertops use a paste of baking soda & water. This should remove dirt rings and many stains. If this doesn't work on a particular stain, try a paste of washing soda and water; but use gloves.

To clean windows, fill a spray bottle with water & either ¼ C white vinegar or 1 tablespoon lemon juice.

**Drain, oven & toilet bowl cleaners** are extremely corrosive and can irritate

eyes and skin and cause or worsen breathing problems. To green-clean drains, try using a "snake," a plumbing tool that can bring much [or all] of the clog to the surface. If you still need to clear your drains, try eco-friendly solutions that use enzymes rather than caustic chemicals to dissolve your obstructions. Check out *Earth Friendly* and *Naturally Yours* products. And, for the future, consider metal or plastic drain screens that will prevent hair and other obstacles from getting in your drain.

Oven surfaces can be cleaned with a paste of water & baking or washing soda; let stand overnight and scrub while using gloves. *EnviroSafety* has a plant-based multi-purpose cleaner. To make it easier on you to keep your oven clean, line the oven floor with aluminum foil and wipe oven walls after each use.

Toilets can be cleaned using non-chlorine scouring powders or you may try AFM SafeChoice or Ecover products for the toilet.

**Furniture polish:** can use 3 parts light mineral oil to one part olive oil ad a drop

of lemon juice. Or try a small amount of olive or lemon oil and beeswax. Or: dip a cloth in cool tea and rub onto furniture. You can hide wood scratches by rubbing it with the meat of a walnut. To remove water stains on wood furniture, dab white toothpaste onto the stain. Allow it to dry and gently buff with a soft cloth.

**Fabric softener:** you can substitute a commercial fabric softener with an addition of ¼ C baking soda to your wash cycle. A ¼ C white vinegar will also soften and eliminate fabric cling.

According to *Grist*, an environmental news website, less toxic sore products are manufactured by Ecover [laundry & dish soaps], Seventh Generation [laundry & dish soaps], Aubrey Organics [all purpose household cleaners], Vermont Soapworks [all purpose household cleaners] and Naturally Yours [dishwasher detergent].

**Air fresheners:** can trigger allergies and asthma. An easy solution – when the weather co-operates, open the window and ventilate! Use an open box of baking soda to remove odors – place these boxes in closets, in your refrigerator, or any enclosed spaces where the air is stale. Other common ingredients that can rid room odors are: ~a mixture of baking soda, hot water and lemon juice mixed and poured into a spray bottle; spray into the air; ~a bowl of vinegar; ~a bowl of charcoal or kitty litter; ~lighting a match for a few seconds; ~burning a candle; ~a small dish of vanilla extract. If you want to be fancy – put the baking soda into a decorative bowl. Or you can use cloves, sticks of cinnamon, whole allspice or similar spices, simmered in a pot for 1-2 hours,

If you want to use commercial products, try cedar blocks, sachets of dried flowers and herbs and products which are scented with essential plant oils, such as lemon, verbena or lavender. Avoid and products that lists an unspecified "fragrance" - these could easily be synthetic chemicals, which you are trying to avoid

## Green Laundry Tips - Linda Levitt Contributor



~ **Pre-soak** soiled items in warm water w/ ½ C washing soda for 30 min. rub soiled areas w/ liquid soap

~ **To remove stains**, soak spot in cool water immediately; sponge away as much as possible. Repeat if necessary. \*air-dry since heat can set a stain

~ **Blood**: pour hydrogen peroxide directly on stain and rinse in cold water

~ **Chocolate & coffee**: soak in cold water, rub w/ soap & mild borax solution & rinse. Wash in water as hot as the fabric can stand

~ **Fruit & wine**: soak in cold water for 30 minutes. Rub soap into remaining stain & wash in water as hot as the fabric can stand. Bleach with lemon juice and sunlight, if needed

~ **Grass**: rub with glycerin [available in drug-

stores]; let stand for 1 hour, then wash

~ **Ink**: for ballpoint pen, sponge with rubbing alcohol, rub with soap, rinse & wash. For felt-tip, rub with soap, rinse & wash

~ **Lipstick**: rub with cold cream or shortening to dissolve color, rinse with solution of washing soda in warm water to remove grease.

Wash in soapy water as hot as fabric will stand

~ **Mildew**: wash with soap & water. Rinse well, dry in sun. If spot remains, apply lemon juice, rub with salt and dry in sun. Wash

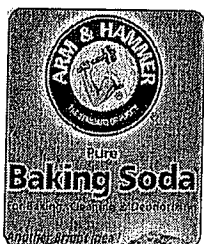
~ **Perspiration**: rub with solution of vinegar and lemon juice in water

## In a Nutshell: The Best Homemade Cleaning Product Ingredients to Keep on Hand (you probably already have them in your house)

- Linda Levitt Contributor

**Baking soda**: mildly abrasive, naturally deodorizing. On a damp sponge it will clean your tub and sinks, remove marks on painted walls. If you have stubborn stains on sinks or countertops, make a paste and let it sit on the stain for 15 minutes before scrubbing. On a dirty [cold] oven, spray with water and spread a mix of ¾ cup baking soda, ¼ cup salt and ¼ cup water over the interior;

do be careful not to let the mixture clog any openings. Let sit for a few hours to



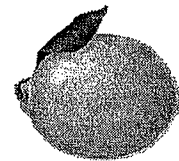
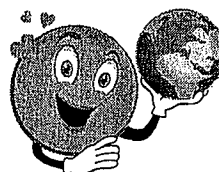
overnight and clean off. To remove odors on carpets, sprinkle with baking soda, let it sit for a few minutes and vacuum

To clear your drains, make a mixture of equal parts baking soda and cider vinegar, pour over the clogged drain, and follow with hot water. Do not use this immediately after using a commercial drain cleaner as it could cause a dangerous chemical interaction.

**Vinegar**: again, with baking soda, will keep drains from clogging. It also is a wonderful spray cleaner, dissolving soap scum and grease

Make a mixture of equal parts vinegar and water in a spray bottle and you can

use it on counters and cabinets – and there is no need to rinse! With difficult stains, use very warm water and let it sit for a while before scrubbing. Unfortunately, this may not work on the most stubborn of stains – they may call for commercial products. To clean toilets, use vinegar full strength; add one cup to your laundry rinse cycle to soften; full strength vinegar will clean and polish your kitchen stainless steel appliances; and ½ cup vinegar mixed with one gallon hot water will clean your washable floors.



**Lemon**: use them to deodorize your garbage disposals. Rust stains in your bathroom can be cleaned by sprinkling the stain with salt, squeezing lemon juice over the salt, letting the mixture sit for several hours and then wiping clean. You can make a good furniture polish with 1 cup of oil [olive or mineral] and ½ cup of lemon juice. Clean your grout by sprinkling it liberally with lemon juice, letting it sit for 30 minutes and scrubbing. Lemon juice removes perspiration and other stains from clothing.

## Cleaning Products—continued

**Borax [sodium borate]:** kills mold and bacteria. Used as an alternative to bleach, it deodorizes, removes stains, and boosts the cleaning power of soap

**Ammonia:** a wonderful cleaner for windows, chrome, tile and mirrors when you combine the ammonia [one tablespoon] with rubbing alcohol [1 cup] and water [1 cup]. To avoid streaking, don't clean in direct sunlight. If you see a bowl of ammonia in an oven overnight, most of the gook can be wiped away. Steel wool and elbow grease can finish the project, if needed.

**Salt:** an abrasive



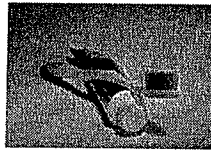
**Bleach:** combine  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup bleach with one gallon of water. This can be used for mold and mildew on grout and tile. Do be careful with fabrics and never, ever combine bleach & ammonia – this can release highly toxic gases.

**Washing soda [acetic acid]:** cleans clothing, softens water, cuts grease and disinfects. When combined with soap, can

greatly increase its cleaning power.

Liquid castile soap: gentle soap

**White, non-gel toothpaste:** mild abrasive that cleans silver



Scouring pad / soft rags and/or sponges / spray bottles

**Club soda:** great stain

Hints: buy your ingredients in bulk, pre-mix, and label and store your cleaners properly. You can use spray bottles for many of your cleaning supplies. Add essential oils or herbs to many of your cleansers – this will add a pleasant fragrance to your products.

Homemade cleaning products tend to be cheaper, usually work as well as commercial products and are vastly superior to our health, the health of our pets, and to our ecosystem. Do be sure you clearly label and carefully store all your products so they cannot be mistaken for something suitable for eating or drinking!

## **Contributors' Sources Courtesy of**

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