

Alternative Household Products

Part of household hazardous waste reduction is *product substitution*, that is, using a less toxic or non-toxic product to create a less toxic or non-toxic waste. Protect the environment, your health, and your home by replacing your household cleaning products with these less or non-toxic alternatives that you make yourself.

Air Freshener

- Simmer cloves and cinnamon in boiling water.
- Leave opened box of baking soda in room.
- Set out a dish of vinegar.

Ant Control

- Mix 2 Tablespoons boric acid, 2 Tablespoons sugar, and 1 cup water. Soak paper towels, place on dishes, and set out for ants.
- Pour a line of cream of tartar where ants enter.
- Put a light coating of petroleum jelly around the base of your pet's feeding dish to keep ants out.

Carpet & Upholstery Cleaner

- Clean stains immediately with club soda.
- Sprinkle cornstarch on rug and vacuum.
- Use soap-based, non-aerosol rug shampoo.

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Drain Opener

- Use a plunger or mechanical snake.
- Pour 2 cups baking soda and hot water into drain, then pour 1 cup of vinegar. Immediately plug the drain with rubber gasket or plunger.
- Flush drain weekly with boiling water.

Flea & Tick Repellent

- Scatter pine needles, fennel, rue, or rosemary on pet's bed.
- Feed pet brewer's yeast, vitamin B, or garlic tablets.

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Furniture Polish

- Mix ½ cup olive oil and 1 teaspoon lemon oil in a bottle. Shake well, pour into microfiber towel, and rub onto finished wood.

Glass Cleaner

- Mix 1 cup distilled (or filtered) water with 1 tablespoon of white vinegar. Distilled waterworks best because it has no minerals and will not leave residue on glass.
- Add 1 bay leaf and let soak overnight to reduce the vinegar odor.

Insect Spray for Plants

- Blend 6 cloves crushed garlic, 1 minced onion, 1 Tablespoon dried hot pepper, and 1 Tablespoon pure soap in 1-gallon hot water. Let sit 1 to 2 days; strain and use.

Metal Polishes

Brass:

- Cover brass surface with regular ketchup; the salt and vinegar will remove the tarnish.
- Leave on surface for 10 minutes and then rinse clean. Repeat the process for heavilytarnished brass.

Copper

- Mix 1 part of salt with 10 parts white vinegar.
- Submerge copper in solution and stir for 20 seconds (or more if needed.)
- Rub remaining tarnish off with a damp cloth.
- Rinse copper thoroughly with clean water when done.

Silver:

- Line the bottom of a large glass bowl or plastic bin with aluminum foil. Do not use ametal container.
- Place a generous amount of baking soda into container and then place the silver item tobe leaned on top of the baking soda.
- Pour hot (not warm) water into container until the silver item is completely submerged.
- Soak silver for ten minutes to a half hour depending on the degree of tarnish. Tarnishwill move to aluminum foil.
- Polish silver with clean dry cloth.

Steel/Chrome:

- Mix baking soda and water to the consistency of toothpaste.
- Rub paste into the grimy area with a sponge, adding more as needed.
- Rinse area with warm water.

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Mildew Remover

- Dissolve 1/2 cup Borax and 1/2 cup vinegar in warm water.

Mothballs

- Sew dried lavender or cedar chips into small cloth bags and place with clothes.

Multi-Purpose Cleaner

- Mix 1/2 cup ammonia, 1/3 cup vinegar and 1/4 cup baking soda in 1 gallon of warm water.

Septic System Cleaner

- Use professional service every 2 to 3 years. Chemical treatments don't work; some can actually harm your system.

Shower Head Cleaner

- Pour 1/2 Cup Vinegar into 1 quart water.
- Put shower head in mixture and boil for 5 minutes.

Tape Adhesive Remover

- Cover tape residue with generous amounts of peanut butter.
- Let sit 5 minutes.
- Wipe clean with warm water.

Window Cleaner

- Use 1/2 cup vinegar in 1 gallon of warm water.
- Use lemon juice and dry soft cloth.
- Use newspaper to dry glass.

Additional Information

For more information regarding household hazardous waste, please contact hhw@des.nh.gov, call (603) 271-2047, or go to <http://des.nh.gov/>.