

Special to the Fitchburg Newsletter

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Spring Cleaning Found Dangerous!

It's just like you always thought... housework is hazardous to your health.

Many of the commercial cleaners we use at home contain dangerous or toxic ingredients and many of these ingredients can't be treated at sewage treatment plants.

As a result, these chemicals end up in our lakes and streams.

However, this doesn't mean that you need to give up cleaning all-together, unless you'd really like to. To keep spring-cleaning from dirtying up the environment:

- ***Read labels on products.*** "Poison" means highly toxic and "Danger" means extremely flammable or corrosive or highly toxic. "Warning" or "Caution" mean less toxic. Try to use products that are less toxic or don't carry these warnings at all.
- ***Avoid dumping extra materials down the drain.*** Share them with friends or neighbors instead.
- ***You can dispose of unwanted hazardous household materials,*** from paint products to pool cleaning supplies, at "Clean Sweep." Call 267-1997 for a detailed recording of what this local government facility will handle.
- ***Mix your own non-toxic cleansers,*** to save money and protect the environment. Vinegar, baking soda, lemon juice and salt can take the place of many expensive and dangerous materials.

To see what non-toxic cleaning materials can do, drop a dirty penny in a cup with vinegar and salt and let it sit for a while.

If simple ingredients can bring a shine to spare change, imagine what they can do when blended with elbow grease. For non-toxic cleanser recipes, contact the Dane County Lakes & Watershed Division at 266-2626 or Dane County Extension at 266-4271.

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