

# Tips for Non-Toxic Household Cleaning



**A few eco-friendly tips for cleaning up around the home with non-toxic cleaners you can make yourself**

## Why Not Use Conventional Products?

Today's home is loaded with toxic and polluting substances designed to make domestic life easier. Costs of these commercial, chemical-based products can be high—long-term health concerns for the family, and the environmental pollution resulting from their manufacture and disposal. In the U.S., many people suffer from allergies, sinusitis, asthma or bronchitis and many studies have shown a link between chemical cleaning products and these conditions.

## Change Your Cleaning Routine

Making your own non-toxic alternative cleaners sometimes has health benefits that outweigh the chance that you will have to scrub harder or longer. Plus, many of the alternatives are just as effective in cleaning as the more hazardous chemicals you may have been using.

### **Basic items you'll need**

- baking soda
- vinegar
- soap (Murphy's Oil Soap or Castille)
- salt

Do not mix the Green Cleaning recipes in this publication with other cleaning products. Keep ALL cleaning products out of the reach of children.

**Butler County Holds Regular Collections for Hazardous Waste!**  
**For information on how to properly dispose of hazardous household products you no longer want or need, call the Butler County Dept. of Recycling & Waste Management at (724) 284-5305 or email [skelly@co.butler.pa.us](mailto:skelly@co.butler.pa.us).**

## Recipes

### Tub / Sink / Toilet Bowl Cleaner

*baking soda*  
*Castile Soap or Murphy's Oil Soap*

Use baking soda in place of scouring powder. Sprinkle it on porcelain fixtures and rub with a wet rag. Add soap to the rag for more cleaning power. Rinse well to avoid leaving a hazy film.

### Window and Mirror Cleaner

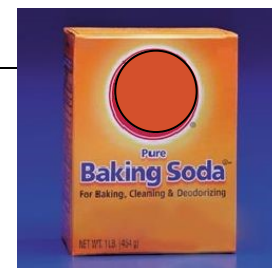
*1 part vinegar*  
*3 parts water*

Put vinegar in a spray bottle and fill to top with water. Spray on surface. Rub with a cloth diaper, lint-free rag, or sheets of newspaper. For outdoor windows use a sponge and wash with warm water mixed with a few drops of liquid soap. Rinse well and squeegee dry.

### Linoleum Floor Cleaner

*½ cup vinegar*  
*bucket of warm water*

Mop with a mixture of 1/2 cup vinegar in a bucket of warm water. The vinegar odor will go away shortly after the floor dries.



**Butler County  
 Department of  
 Recycling &  
 Waste Management**

**PO Box 1208  
 124 W. Diamond St.  
 Butler, PA 16003**

**Phone:  
 724.284.5305  
 Fax: 724.284.5315  
 Email:  
[skelly@co.butler.pa.us](mailto:skelly@co.butler.pa.us)**

### All-Purpose Cleaner

*(for spots on linoleum, tile, and woodwork)*

#### *Murphy's Oil Soap*

Add a drop of soap on a wet washcloth and rub briskly. A washcloth will last longer and create less waste than a sponge.

### Copper Cleaner

*1 Tablespoon vinegar*

*1 Tablespoon salt*

*water*

*vegetable oil (optional)*

Mix equal parts vinegar and salt (a tablespoon of each) and apply to surface with a rag. Rinse thoroughly with water to prevent corrosion. Apply a little vegetable oil with a cloth and rub for a shiny appearance. Do not use this cleaner on lacquered finishes.

### Drain Cleaner

*½ cup baking soda*

*½ cup vinegar*

*boiling water*

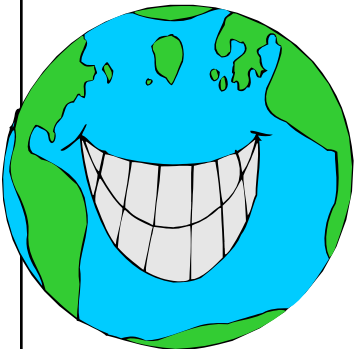
This recipe will free minor clogs and help prevent future clogs. Pour baking soda down the drain first, then the vinegar. Let it fizz for a few minutes. Pour a teakettle full of boiling water down the drain to clear it. Repeat if needed. If the clog is stubborn, use a plunger. If very stubborn, use a plumber's snake.

### Oven Cleaner

*1 cup baking soda*

*water*

Mix baking soda with enough water to make a paste. Apply to oven surfaces, and let stand for several minutes. Use a scouring pad for scrubbing most surfaces. A spatula or bread knife is effective to get under large food deposits. This recipe will require "elbow grease," but it is non-toxic and safe for the whole family. Try spot cleaning your oven regularly; dirty ovens are less energy-efficient. Do not use this cleaner on self-cleaning ovens.



**A growing number of commercial, non-toxic home cleaners are on the market and are sold in most stores. Your use of these products helps promote the growth of "green" businesses and are contributing to a more eco-friendly and sustainable economy.**

**For more information** on "green cleaning" or information on how to properly dispose of hazardous household products you no longer want or need, call the Butler County Dept. of Recycling & Waste Management at (724) 284-5305 or email [skelly@co.butler.pa.us](mailto:skelly@co.butler.pa.us).

**Please Note: You should ALWAYS test ANY cleaner in an inconspicuous spot first to be sure it won't damage any surface finishes.**



**Board of Butler County  
Commissioners**

Leslie A. Osche, Chairman  
Kimberly D. Geyer, Vice-  
Chairman  
Kevin E. Boozel, M.S.,  
Secretary