

Kick the Toxic Cleaning Habit

The Green Notebook

Building on last week's column, here are a few more tips for keeping the chemicals out of your cleaning routine, which will benefit you and the environment:

- Leave the toxins at the door by having a really good mat either outside or inside the door (or both). Even better, take your shoes off and leave the pollutants on your shoes and not on the carpet.
- If you have a cleaning service, check to see if they will switch to green products or call around to find a green company (yes, they are popping up)
- When getting carpets steam cleaned, look for companies that use only water or natural solvents

A few resources of interest on the internet include:

- www.newdream.org/clean--for advice on how to change the cleaning products used by the custodial staff at your workplace.
- www.ipa.gov/oppt/epp/pubs/products/cleaner.htm--The Green Cleaning Products page lays out the basics of why cleaning chemicals can be so harmful.
- householdproducts.nlm.gov --The National Institute of Health's webpage lets you search a variety of products to see their health and toxicity ratings.

If reading is your thing, check out books on the topic including:

- *Clean and Simple: A Back-to-Basics Approach to Cleaning Your Home* by Ken Sheldon and Christine Halvorson
- *Green Clean: The Environmentally Sound Guide to Cleaning Your Home* by Linda Mason Hunter and Mikki Halpin
- *Organic Housekeeping: In Which the Non-Toxic Avenger Shows You How to Improve Your Health and That of Your Family, While You Save Time, Money, and, Perhaps, Your Sanity* by Ellen Sandbeck (I have got to read that one! The title alone is intriguing.)
- *Better Basics for the Home: Simple Solutions for Less Toxic Living* by Annie Berthold-Bond
- *Clean House Clean Planet* by Karen Logan

There are a lot of other books and guides out there on the subject, this is just a few. Sorry, I couldn't find any videos, but there are plenty of green cleaning ideas on the internet. Take the time to learn more and share your findings with friends and family. We don't need to be chemically dependent cleaners any more!

Tuesday Trippier lives in Delaware, is a writer, wife and mother of three with an interest in green living. Send an email to the Gazette if you want to know more on a certain green topic.