

# **A CLEAN SWEEP: MAKE YOUR OWN SAFER AND INEXPENSIVE HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS**

## **USING AND MAKING A CLEANER**

- It may take longer because of needing to let the mixture “sit” before rinsing.
- You may use more “elbow grease.”
- The ingredients are still not completely safe, so follow these guidelines:
  - Be careful mixing chemicals. Chlorine bleach and ammonia produce a toxic gas when mixed.
  - Only make a month’s supply at a time, or the mixture may lose its strength.
- Mix where there is plenty of fresh air.
- Still store all cleaning solutions out of children’s reach or in a locked cabinet.
- Store in new containers bought for each specific mixture and keep in a permanent place. If using a recycled container your mixture may react with something left over inside it or be mistaken for a food or beverage.
- Label carefully, clearly and permanently.

Sometimes only a commercial product will do the job. Here are some tips to keep your household safe:

- Read the label for choosing the least poisonous product, storage, use, disposal and risks.
- Avoid aerosols; use sprays, powders, pastes or liquids.

## **GENERAL PURPOSE CLEANERS:**

- Mix ½ cup of vinegar with 1 gallon of water.
- Combine ¼ cup of baking soda and 1 tablespoon of water to form a paste.
- Combine 2 tablespoons of ammonia, 2 tablespoons liquid detergent and 1 quart of warm water.

## **FURNITURE POLISH:**

Mix 2 teaspoons lemon oil and 1 pint of mineral oil.

## **AIR FRESHENER/ODOR REMOVAL:**

- Simmer cinnamon sticks or sliced citrus in water.
- Spray a mixture of 1 teaspoon baking soda and 1 teaspoon lemon juice dissolved in 2 cups of hot water.
- Sprinkle carpets with baking soda at bedtime and leave overnight. Vacuum the next day.



### **BATHROOM CLEANER:**

- ½ cup bleach and 1 cup of water, wiped on and left for 5 minutes will remove mildew from tile.
- Vinegar and water removes mildew from shower curtains and water spots from faucets.
- Borax and lemon juice cleans and deodorizes the toilet.
- ¼ cup of cornstarch, ½ cup ammonia and 1 cup vinegar on windows or shower doors for removing rust and lime deposits.

### **DRAINS:**

- For a weekly drain cleaner mix 2 tablespoons of baking soda, ½ cup vinegar with 1 quart of warm water and pour down the drain. Let sit ½ hour and rinse with 3 quarts of hot water.
- To unclog drain: Pour 1/2 cup baking soda down the drain, then 1/2 cup vinegar. After 15 minutes pour in boiling water to clear. Caution: only use this method with metal plumbing. Plastic pipes can melt if excess boiling water is used. Also, do not use this method after trying a commercial drain opener--the vinegar can react with the drain opener to create dangerous fumes.

### **KITCHEN:**

- Baking soda makes a good scouring powder for counters, fine china, coffee pots, and toasters.
- Vinegar in the rinse water removes spots on glassware.
- Oven cleaner: Sprinkle baking soda on stains. 5 minutes later scrub with a damp cloth.

**WINDOW CLEANER:** (Note - remove chemical cleaner with ammonia first, or you may get streaks when using vinegar solutions.)

- ½ cup of vinegar in 1 gallon of water, wiping off with newspaper.
- ¼ cup of ammonia in 1 gallon of water, wiping off with newspaper, again.

### **FLOOR CLEANER:**

- Mix 1 cup vinegar OR ½ cup of ammonia in a bucket of water.
- If there is a wax or dirt buildup, use 2 cups of ammonia per gallon of water and let sit for 20 minutes before rinsing off.
- Dissolve 1/2cup of borax in 2 gallons of hot water.

