Healthy Homes, Healthy Congregations
Minimizing Toxic Chemicals at Home and at Church

Easy Steps to Take

Caring for Babies
- Avoid toys, bottles, teething rings, or sippy cups with #3, 6, or 7 plastics.
- Use glass bottles.
- Avoid powders and talcs.
- Choose cloth or wooden toys.

www.ecocenter.org/healthy-stuff
www.healthychild.org

Clean Up Your Cleaning
- Use cleaners labeled “plant-based,” “biodegradable,” “nontoxic,” or “organic.” Companies such as Seventh Generation, Shaklee, The Honest Company, and Simple Green offer these and are increasingly available in supermarkets.
- You can also make your own cleaning products using vinegar, baking soda, lemon, and washing soda (Borax™),
- Choose spray bottles over aerosol cans.
- Choose unbleached paper products.

www.healthylegacy.org

Personal Care Products
- Reduce the number of products you use—this will limit the number of chemicals to which you are exposed.
- Shop wisely! The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics offers a large database which rates personal care products according to safety.
- Choose products that do not list “fragrance” in the ingredients.

www.safecosmetics.org

Plastic Safety
- Check the number on the bottom of your plastic containers. #1, 2, 4, and 5 are the least toxic for storing and serving food.
- Don’t microwave food in plastic containers—plastics under duress from heat release toxins into your food. Choose ceramic or glass instead.
- Throw out plastic containers that show wear and tear—they are leaching chemicals.

www.who.int/gho/en
(Global Health Observatory)

Watch for Lead
- Test window frames and windowsills for lead in houses built before 1978. Simple lead test kits are available at your local hardware store.
- Children under 6 and pregnant women should be checked for lead poisoning at your local health care provider.

www.epa.gov/lead/

Fish and Mercury
- Children and women of childbearing age should follow guidelines for eating fish with mercury.

www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/fish

Skip the Pesticides
- Whenever possible, purchase organic fruit, vegetables, dairy, and meat, raised without pesticides or herbicides.
- Eliminate indoor pests by improving your food storage habits, caulking entrance holes, installing door sweeps, and repairing screens.

www.foodncws.org

Healthy Homes, Healthy Congregations
is a program of the Minnesota Council of Churches. Contact us for more information on:
- Presentations on toxic chemicals and how to minimize their effects in your home and place of worship.
- Existing faith-based and secular resources to increase your understanding of this issue.
- Referrals to a specific denomination’s worship, Bible Study, and educational resources.
- Referrals to organizations involved in advocacy for environmental issues.
- Training and individual consultation to those who want to develop environmental health programs in their congregations.

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