

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 releases 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.foodnews.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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