

# How to Clean Your Home Using Environmentally Friendly Products

Safe for your Family and Pets and Chemical Free



September 2016

## Table of Contents

<b>Healthy Families</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Clean Homes</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Cleaning your house regularly is very important as it helps keep your family healthy. ....	3
<b>Kitchens</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Stove and Oven	4
How to Clean an Oven:.....	4
Cupboards, Bench Tops and Shelving	5
How to Make Household Spray and Wipe*:.....	5
Floor Cleaning	5
How to Make a Floor Cleaner: .....	5
Fridge	6
How to Remove Bad Smells in the Fridge: .....	6
Saucepans, Frying Pans and Baking Dishes	6
How to Remove Baked on Food and Grease from Pans: .....	6
How to Remove Scale/Mineral Build-up in Kettles: .....	6
Rubbish and Rubbish Bins	6
<b>Bathrooms</b> .....	<b>7</b>
How to Clean Hand Basins, Baths, Shower Recesses and Drains: .....	7
How to Remove Mould from Bathroom Tiles, Shower Recess and Shower Curtains: .....	7
How to Clean a Glass Shower Screens: .....	8
How to Remove Mineral Deposits from Showerheads: .....	8
How to Remove Stains from Grout: .....	8
<b>Toilets</b> .....	<b>8</b>
How to Clean Toilet Seats and Bowls: .....	8
<b>Bedrooms</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Pillowcases and sheets:	9
Bed Mattress	9
Carpets and Mats	9
How to Keep Carpets and Mats Smelling Good:.....	9
<b>Living Areas</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Dusting:	10
Window Cleaning:	10
How to make your own Window cleaner: .....	10
Furniture Cleaning:	10
How to make your own Furniture Cleaner:.....	10
Window Fly-screens	10
Curtains	10

## Healthy Families

Many studies link health issues such as asthma, skin problems and injury to hazards in the home. A hazard is a source of danger and can be anything that increases the risk of harm to people. Many hazards may be present in your home and should be dealt with as soon as possible. Many people in spend over half of each day inside their homes it plays an important role in health.

Everyone deserves to be safe and healthy but some of the most serious health problems for families can start in the home.

A healthy home affects everyone, especially:

**Children** are more likely to be affected by hazards in the home because their bodies are still growing. Children play and crawl on the floor and often put things in their mouth. When compared to adults, relative to their body weight, children eat more food, drink more water, and breathe more air. For this reason children often have greater contact with household sources that may be harmful to their health. Children also depend on adults to make their homes safe.

**Expecting Mothers** should live in a health home. Contaminants such as smoking and tobacco smoke can be harmful to the health of the developing baby.

**Seniors** may be subject to trips and falls in the home. Common objects such as uneven flooring, poor lighting and wet surfaces can all be hazards for injury.

By following the Health Homes Principles shown in this booklet, you can help make your home a healthier place to live. These principles are simple ways to help create a healthier home for you and your family.

## Clean Homes

**Cleaning your house regularly is very important as it helps keep your family healthy.**

Some areas of your home, such as the kitchen benches and sink should be cleaned every day. Other areas can be cleaned weekly (such as floors) or monthly (such as fan blades and wiping out cupboards and draws).

How often the various parts of a house need to be cleaned depends upon:

- How many people live in the house
- How many other people use the house
- How tidy people are and if they clean up after meals
- How many pets belong to the household
- Whether or not there is sickness in the house – scabies or diarrhoea
- Whether there has been a plumbing problem or overflowing sinks and hand basins
- Any other environmental factors – wind blowing dust into the house or wet soil being walked into the house when it rains.

## Kitchens

The cleaning jobs which should be done in kitchen include:

- Washing the dishes up after each meal
- Wash and wipe down the kitchen benches and tables after each use. This keeps bugs and pest away.
- Emptying and washing out the kitchen rubbish bin after you have disposed of the rubbish
- Sweeping and/or mopping the floor
- Wiping the shelves and cleaning the cupboards inside and out
- Cleaning the stove top and oven
- Cleaning out the refrigerator
- Cleaning the walls, windows and brushing flyscreens
- Removing cobwebs



### Make your own cleaning products

You can use environmentally friendly, chemical free products to clean almost everything in your house. Try this helpful hint to make your own cleaning products from Baking Soda (Bi-Carb), white vinegar, salt and other natural products like lemons.



### Stove and Oven

The stove top, inside and outside of the oven should be cleaned regularly to remove food and grease. Use an oven cleaner to remove grease from inside the oven (see helpful hint on the next page for chemical free cleaning). Only use saucepans or proper cooking trays. Don't put plastic or fabric in the oven or on the stove as this can cause a fire and other damage. Never let anyone stand or sit on the open oven door. Make sure oven racks stay in the oven – don't use them for outdoor cooking.

#### How to Clean an Oven:

- The inside can be cleaned by mixing  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of bi-carb soda and 1 litre of water in a bucket.
- Wipe over inside surfaces of the oven with this solution on a damp cloth and/or non-abrasive cloth. Do this regularly.
- Wipe over the outside with a soft cloth or sponge soaked in dishwashing detergent and warm water.
- Wire racks should be removed from the oven and placed in a large container, sink or bath.
- Cover with warm water and add 1 scoop of clothes washing powder. Soak overnight the wire racks with a cloth or sponge.
- Rinse in warm water; allow them to dry and return racks to oven.



*Do this regularly and cleaning up spills as they happen is the easiest way to keep your oven clean.*

## Cupboards, Bench Tops and Shelving

Cupboards, bench tops and shelving can be a breeding place for ants and cockroaches etc., so if you clean them regularly this will prevent them from nesting and breeding.



Bench tops where you prepare food should be washed down after each use. Spray with spray and wipe\* or use warm soapy water and a sponge or damp cloth. Rinse sponge or damp cloth in warm water and wipe bench top again and then dry off

Remove the content of the cupboard and wipe the shelves inside the cupboard using a sponge and household spray and wipe\*. Dry the surface and

replace the content. Keep all dry foods such as sugar, rice, biscuits in a closed container or sealed bags to preserve and keep pests out.

### How to Make Household Spray and Wipe\*:

You can use any spray bottle that has been cleaned for this process:-

- 4 litres of hot water
- 125ml white vinegar
- 4 tablespoons bi-carb soda
- 4 tablespoons liquid soap base (detergent)
- 3 drops of lavender oil
- Mix all together and put in the spray bottle and label.

## Floor Cleaning

Floors should be swept daily to ensure no food scrapes, which may have fallen on the floor, are left overnight. Sweeping the floor will reduce pests like cockroaches and ants. Use a brush to sweep the mess into the pan and empty content into the rubbish bin.

Floors should be mopped at least once a week but if you have many people visiting or living in the house this might need to be done more often.

### How to Make a Floor Cleaner:

(Suitable for vinyl, lino, sealed timber floors and tiles)

Mix in a bucket:

- 1 cup of basic household soap
- 1 cup of hot water
- 2 cups of vinegar
- 3 teaspoons tea tree oil
- 8 litres of hot water

Pour into bottles and label clearly. Add 1 cup of floor cleaner to half a bucket of warm water and mop the floor.



## Fridge

Fridges should be wiped out when spill happen otherwise a monthly clean should be sufficient.

### How to Clean Outside of Fridge:

Wipe over the outside of the fridge with warm soapy water and a damp cloth.

### How to Clean Inside of Fridge:

Remove shelves and wipe the inside especially the rails where the racks fit with warm soapy water or spray and wipe\* and a damp cloth. Wash the shelves in the sink in warm soapy water and a sponge or damp cloth. Dry and replace back in fridge after it has been wipe out.

### How to Remove Bad Smells in the Fridge:

- Place a small container with Bi-carb Soda in it at the back of the fridge. The Bi-carb absorbs any odours. Replace every 3 months.
- Place 3 drops of vanilla essence into 1 cup of warm water. Wipe the inside of the fridge and shelves with this mixture and a damp cloth.

## Saucepans, Frying Pans and Baking Dishes

Burnt food or grease on saucepans, frying pans and baking dishes can build up quickly if not cleaned straight away. The burnt food and grease is a breeding place for bacteria/germs that can give you runny belly. Unclean dishes can also attract cockroaches and mice. They must be cleaned after each use to ensure you and your family do not get sick.

### How to Remove Baked on Food and Grease from Pans:

- Sprinkle bi-carb soda on surface with a little lemon juice or vinegar to cover burnt food or stain and soak for a while.
- Burnt saucepans/pans or baking dishes may require soaking overnight.
- After soaking scrub with a scorer and wash as normal in hot water.

### How to Remove Scale/Mineral Build-up in Kettles:

- Fill with white vinegar and water to cover the electric element
- Boil the kettle and rinse with cold water and use as normal
- Or
- Cut up 1 lemon into pieces and place in kettle filled with water
- Boil the kettle
- Empty kettle and rinse with cold water and use as normal

## Rubbish and Rubbish Bins

When rubbish is not disposed of quickly it can attract pests (flies, mice, cockroaches and ants) and spread germs around your home.

Wrap food scraps in newspaper or place in a plastic bag and put in outside bin. Always close the lid to keep flies and maggots out of your bin.

After the bin has been emptied, wash out with detergent and warm water and dry out or place in the sun with the



lid open or off until dry. Do not let the kids fill with water and play in as bins, if not cleaned, can cause skin sores, ear and eye infections or give the children runny belly.

## Bathrooms

The cleaning jobs which should be done in the bathroom include:

- Cleaning the hand basin, the shower recess and/ or bath (Spray and Wipe recipe page 7)
- Sweeping and mopping the floor (see recipe page 7)
- Cleaning the mirror, cupboards and/or shelves
- Changing or washing the towels and the bath mat
- Cleaning the walls and windows and brushing flyscreens
- Removing cobwebs



### How to Clean Hand Basins, Baths, Shower Recesses and Drains:

- You can use Spray and Wipe (see page 7 for recipe) in hand basins baths and shower recesses to remove dirt and grime.
- Wipe down with a damp cloth to remove the grime and dirt, rinse with water or
- You can sprinkle bi-carb onto a damp cloth (forms a paste when used) and wipe inside the hand basin, bath and the walls and floor of the shower recess
- Remove hair and rubbish from plug holes and drains to prevent blockages
- If drains are blocked remove hair and rubbish then pour half a cup of bi-carb down the drain, followed by one cup of vinegar.
- Leave for a few minutes and flush with boiling hot water
- Mop wet floors daily and wash with floor cleaner regularly (see page 7 for floor cleaner recipe)

*If you clean the bathroom daily you will prevent the spread of germs through the skin and ensure drains do not smell or get blocked.*

### How to Remove Mould from Bathroom Tiles, Shower Recess and Shower Curtains:

- Pour vinegar into a spray bottle.
- Spray vinegar on walls shower curtain and leave for 15 minutes, rinse and let dry.
- If there is stubborn mould/mildew, spray again then wipe with a damp cloth with bi-carb on it.
- Rinse and let dry.
- Pull your shower curtain across so it is open and let dry.
- The shower curtain can also be washed in the washing machine with laundry detergent and a little vinegar.
- Dry shower curtain in direct sunlight on a line

*Spraying vinegar on the shower recess, walls and shower curtain will also prevent mould/mildew forming.*

### How to Clean a Glass Shower Screens:

- Mix one tablespoon of vinegar in water and add to a spray bottle.
- Spray onto glass surfaces and wipe dry.

### How to Remove Mineral Deposits from Showerheads:

- Put vinegar in a plastic bag and tie the bag around the showerhead
- Let the bag sit overnight and rinse the showerhead with water in the morning.



### How to Remove Stains from Grout:

- Make a paste from lemon juice and a teaspoon of cream of tartar. Apply to the area with a toothbrush and brush once stain is gone, rinse with water.

## Toilets

Although vinegar is not registered as a disinfectant with the EPA, it will kill both salmonella and E-coli, two bacteria that can make you and your family sick.

*It is important that you do not use the same cloth used to clean toilets anywhere else in the home as this will spread bacteria that can make you and your family sick. Once you have finished using the cloth put in a bucket of hot boiling water and vinegar and leave for 10 minutes. It now can be washed in the washing machine or rinsed out and put on a line in direct sunlight to dry.*



Toilets should be cleaned daily especially after bowel movements that leave the bowl stained. Toilet seats should be wiped every day.

### How to Clean Toilet Seats and Bowls:

- Clean the **outside** of the bowl, lid and seat by spraying white vinegar followed by a cloth damped with hot water. You can also use spray and wipe (see recipe on page 7)
- Sprinkle bi-carb **inside** the bowl, spray with vinegar and scrub with a toilet brush. (*Do not use this brush anywhere else in the house as it will make you and your family sick*).
- Mop the floor using a floor cleaner (see page 7 for recipe)

*Don't flush anything down the toilet but toilet paper. Disposable nappies, other personal items and rubbish must never be flushed down the toilet. They will block the drain and stop the toilet from working. Wrap disposable nappies and personal items in newspaper or a plastic bag and put in the rubbish bin.*



# Bedrooms

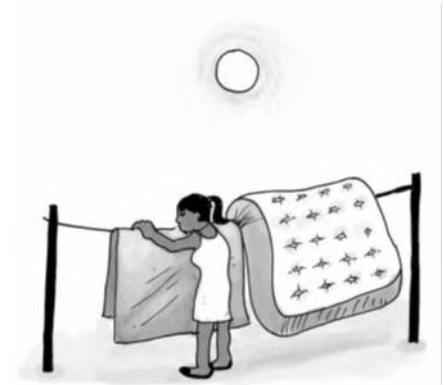
## Pillowcases and sheets:

Pillowcases and sheets should be washed once a week (unless children/babies have soiled them, then on that day). If any family member has an infection such as Trachoma, scabies and head lice their pillowcase must be washed daily to prevent the spread of the infection or head lice.

- Wash sheets and pillowcases in the washing machine in hot water, with soap powder or detergent and a cup of vinegar to kill any bacteria.
- Once washed, hang in direct sunlight until dry.

## Bed Mattress:

If a child or baby has wet the mattress remove any bedding and wash, and place mattress in the sun to dry. Sprinkle bi-carb on dry mattress to remove any smell and then vacuum. This should be done monthly to kill dust mites and any bad smells.



## Carpets and Mats

Sweep floors or vacuumed once a week. Mop with floor cleaner weekly if the floor is vinyl or floor boards or polished concrete. If carpet vacuum only.

## How to Keep Carpets and Mats Smelling Good:

Mix together

- 1 cup of dry herbs (rosemary or lavender),
- 1 teaspoon ground cloves &
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons bi-car soda
- Sprinkle the mixture over the carpet and leave for 1 hour
- Vacuum as per normal

# Living Areas

## Dusting:

Wipe furniture with a soft cloth to remove any dust and dog hairs. This should be done at least once a week. If you have children with asthma this should be done daily as dust mites are a trigger for asthma and other allergies.

## Window Cleaning:

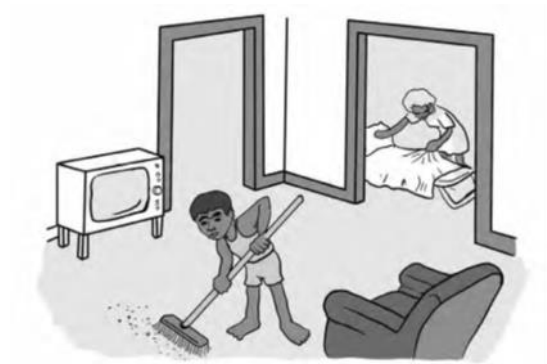
Clean all the windows at least 1-2 times a year. More if you have heavy dust areas like your windows to sparkle.

### How to make your own Window cleaner:

- Place 2 cups of water in a bucket
- Add ½ cup of white vinegar
- Add ½ teaspoon of dishwashing liquid
- Mix all together and pour into a spray bottle and label clearly
- Spray onto windows and wipe with a dry rag or paper towel.

## Furniture Cleaning:

Furniture such as sofas and chairs can get dirty from people sitting on them. Children and babies can leave sticky marks from food and dirty marks from playing outside in the dirt. Cleaning of furniture depends on the number of family members and children you have living in the house.



### How to make your own Furniture Cleaner:

- Put 2 cups of white vinegar in a bucket
- Add ¼ cup (60 ml) olive oil
- Mix well together and put in a spray bottle and label clearly
- Spray onto furniture and wipe over with a damp cloth.

## Window Fly-screens

Window fly-screen should be removed and brushed down at the same time you clean your windows. It is recommended that you do this monthly if you have a family member with asthma or other dust related allergies as dust collect easily on fly-screens.

Wash fly-screens with warm soapy water and wipe around edges with lemon oil on a cloth or lemon peel. This keeps spiders away. Replace flyscreen to keep out the pests.

## Curtains

Curtains also hold dust and should be washed regularly (at least 3-4 times a year) to reduce allergies and asthma attacks.

If you are washing your curtains in the washing machine do not spin dry as this will crease them. Wring out the water by hand until no more water is dripping

from the bottom. Place back on curtain rail and open window to allow air to dry them quickly.

If your curtains are not machine washable (check any labels) you should brush down curtains with a soft brush monthly as this loosens the dust then wipe down with a damp soft cloth. Leave on the curtain rail to dry.

This publication can also be downloaded from Aboriginal Environmental Health Website Toolkit:

[http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/2/1395/2/aboriginal\\_health.pm](http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/2/1395/2/aboriginal_health.pm)