

HEALTHY TOWNS, HEALTHY SCHOOLS

A Greening Guide for Home, School & Work

Clean Water Action and Clean Water Fund are working to protect people from toxic harm by reducing and preventing pollution at its source. According to scientific studies, many common cleaning and pest control products may contain toxic chemicals linked to asthma, immune system and nerve disorders, infertility, birth defects, learning disabilities, behavioral problems, and even cancer (Source: www.beyondpesticides.org/health/index.php).

Children are especially vulnerable due to their size, rapid development, and hand to mouth behaviors. A recent study of preschoolers found 99 percent of kids tested had one or more pesticides in their bodies.

To date, we have assisted 100 communities in the adoption of policies that replace consumer, cleaning, and pest control products with safer alternatives, promote “zero waste,” and/or reduce harmful vehicle exhaust and diesel emissions. Use this guide to start greening your home, school and workplace today. Contact us at 732-963-9714 or njcwa@cleanwater.org for assistance.

GREEN CLEANING



Many common cleaning products are especially harmful to children and custodial staff who use them every day. Since 2006, all of NJ's state properties and authorities are required to purchase and utilize green cleaning products (Executive Order #76). If you want to “go green” in your school and other public facilities however, you must take your own initiative.

Follow the steps below to start green cleaning or download our **HOME SAFE HOME** guide at www.bit.ly/greencleaningguide

1. **Replace your cleaning products** with non-toxic, biodegradable, and phosphate free products. Look for products with recycled content containers and bulk packaging as well as products that use natural fragrances, contain no dyes, chlorine, or hypochlorite and fully disclose or label all active and inert ingredients.
2. **Refrain from using products** containing antimicrobials, which the American Medical Association advises not to use as it is linked to the development of antibiotic resistance. According to the Environmental Working Group, Triclosan, a common ingredient in personal care products, has also been linked to allergies, asthma, decreased fertility, birth defects and cancer. (Source: www.ewg.org/research/healthy-home-tips/tip-5-wash-those-hands-avoid-triclosan)

IDLE FREE NEW JERSEY



Idling your vehicle for more than 3 minutes is against the law in New Jersey. That's because vehicle exhaust not only pollutes our air (it's NJ's leading source of hazardous air pollution), it also puts people, especially children, at risk for asthma and other respiratory ailments, allergies, and possible long term problems.

Follow the steps below to go idle-free or view our **Idle Free New Jersey Guide** at: www.bit.ly/idlefreepledge

1. **Have your school, town or workplace take the No-Idling Pledge.** It's simple. If you are going to be idling more than 30 seconds, turn off your vehicle. It uses less gas. Idling for 3 minutes is equivalent to the gas needed to drive 5 miles.
2. **Educate and enforce:** Place no-idling signs at key locations, especially by bus and school drop-off points.
3. **Download sample no-idling pledges and signs at:** www.bit.ly/idlefreepledge



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PEST CONTROL WITHOUT TOXINS



Many common pest control products contain toxic chemicals which are harmful to our health and environment. To date, we have assisted almost 40 municipalities establish Pesticide Free Zones (PFZ) in parks, school yards and home lawns and dozens of NJ schools adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs that utilize least-toxic pest control options as required by the 2004 NJ School IPM Act. "Pests" are just looking for food, water & warmth. If they don't have access to them, you will have few, if any, "unwanted" pests.

Examples of toxic free pest control options. Download lawn care tips at: www.bit.ly/pesticidefreelawns

- **Ants:** Caulk or fill cracks, molding (often doors, windows, floor) and other entry points. Alternatively, place cayenne, lemon juice, or hot sauce in a line on the floor where you think they are coming from.
- **Pantry moth:** Throw out contaminated foods - flours and grains. Purchase pantry moth trap. Place in kitchen and cabinets. Moths are attracted to the smell in the trap, then get caught on the sticky tape.
- **Yellow jacket & other bees:** Buy a yellow jacket trap or go online to find out how you can make your own. Hang in affected area or near source of bees/wasps. They are attracted to and enter trap and can't get out again.
- **Mosquito:** Eliminate standing water. Use citronella candles. Plant marigolds. Wear light colored clothing and non-DEET repellents as needed. Put frogs in a pond, introduce purple martin bird house, or other mosquito eating critters.
- **Mice:** Find entry point, then close it off. Use a live trap (catch and release far from home) or snap trap.
- **Flies:** Use a fly swatter.
- **Cockroaches:** Buy a "roach motel". Put on flat surface near problem area. Roaches are attracted to its smell, enter "motel," rarely check out due to sticky tape inside.

ZERO WASTE: REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE COMPOST



Zero Waste strategies focus on reusing, recycling and composting materials instead of sending them to landfills or incinerators. Burying and burning waste pollutes our air and water with harmful chemicals linked to global warming and health disorders such as asthma, and cancer. **Adopt a Zero Waste or recycling plan. Follow the steps below or visit our website at: www.bit.ly/zerowastenj**

Reduce / Reuse:

- Buy used, borrow, rent, share, give away or donate items.
- Look for products that use less packaging, more recycled materials, and reusable rather than disposable.
- Turn waste into something new (e.g. convert a soda bottle into a bird feeder).
- Print on recycled paper double sided, make only the copies you need, and send items electronically.

Recycle:

- Ask local Department of Public Works or school/office facility manager what can be recycled and how best to do it. "Single stream" means comingling recyclables in one container. Alternatively, each material must be separated before pick up.
- TerraCycle accepts "hard to recycle" packaging and turns it into new products; but you must collect and send it.
- Buy recycling bins or make your own. Label each bin (best to use both words and pictures of acceptable items). Place bin immediately next to your "trash" can. Have the same set up everywhere.
- Teach everyone (students, employees, supervisors and facility managers) why and how to reduce, reuse and recycle.
- Monitor how well you all are doing. Do refresher trainings as needed. This is important. A recycling bin contaminated by other things may cause it all to be rejected by the hauler and taken away as "trash" instead of recycled.

Compost:

- Recycle yard materials and kitchen scraps by composting in home or garden.
- Composted materials turn into a great soil enhancer. Learn composting tips at: www.bit.ly/njcompost

RESOURCES & INFORMATION

Clean Water Action & Clean Water Fund work side by side to develop strong grassroots environmental leadership and to bring together diverse constituencies to work cooperatively for changes that improve their lives, focused on health, consumer, environmental and community problems. We can work with your community or institution to provide free *Healthy Towns, Healthy Schools* consultation and training upon request and as resources permit. Please contact us today.



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