



NTEF
National Toxic Encephalopathy Foundation
NTEF-USA.Org

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According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) we are exposed to risks everyday. EPA studies of human exposure to air pollutants indicate that indoor air levels of many pollutants may be 2-5 times, and on occasion more than 100 times, higher than outdoor levels. These levels of indoor air pollutants are of particular concern because it is estimated that most people spend as much as 90% of their time indoors. Indoor air pollution is one risk that you can do something about.

The purpose of this month is to create less toxic indoor environments. These changes may appear to be minor but will have an impact on everyone's health if followed as recommended.

For offices:

The cleaning crews are to use only the following the day prior: To dust the desks use a (damp) micro-fiber cloth. If polish is required, they are to substitute the furniture polish with mineral oil.

Carpets are either to just be vacuumed or sprinkled with Arm and Hammer Baking Soda. If at all possible no carpet cleaning is to be done during this event. No floor waxing or polishing prior to the start day of the event. Floors are to be mopped with water and a mild dishwashing detergent.

There are to be no air fresheners to be used anywhere in the building.

If at all possible reschedule pesticide application. Approximately 15% of the pregnant women they studied may have experienced cumulative organophosphate (OP) pesticide exposures exceeding a health protective value. [1]

The day before, employees are to remove all scented products from their work areas, this includes, potpourri, candles, etc. Just placing them in a desk drawer will defeat the purpose of this venture. Any canisters of air fresheners are to be removed from the bathrooms.

- the employees will try to be as fragrance free as possible. (It has been proven that fragrances exacerbate those with asthma and are implicated in triggering migraines)
- try to reduce the amount of photocopying and printing (the hotter a printer gets, the more ultra fine particulates go into the air, laser printers released particles of toner-like material which, if inhaled, could travel deep into the lungs where they could pose a health hazard. These particles were as dangerous as inhaling cigarette smoke) [2]

- have a spray bottle of 5% white vinegar in the employees break room to clean off the counters
- wipe their monitor screens with a micro-fiber cloth
- if an employee is prone to migraines or asthma attacks, have them keep a log to see if they are using their inhaler more/less and if they are having migraines (or less severe ones)
- have the employees note if they feel less tired
- remove all ozone generating machines. The ozone to be effective exceeds safe levels. Ozone reacted with chemicals from new carpet, ozone reduced many of these chemicals, including those which can produce new carpet odor. However, in the process, the reaction produced a variety of aldehydes, and the total concentration of organic chemicals in the air increased rather than decreased after the introduction of ozone [3]
- have each employee bring in a sturdy container filled with Arm and Hammer and place it near their monitor to absorb chemical off-gassing. As monitors, especially the newer ones emit triphenyl phosphate, a chemical known to cause itching and nasal congestion to headaches [4]
- avoid using hand sanitizers. There is no research confirming that they are better than soap and water when used for ordinary use and they release chemicals into the air that aggravate asthma.
- avoid using Wite Out or any other liquid correction product (releases naphtha into the air), use the tape correction product. Light naphtha is made from petroleum and can cause exacerbation of some conditions. [5]

Home:

Rather than using scrubs with chlorine, Bon Ami or Barkeepers Friend accomplishes the same effect with less toxic ingredients.

To spot clean clothes, use a small amount of regular shampoo and use a toothbrush to rub out the spot, then just add to the wash load.

Bleach is basically chlorine which is an irritant, instead use either a non-chlorine bleach or a cup of hydrogen peroxide. Add a cup of white vinegar to the final rinse.

Instead of toxic dryer sheets, a wadded ball of aluminum foil in the dryer will reduce static cling. Which is produced from synthetic fabrics like polyester. Dryer balls will assist with both drying clothes faster and also will soften the towels. Dryer sheets deposit an oily residue that achieves the perception of softened towels. When in fact, this residue actually impacts the towels ability to absorb water.

A mixture of 1 part white vinegar to 3 parts water in a spray bottle, will clean countertops and windows. If you want a 'scent' you can add a few lemon or orange peels.

These are just a few easy and effective alternatives to create a healthier and green home or work environment.

Don't be fooled that because a product 'claims' to be green, that it is actually green and healthy. Simple Green ® just announced that it is removing the reproductive toxicant in their product. Everyone though that this was 'safe'. Sunshine Makers has reformulated its iconic Simple Green all-purpose cleaners to remove 2-butoxyethanol, a reproductive toxin linked to fertility problems and low birth weight. [6]

REFERENCES

- [1] <http://www.ehponline.org/docs/2003/111-13/ss.html>
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