

Leading the way to...

Healthy Schools.®



*... less toxic alternatives for
school maintenance*

Funded by:



SAN MATEO COUNTYWIDE
Water Pollution Prevention Program
Clean Water. Healthy Community. www.flowstobay.org

Produced by: the
watershed
project



WHY *Should you be concerned?*

Safety was cited as the #1 concern among many janitors and building maintenance workers.

Health & Safety

- ▶ Many cleaning products contain **carcinogens, asthmagens** and substances associated with damage to reproductive organs, birth defects, kidney failure, blindness and other health effects. Substances not only can be inhaled, but also absorbed through the skin to damage organs.
- ▶ Recent worker's compensation data shows that approximately **6% of janitors have lost-time injuries** per year.
- ▶ EPA ranks indoor air quality as one of the **top 5 environmental risks**, partially due to the use of conventional cleaning products.
- ▶ **12% of asthma** cases were from exposure to cleaning products at work.
- ▶ Bleaches that contain chlorine become **extremely toxic** when mixed in any wastewater that contain ammonia.

Cleaning products also contribute to environmental pollution by making their way to our creeks and the bay, and are toxic to aquatic organisms.

Environmental Impact

- ▶ In California, nearly **10%** of all non-vehicular VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds) released to the outdoor environment, come from cleaning products.
- ▶ Cleaners containing phosphate **kill marine life** by causing excess algae blooms that rob water of oxygen and block sunlight.
- ▶ Ingredients, such as alkylphenol ethoxylate surfactants, do not break down easily in the environment and may interfere with the hormonal system of exposed organisms.

How Toxic is My Product?

Look for **Signal Words** (Keywords that warn of the potential *immediate* danger level, as tested on a *180lb male*)

SIGNAL WORDS

WARNING or CAUTION	Substance may pose a lesser degree of hazard, even though they may still be flammable, combustible, corrosive, or have harmful vapors.
DANGER	Substance is extremely toxic or highly flammable or corrosive.
POISON	Substance is most toxic and can kill.

Avoid ingredients that pose the **greatest** health hazard.

HIGH RISK INGREDIENTS

<i>Class</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>	<i>Health Hazard</i>
Acids	Hydrochloric Acid Phosphoric Acid	Corrosive. Causes blindness and damages skin.
Caustic	Sodium Hydroxide Sodium Metasilicate Potassium Hydroxide	Corrosive. Causes blindness and can cause severe skin damage.
Solvents	Perchloroethylene Butoxyethanol Ethanolamine Toluene	Causes cancer. Absorbs through skin & poisons liver, kidneys, and fetuses.
Disinfectants	Alkyl Phenol Ethoxylates	Persists in the environment and affects animal hormone systems.
Surfactants	Bleach Urinal Blocks Quaternary-Ammonium Chloride	Corrosive. Bleach mixes with ammonia or acid and causes poisonous gas. Can cause cancer.

What can I do and where can I find out more?

Resources

Fact Sheet: *Environmentally Preferable Janitorial Cleaning Products*

http://www.stopwaste.org/docs/janitorial_cleaning_products.pdf

For a guide to buying green cleaning products, go to:

http://www.responsiblepurchasing.org/purchasing_guides/cleaners/products

To buy green janitorial products online:

<http://www.all-greenjanitorialproducts.com/>

Green Janitorial Service in San Mateo area:

Phone: (415) 642-2100

<http://www.gmgjani.com/>

The Green Cleaning Pollution Prevention Calculator:

<http://www.ofee.gov/janitor/index.asp>

Proper Disposal

Unused portions of cleaning supplies must be dealt with as household hazardous waste!

Household Hazardous Waste Program (San Mateo County):

Very Small Quantity Generator Program: (650) 363-4607

<http://www.smhealth.org/vsqq>

Schools Hazardous Waste Collection, Consolidation, and Accumulation Facility:

More info: <http://www.calcupa.net/programs/hazwaste/FS-02-030.pdf>

Implementation questions: <http://www.desc.ca.gov>

Recycle Works: A Program of San Mateo County

Recycle Works Hotline: 1-888-442-2666

<http://www.recycleworks.org/index.html>

