

## TOXIC CHEMICALS IN HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS

Many people are not surprised to hear that household items like pesticides, cleaning products, and automotive supplies can be harmful to health and should be used with care. But toxic chemicals can be found in a wide range of common household products: for example, furniture and electronics may be treated with toxic flame retardants (PBDEs), plastic toys may contain phthalate plasticizers and lead, and baby bottles may contain the endocrine disruptor BPA (bisphenol-A). The toxicity of chemicals used in household products varies widely and toxic-free products are available, but chemicals linked with long-term health effects (such as hormone disruption, asthma, and neurological effects) have been detected not only in products themselves, but also in house dust and in people's bodies.



This Toxipedia section provides links to information on toxic chemicals in various types of household products and on how to choose safer alternatives. Our hope is that this will help guide consumers through some of the many resources available on this complex and important topic. We do not endorse recommendations made by any entity we link to.

### Guidelines on Choosing Safer Products

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We have prepared three tables with links to product information. Please choose the table for the product you are interested in or [start browsing](#).

**Table 1:** Automotive Products, Art and Office Supplies, Building Materials, Children's Products, Cleaning Products

**Table 2:** Clothing and Apparel, Cosmetics and Personal Care Products, Electronics, Food Storage and Kitchenware, Furniture and Mattresses

**Table 3:** Laundry and Dry Cleaning, Lawn and Garden Products, Other, Tableware, Toys

*Note:* Resources on institutional purchasing include the [Responsible Purchasing Network](#), [Clean Production Action](#), and the City of Seattle's Office of Sustainability and Environment's information on [sustainable purchasing](#).

**NEW!** Also see our page on toxic chemicals in [diapers](#).

We also have an article on [air fresheners](#).

## General Resources

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- ♣ [Environmental Working Group](#): nonprofit organization that provides information on toxic ingredients in consumer products (such as personal care products and food) and advocates for national policies that protect environmental health.
- ♣ [Green Guide](#): provides consumer resources on choosing everyday products made of environmentally preferable materials, including but not necessarily focusing on products containing less-toxic ingredients. (Formerly Mothers & Others for a Livable Planet, now part of National Geographic.)
- ♣ [HealthyStuff.org](#): tests consumer products for toxic ingredients and provides results in a searchable database, with a focus on children's products. Currently contains testing results for over 5000 products. A project of the Center for Health, Environment & Justice and its partner organizations.
- ♣ [NIH Household Products Database](#): provides information on potential health effects (usually short-term) of a wide range of household products, with a focus on cleaners, hobby and home repair supplies, and auto products. Part of the U.S. National Institutes of Health.
- ♣ [Pollution in People](#): provides tips on choosing less-toxic consumer products in nine categories. The tips accompany a study by the Toxic-Free Legacy Coalition investigating toxic chemicals found in the bodies of ten residents of Washington State.
- ♣ [Washington Toxics Coalition](#): nonprofit that provides information on safer alternatives to toxic chemicals in consumer products and advocates for state policies that protect environmental health as part of the national Safer States network. Fact sheets, FAQs, and shopping guides offer general information as well as information specifically on children's products.
- ♣ [Healthy Home Focus](#): provides practical resources on choosing safer products and reducing toxic exposures in the home, including the Common Sense Guide for Consumers. Helpful quick tips and links to additional information, with a personal touch.

Source : <http://www.toxipedia.org/display/toxipedia/Toxic+Chemicals+in+Household+Products>