

## What steps can I take to reduce my exposure to toxic chemicals?

- ◆ Choose Non-Toxic Household Cleaners. Look for companies that state that they **list all ingredients** on the label and read it carefully.
- ◆ Look for products that are certified by **Green Seal**, an independent, non-profit organization whose standards include the requirement that “the undiluted product shall not contain any ingredients that are carcinogens, mutagens or reproductive toxins.”
- ◆ **Make Your Own** Non-Toxic Cleaners. Recipes can be found online!
- ◆ You can minimize your exposure to contaminated household dust by **damp mopping and dusting** and by using a **vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter**.

### More Information:

<http://www.akaction.org/>

Chickaloon Village Traditional Council  
PO Box 1105  
Chickaloon, AK 99674  
(907) 745-0749

Environmental Stewardship  
Department  
Sutton, AK  
(907) 745-0737

**Jessica Winnestaffer**  
Environmental Stewardship Director  
[jessica@chickaloon.org](mailto:jessica@chickaloon.org)

**Gene Agnew**  
Environmental Stewardship Assistant  
Director  
[genea@chickaloon.org](mailto:genea@chickaloon.org)

Chickaloon Village  
Traditional Council  
(Nay'dini'aa Na')

## Cleaning Products: Toxic Chemicals in Your Home



Environmental Stewardship  
Department

## Why do I need to be concerned about household cleaners?

We buy household cleaners to create a healthy environment, yet some cleaning products contain harmful chemicals. These include chemicals that are known or suspected to cause cancer, reproductive damage, depression of the central nervous system, skin irritation, asthma, thyroid disruption, and liver and kidney damage.



Cleaning product ingredients are not evaluated for safety before going to market and companies are not required to list all ingredients on their product labels. Even those products advertised as “natural,” “green,” or “organic” may contain harmful substances. Unless you know exactly what is in a product, you cannot know for sure whether it is safe or toxic.

## What ingredients should I avoid and why?

### Alkyl phenol ethoxylates (APEs) & Nonylphenol ethoxylates (NPEs)

- ◆ Found in laundry detergents, stain removers, and all-purpose cleaners.
- ⇒ Reduce embryo survival in fish and alter tadpole development.

### Diethanolamine (DEA)

- ◆ Found in a wide range of cleaning products.
- ⇒ Skin and respiratory toxicant.

### Glycol ethers

- ◆ Found in glass cleaners and all purpose spray cleaners.
- ⇒ Associated with low birth weight.

### Monoethanolamine

- ◆ Found in oven cleaners, tub and tile cleaners, laundry pre-soaks, floor strippers, and carpet cleaners.
- ⇒ May cause liver, kidney and reproductive damage, as well as depression of the central nervous system. Inhalation of high concentrations can cause dizziness or even coma.

### Phthalates

- ◆ Carriers of fragrance in glass cleaners, deodorizers, laundry detergents and fabric softeners.
- ⇒ Linked to adverse effects on male children, reduced sperm count in adult men, and increased allergic symptoms and asthma in children

### Xylene

- ◆ Solvent found in some spot removers, floor polishes and ironing aids.
- ⇒ Neurotoxin that can lead to memory loss, loss of consciousness and even death in extreme exposures. It may damage liver, kidneys, and the developing fetus.

### Triclosan

- ◆ Antibacterial agent used mostly in personal care products, but also found in some cleaning products and dish soap.
- ⇒ Skin irritant, suspected carcinogen, affects reproduction, can disrupt thyroid hormone, alter development, and impair important functions at the cellular level.

Avoid ALL aerosol products which may contain **propane**, **formaldehyde**, **methylen**, and **nitrous oxide**.