

How To Have A Greener, Healthier Home

(NAPSA)—According to the U.S. EPA, most of us spend about 90 percent of our time indoors, thinking we're as snug as a bug. Unfortunately, things aren't as tranquil as they seem. The average American home can contain as much as 100 pounds of household hazardous waste. Instead of tacking up a "restricted area" sign on your front door, take a pledge to green your home. It's easier than you think and can increase your health, reduce waste and save energy.

Here are some quick and dirty (or shall we say clean?) tips to detox your home and, indirectly, your body (as well as your family's and pets'):

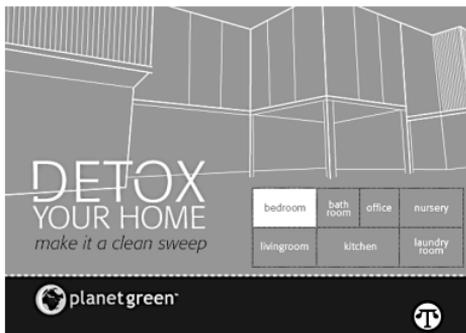
- Ditch dishpan hands and use the dishwasher instead. It can save 5,000 gallons of water annually. As if you needed an excuse to let the dishes pile up!

- Keep your home's air-conditioning filters clean. It increases its efficiency, saving 350 pounds of carbon dioxide from escaping into the air per year, and prevents other pesky particles from entering your lungs. Now that's a breath of fresh air.

- Opt for eco-friendly laundry detergents to get clean without making planet Earth want to scream. They work just as well as conventional suds but are gentler on skin and our waterways, as they don't contain the same harsh chemicals. Lather up!

- Avoid products with artificial fragrances, which lurk in everything from air fresheners to surface cleaners. It's one of the easiest ways to reduce your family's exposure to harmful toxins. Give your nose a break with fresh-cut flowers and biodegradable all-purpose sprays.

- Use candles made from soy or beeswax instead of paraffin,



Inside air can be five times worse than outdoors. Fortunately, help is available on a new Web site where you can get advice about how to "detox" your home.

which emits sooty particles. It's a surefire way to spice up your home without letting your lungs take the heat.

Here are some refreshing and inspiring facts about what we can do to keep our planet mean, clean and green:

- If every household in America used just one package of recycled-content napkins, we could save 1 million trees.

- A simple solution of vinegar and water is a great alternative to conventional household cleaners, which contain loads of nasty chemicals. This 100 percent harmless concoction works wonders on quick spills and most cleanups.

PlanetGreen.com offers a step-by-step guide to a healthier home base with video, commentary and in-depth articles. The www.planetgreen.com/home-detox site features a room-by-room guide designed to help us whip our homes into shape. Planet Green resident and green-living expert Sara Snow, and the green-scene insiders at PlanetGreen.com, offer up the latest information and advice.

You can also log on to Planet Green's sister site, www.TreeHugger.com, to explore in-depth, eco-friendly news and information to help "green" your home.