REDUCE THE CHEMICALS YOU USE IN YOUR HOME

NATURAL CLEANING WITHOUT POLLUTING THE RIVER

WHAT GOES DOWN THE DRAIN DOESN'T JUST DISAPPEAR

Every cleaning product we use in our kitchens and bathrooms ends up going down the sink, plughole or toilet. Complex chemicals that kill bacteria in the kitchen, also kill dragonflies in the river. Complex chemicals that dissolve limescale also dissolve fish.

Many everyday cleaning jobs can be done with a few household ingredients. This cuts the toxic chemicals we use at home and cuts the amount entering the sewage system or our septic tank. It also means buying fewer plastic bottles and saves money! (These household ingredients, like vinegar, occur naturally and are far less dangerous to our rivers and the creatures that live in them.)

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

Never mix acids (e.g. vinegar, lemon, citric) with bleach/hypochlorite cleaners. This can release chlorine gas.

Even natural chemicals can be harmful when concentrated. Wear protective gloves and keep rooms ventilated when cleaning.

Cleaning is not disinfecting: don't rely on vinegar and lemon where full disinfection is needed for food hygiene or medical infection control.

DO USE: THESE ACIDS – but NOT on natural stone and other acid sensitive surfaces

WHITE VINEGAR (cleaning grade)

Good for: Limescale, soap scum and greasy marks on taps, mirrors, shower screens, windows and stainless steel (including pans/hobs). Mix with salt (or as a paste with salt & flour) to clean copper/pewter.
How to use: dilute with water or use neat. Spray or wipe, leave for stubborn stains, wipe and rinse (or wipe and polish for metal/glass).

LEMON JUICE or lemons

Good for: Limescale, mild stains, odours on baths, taps and sinks.
How to use: either dilute with water or use neat. Wipe and rinse thoroughly to remove any sticky residue.

CITRIC ACID

Good for: Stubborn limescale, kettles and shower heads.
How to use: Dissolve in warm water and use as a descaler. (e.g. boil the kettle with a spoonful of citric acid. Leave shower heads to sit in citric acid dissolved in warm water. Rinse thoroughly.)

DO USE: THESE ALKALIS – but don't confuse washing soda with bicarbonate of soda

BICARBONATE OF SODA (NOT baking powder or washing soda)

Good for: Grease, sinks, baths, ovens, stubborn grime and odours.
How to use: Sprinkle on a damp cloth or make a paste with a little water. Rub gently and rinse. For ovens, leave the paste for several hours before wiping away.

VEGETABLE or LIQUID CASTILE SOAP (use palm oil free makes)

Good for: Everyday cleaning, floors, worktops, greasy surfaces.
How to use: A little in warm water will do most household cleaning.

WASHING SODA / SODA CRYSTALS (NOT bicarb or caustic soda)

Good for: Heavy grease, bins, greasy floors, tough cleaning jobs.
How to use: Dissolve a little in warm water following the packet instructions. Always wear gloves and protect eyes, clothes, etc.

AVOID

BLEACH (often in toilet and floor cleaners, bleach sprays) – bleach breaks down and reacts with other chemicals to form persistent toxins such as dioxin.

OPTICAL BRIGHTENERS in your washing powder/liquid – they cause chronic toxicity in rivers, leading to hormone and oxygen imbalance in fish.

PARABENS and ISOTHIAZOLINONES (in many cleaning and laundry conditioning products) – they damage fertility, immunity and growth in fish/invertebrates.

PHOSPHATES (in some toilet cleaners, limescale removers, detergents and sugar soap). Look instead for products that say 'phosphate free' or use our greener suggestions on the left.

PFAS ('Forever Chemicals' in many stain removers, laundry products, rinse aids, polishes, floor wax and water-resistant fabric finishes). Avoid ingredients starting with 'fluoro' or 'perfluoro'. Look instead for 'PFAS free' or use our greener suggestions on the left.

PHTHALATES (used with fragrances in cleaning products and detergents). They damage fertility, development and resistance to disease in river animals. Look instead for 'Fragrance free', 'Parfum free' or 'Phthalate free', or use our greener suggestions on the left.

Supermarkets stock many greener cleaning alternatives, such as Ecover, Method, Miniml or water-safe specialist goods like OceanSaver, Bio-D and Delphis Eco. Some have their own greener brands such as Sainsbury's Greencare and Morrisons' Eco.

Waste Not Want Not on South Street in Bridport does refills of a wide range of greener cleaning products.
You can also buy online from companies like: Big Green Smile, Ethical Superstore, Miniml, OceanSaver, Bio-D and

www.riverchar.org/cutchemicals

REDUCE THE PESTICIDES YOU USE ON YOUR PETS

KEEP PETS HEALTHY WITHOUT POLLUTING THE RIVER

Pesticides are used to help prevent and control flea and tick infestations in domestic cats and dogs. But there are significant environmental hazards. Sprays and 'Spot-on' treatments contain chemicals that wash off your pet onto people, clothes, bedding and directly into vegetation and river/pond water.

Modern treatments are highly toxic to parasites on your pets. So they are also highly toxic to all insects when they get into the river or into the wider environment. And they are toxic to birds, fish and animals that eat insects.

DO USE: THESE SAFER TREATMENTS

- CHEWABLE TABLETS, in particular the following brands that contain the highly effective Isoxazolines:
- Bravecto (fluralaner) for dogs
- Easecto (sarolaner) for dogs
- Credelio (lotilaner) for cats

ASK YOUR VET to prescribe these or similar treatments. DO NOT accept 'Spot-ons' or sprays.

These products are as potent as the neonicotinoids and Fipronil (in red on the right) but – given as a chewable tablet – they will only end up in the environment via faeces/urine. Avoid the poison entering the environment by picking up your pet's poo, managing your cat's litter tray and disposing of everything in your 'black bin' – NOT down the toilet. NOTE: do not use these products in 'spot-on' form.

AVOID

- Neonicotinoids, including Imidacloprid and Thiomethoxam (sold as 'Advantage', 'Seresto', 'Advocate')
- Fipronil (sold as 'Frontline')
- Avermectins (sold as 'Stronghold', 'Ivomec').
- Any other 'Spot-on's or sprays.

Other things you can do:

1. Vacuum regularly around skirtings and where your pets lie or sleep. This removes fleas and their eggs and larvae.
2. Remove ticks using tools available from vets/pet shops.
3. Wash pet bedding every 1-2 weeks at 40-60˚C to kill eggs/larvae.
4. Proprietary powders/essential oils may help deter infestations but are unlikely to kill fleas/ticks and can be poisonous to cats.
5. **Deworming:** Many good de-wormers have relatively little effect on the environment. ASK YOUR VET.

REDUCE THE CHEMICALS YOU USE IN YOUR GARDEN

KEEPING A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN WITHOUT POLLUTING THE RIVER

Gardening without chemical herbicides, fungicides, pesticides and artificial fertilisers just means doing things differently! Follow these tips to replace control with resilience. Treat your garden as an ecosystem not a battlefield, then nature will do the hard work for you.

DO TRY TO:

CREATE HEALTHY LIVING SOIL

Use mulch, compost (ideally homemade) and manure. Do minimal digging. Invertebrates, fungi and bacteria in this soil will support healthy growth.

CREATE COMPLEX HABITATS

Aim for a variety of native shrubs and perennials, areas of short and long grass, bare soil and a pond – even in a small garden. Leave old stems, roots, rotten wood and leaves.

UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF INVERTEBRATE 'PESTS' IN YOUR GARDEN

Tolerate 'pests' and see what their role is. Woodlice, earwigs, beetles, slugs, snails, aphids, caterpillars are all key to the ecosystem, creating healthy soil and providing food for other wildlife. Many 'pests' are also important pollinators.

USE MANUAL INTERVENTION:

Inspect regularly and remove pests or disease by hand, not with chemicals. Then birds, bats, hedgehogs, toads and spiders will come into your garden and help you.

AVOID:

Chemical Insecticides including:
Provanto ~ BugClear Ultra ~ Resolva Bug Killer

Weedkillers including:
Roundup ~ Resolva ~ Weedol

Fungicides including:
Fungus Clear Ultra ~ Provanto Fungus Fighter Plus ~ RoseClear ~ Mildew Clear for Edibles

www.riverchar.org/cutchemicals