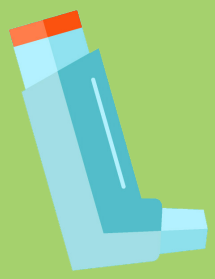
Hazardous Waste Management Program

Cleaning & disinfecting for a healthy home

Follow these recommendations on safer cleaning methods and disinfecting for germs to help prevent the spread of disease.

General cleaning followed by disinfecting can remove germs that cause diseases like COVID-19. Approaching your cleaning by using the least hazardous cleaning products and methods is the best way to keep everyone in your home safe.

Know the risks



Asthma
(If preexisting)

Irritated Skin

Many cleaning supplies and household products contain chemicals that can irritate the eyes or throat, cause headaches, and other health problems like asthma. This is due to breathing in fumes from products like bleach or absorbing chemicals in your skin. Switching to a safer cleaning method or product can help avoid these health risks.

Irritated Eyes

Headache

Avoid products with the words **CAUTION**, **WARNING**, **DANGER**, or **POISON** on the label.

These will contain the toxic chemicals that are harmful to your health. Instead opt for products that have a label that says EPA "Safer Choice" or "Cradle to Cradle." These products are less toxic and pose less risk to your health.

Use less toxic cleaning products

You can make household cleaners from common ingredients like baking soda, vinegar, dish soap, and water.

These can be combined and used to clean most surfaces in your home. Check out a safer cleaning recipe from Hazardous Waste Management Program by visiting Hazardous Waste haz-wastehelp.org.

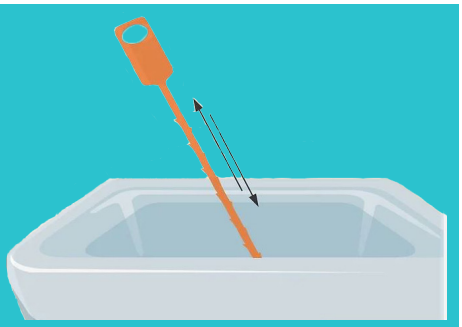
Use an EPA-registered disinfectant to ensure it is effective for killing germs.

For less toxic disinfectants look for products that say **CAUTION** rather than **WARNING**, **DANGER** or **POISON** on the label. Other less toxic options include products that contain ethanol, isopropanol (isopropyl alcohol), hydrogen peroxide, L-lactic acid, and citric acid.

On average, one out of every three cleaners at the store is labeled with DANGER or POISON. Knowing about chemical hazards and safer alternatives can help you clean more safely and effectively.

Get Safer Cleaning Tools

Sponge



Drain Cleaning Tool

Use water or a less toxic cleaning product with these to clean most surfaces.

Microfiber Cloth

Scrub Brush

Clean Before You Disinfect

1. Start with cleaning

Cleaning removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Start by using soap, your less toxic cleaning solution, water and friction to physically remove dirt and germs from surfaces.

2. Put on protective wear

Take steps to protect your skin and eyes by wearing gloves and some form of eye protection, preferably safety glasses. Protect your lungs by opening windows to give yourself fresh air.

3. After cleaning disinfect

Disinfecting destroys almost all infectious germs by chemical action, when used as the label directs. It has no effect on dirt, soil, or dust. After cleaning a surface, use an EPA-registered disinfectant appropriate for the surface. Wipe down those surfaces again.

Learn more about safer cleaning & how to protect your family from COVID-19

For safer cleaning and disinfectant tips visit

Hazardous Waste Management Program of King County
Hazwastehelp.org

For COVID-19 updates and resources for King County visit

Public Health-Seattle & King County
www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health

For information about disinfectant for use against COVID-19 visit

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
www.epa.gov/coronavirus

Hazardous Waste Management Program

Questions? Contact

Baba Badru
Residential Services Program Manager
babatunde.badru@kingcounty.gov
(206) 263-1555

Julia Singer
Residential Services Educational Outreach Programs
julia.singer@kingcounty.gov
(206) 263-1670

Alternate Formats Available 206-263-8899 or
TTY Relay: 711

LHWMP_0343 April 17, 2020