

February Newsletter

What is Green Cleaning?

Green cleaning means using products that have fewer environmental costs in more environmentally-friendly ways in order to achieve the cleaning purposes. Green cleaning products avoid the use of toxic chemicals.



Why is Green Cleaning Important In Schools?

1. Some of the chemicals in regular cleaning products can cause skin or throat irritation or headaches.
2. Green cleaning products typically have neutral pH level, low fragrance, low volatile organic compounds. They can protect the health of students, teachers, and custodians.
3. Using green cleaning products can increase the lifespan of facilities.

For more information:

<https://www.epa.gov/schools-healthy-buildings/cleaning-effectively-healthy-school-environment>

Green Cleaning in the Arlington Public Schools

In 2012, the Arlington School Committee adopted a [policy on Green Cleaning](#). This policy applies to custodial cleaning of the school buildings. Students, teachers, and parents have also wanted to bring green cleaning to the classrooms. As of the 2017-2018 school year, Brackett Elementary School replaced classroom disinfectant wipes with green cleaners that were made by their Green Team (see sample recipes below).

Green Cleaning Recipes from Brackett Green Team

CLASSROOM GREEN CLEANER

½ cup white vinegar

1 ½ cups water

10 drops of lemon oil (tea tree oil has disinfectant properties but some people are sensitive to it).

**This can also be used as a leave-on [Tub and Shower Spray](#) to prevent mildew

WINDOW AND GLASS CLEANER

1 cup white vinegar

1 cup water

splash of lemon juice or tiny squirt of castile soap

ALL PURPOSE DISINFECTANT SPRAY

1 cup white vinegar

1 cup water

1 tsp castile soap or dish detergent

10-20 drops essential oil (10 drops tea tree oil and 10 drops of lemon oil)—avoid tea tree oil if any family member has a sensitivity to it

ALL-PURPOSE COUNTER SPRAY

2 Tablespoons of baking soda,
hot water

½ teaspoon dish soap, and

½ cup white vinegar

Using a funnel, put baking soda and 1 cup hot water into spray bottle. Stir/shake till the baking soda dissolves. Add the dish soap and vinegar and a few drops of essential oil if desired. Top off with another cup of warm water.

FLOOR CLEANER

½ cup white vinegar

½ cup Isopropyl alcohol
½ cup water
3-5 drops Ivory dish detergent
5-10 drops of essential oil (lemon, peppermint, etc.)

Monthly Challenges

---Research about products that meet the [Safer Choice Standard](#).

---Try to create your own homemade natural cleaning products using materials such as baking powder, lemon, and vinegar (see recipes above).

---Research an event other schools or organizations have done that can be associated with green cleaning. Think about how your school can implement green cleaning.

Useful Link: ---> <https://greencleanschools.org/>



Junyi(Michelle) He

---Senior at Arlington High School. Interested in science, especially biology, and is currently taking Environmental Science course.