Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics
847-434-4000
aap.org
Offers information about childcare, including poison-proofing your home

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
atsdr.cdc.gov
Offers links to programs, activities, and information sources related to children's environmental health

Pennsylvania Resources Council
412-488-7490
prc.org
Provides information for HHW management in Pennsylvania

Pittsburgh Poison Center
800-222-1222
chp.edu/CHP/poisoncenter
Provides free poison information 24 hours a day

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
800-438-2474
epa.gov
Offers information on hazardous substances in your home, as well as alternatives to household cleaners

In Partnership With

Allegheny County Health Department
achd.net/recycling

Armstrong County Recycling Center
co.armstrong.pa.us/recycling

Beaver County Department of Waste Management
beavercountypa.gov/Depts/WasteMgmt

Cambria County Solid Waste Authority
cambriarecycles.org

Washington County Planning Commission
co.washington.pa.us/177/recycling

PA DEP Recycling Hotline
800-346-4242

OUR MISSION: To lead and promote individual and collective actions to preserve Pennsylvania’s environmental resources for each generation.

Pennsylvania Resources Council
Working to protect the environment since 1939

PRC WEST 64 South 14th Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203
PRC EAST 3606 Providence Road, Newtown Square, PA 19073

www.prc.org

SAFE & HEALTHY

Kids

A guide to protecting children from chemicals in the home
Look around your home and you may discover as much as 100 pounds of “household hazardous waste” (HHW) stored in your basement, garage, kitchen, bathroom, and garden shed. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, an average home can easily accumulate this amount of cleaners, pesticides, paints, automotive fluids, and other products containing hazardous components. While such products are safe to use if proper precautions are taken, problems generally arise when you use, store, or dispose of products improperly.

Manage your HHW responsibly:

Shopping – Purchase the least toxic product available and estimate the quantity in advance to avoid leftover toxic materials.

Storage – Label all containers and keep all chemicals out of the reach of children and pets.

Nontoxic Alternatives – Make safe cleaning solutions at home from products such as baking soda, borax, and vinegar.

Collection Events – Gather products and drop off at a household chemical collection event.

Did you know...

- Many household chemicals that pose increased risk to children are brightly colored and sweet-smelling. These chemicals include medications, vitamins, alcohol, and tobacco products.
- Children eat, drink, and breathe more than adults in relation to their body size. Therefore, they are often more susceptible than adults to toxic fumes and household chemicals.
- Children breathe in air that is much closer to the ground. Concentrations of pollutants settle out of the air and stay near the floor, causing children to breathe more chemical vapors.
- The skin of infants and children is more permeable than adults and rapidly absorbs environmental toxins.
- Children often put objects in their mouths, making them susceptible to accidental ingestion of household chemicals.

TOP TIPS for Safeguarding Children

1. Dispose of Excess Toxic Materials
   Call the PA DEP Recycling Hotline at 800-346-4242 to learn about drop-off locations near you.

2. Read the Label
   Read instructions and note expiration dates. Look for words such as “poison” and “danger.” Use each product properly, according to the instructions.

3. Use Original Containers
   Never put poisonous products in containers once used for food, such as bottles, cans, or cups. Children may be confused and accidentally consume poison.

4. Avoid Mixing
   Do not mix substances together unless a label states it is safe to do so. Combining household chemicals can create unsafe byproducts, such as chloramine gas from mixing bleach and ammonia.

5. Keep Chemicals in a Safe Place
   Store all chemicals out of the reach of children and pets.

6. Label Products
   Ensure all products are clearly labeled, including homemade cleaning formulas.

7. Use Adequate Ventilation
   Be aware of the dangers of toxic fumes when using HHW in enclosed spaces such as bathrooms and garages.

8. Use Nontoxic Alternatives
   Purchase nontoxic alternative products or make your own at home from materials such as baking soda and vinegar.

9. Purchase Only What You Need
   Estimate the quantity you need so you don’t end up with large amounts of leftover toxic materials.