

Revolutionising home hygiene with eco-friendly products

Increasingly, environmental awareness and personal wellbeing are at the forefront of consumers' choices when they decide what to put into their trolleys and what to bring into their homes.

By Ivy Carruth.

The traditional arsenal of chemical-laden cleaning products is being replaced by a desire for safer, healthier and more environmentally responsible alternatives. This growing trend reflects a larger movement toward sustainable living and a deep concern for the impact of chemicals on our families and on the planet.

Why some are choosing differently

Some conventional cleaning products contain a cocktail of synthetic chemicals that deliver effective results but can come at a steep cost to human health and the environment. Harsh ingredients like ammonia, bleach and phthalates (plasticisers) can emit harmful fumes, trigger allergies and contribute to indoor air pollution. Unfortunately, these chemicals often find their way into streams and other waterways, disrupting ecosystems and potentially harming aquatic life.

Embracing non-toxic alternatives

The shift moving towards non-toxic cleaning signifies a proactive choice to safeguard personal well-being and the environment. Consumers are now seeing greater availability of products that rely on natural, biodegradable ingredients like vinegar, baking soda, essential oils and plant-based surfactants. These alternatives maintain cleanliness while also granting the peace of mind that comes from knowing the well-being of their loved ones and the planet are being prioritised.

Informed consumers

As the demand for non-toxic cleaning ingredients and ready-made products continues to rise, buyers have become more discerning in the effort to bring the right products into their homes. Reading labels, using mobile apps for comparison and seeking third-party certifications like Clean & Green or Ecocert. These tools allow consumers to make informed choices that align with their values and health needs.

What are the benefits?

Healthier homes: Particularly important for individuals with allergies, asthma or sensitivities to certain chemicals, non-toxic cleaning ingredients contribute to better indoor air quality reducing the risk of respiratory issues or contact with allergens. Synthetic scents can also cause migraines and rashes, so products fragranced with natural plant-based essential oils are a better choice for those affected.

Reduced environmental impact:

By making one simple but meaningful choice, consumers are supporting environmentally responsible practices. Less likely to pollute bodies of water and oftentimes less bulky in non-renewable packaging, the results of choosing non-toxic go far beyond our own homes.

Improved air quality:

Traditional cleaning products often release volatile organic compounds (VOCs) into the air, while non-toxic cleaning products do not. They may or may not be detectable by odour, and of course, the risk of health effects from

inhaling any chemical depends on how much is in the air, how long and how often a person breathes it in.

Sustainable living: Choosing non-toxic cleaning ingredients aligns with a sustainable lifestyle, as these products often come in eco-friendly packaging, are biodegradable and have minimal impact on the environment.

Pet and child safety: Families with pets and young children, as those with elderly or immuno-compromised members may find it less worrisome to worry about accidental exposure to toxins.

Even professional cleaning companies are getting into the game and featuring an eco-friendly ethos as their point of difference when it comes to service, and business is brisk. Lauren Schwartz of Maid2Match cleaners based in Brisbane (but with offices nationwide) shared a few of her favourite eco-products. She also recommends leaving these out for your own cleaners if they use products that aren't environmentally sound.

1. Zero Co Australia

Formulated with plant-based ingredients that are vegan, cruelty-free and septic safe, their mission is to 'untrash the planet'. Refillable 'forever bottles' of ocean plastic are colourful and compact.

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2. biome

B-certified to indicate their commitment to people and a better planet, biome products are natural and sustainable, made without palm oil and toxins. They're also completely free of artificial fragrances and preservatives.

3. Koala Eco

Powerfully plant-based, these products are Aussie made and scented with Australian essential oils. They're certified allergy safe, biodegradable, vegan, and contain zero phosphates or masking agents. Plus, their packaging is gorgeous.

4. koh

For cleaning benchtops to loos, koh's reusable, recyclable and refillable products are eco-certified through Good Environmental Choice Australia. They're also all unscented for those sensitive to odours or for those who wish to add their own scent with essential oils.

5. ENJO Australia

With a bit of a cult following, it's 'cleaning without chemicals' using the wet, wipe and dry method. Simply use water and one of ENJO's special fibre technology cloths or sponges to clean without toxic liquids or scents.

6. Nature's Organics

Nature's Organics make some of the most affordable and accessible eco-products on the market including earth choice, UNDO this mess and My Soda. Pioneers in the eco-space, they've been in business since 1981, long before all the cool kids were doing it.

7. Pleasant State

Think zero single-use plastics, and instead, a concentrated cleaning bar that is simply dropped into hot water and stored in a reusable spray bottle. The Queensland-based company's ethical ethos is a testament to the power a no-tox solution can pack.

8. Happy Human

Cleaning tabs come in biodegradable sachets, and are added to water for a fizzy clean without toxic ingredients. Beautifully scented with tea-tree,

lavender or citrus, customers love the antibacterial properties and the streak-free shine.

9. HealthClean

Free of harsh chemicals, pollutants and scents, these products are for home consumers and commercial purposes. Super concentrated, a little goes a long way, and product labels are designed to be removed before recycling the bottle for an extra eco-friendly benefit.

There are many more great Aussie products on the market.

The forecast

International business analysis consultants, Straits Research tell us that the 'Australian natural household cleaners market witnessed significant growth in the past and is expected to grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of around 12.9 per cent during the forecast period (2023-2030).' As far as specifics go, surface cleaners dominate the market by product, bathroom dominates the market by application and supermarkets/hypermarkets dominate the market by distribution channel.

Not only is the public demanding a less toxic clean at home, but office buildings and commercial retailers are choosing to hop aboard the clean and green bandwagon and are choosing specialty

cleaners who work solely with toxin-free solutions. Berkshire Hathaway's business wire reports, 'The high demand for sustainable products is fueling market growth. Increasing consumer concerns about the adverse effects of harsh chemicals are driving the demand for eco-friendly and organic cleaning products. Studies have shown that around 30 per cent of consumers are willing to pay premium prices for products that deliver on sustainability claims.'

Next steps

By curating a diverse selection of eco-friendly cleaning products, retailers can attract and retain eco-conscious consumers to create a competitive edge in the market. Additionally, effective marketing and education about the benefits of these products, such as a reduced environmental footprint and safer ingredients can enhance brand reputation. Retailers who do are strategically poised to harness the burgeoning wave of eco-friendly cleaning products, and not only align themselves with the global movement towards greener lifestyles but also tap into a rapidly expanding market segment.

It's time to consider – is there space on your shelves for a range of eco-friendly solutions?

