

Three Winter Tips for a Healthy Home

1. Procrastinate on indoor renovations

It might seem like winter is a great time to paint your bedroom or refinish your floor, but projects like these should be kept for seasons when the house can be well ventilated, even when using less toxic products. Planning is critical for healthy renovations. Make winter a time for planning, including identifying healthy materials for your project. Then plunge into action when spring arrives.

2. Clean up the cleaning clutter

What better season to switch to healthier cleaning and personal care products, and reduce indoor pollution? Clean up that clutter of toxic products under the kitchen sink, or in your laundry room. Buy yourself a gift pack of some new less toxic products. You could even save money on the basics - then splurge on a few special products. While you're making changes, go scent-free, if you haven't already. The Guide to Less Toxic Products, www.lesstoxicguide.ca, makes it easy to find healthy choices for whatever job needs to be done. It also gives you tried and true homemade cleaners. Less toxic can also be less expensive. If you don't yet use Dryerballs, you can purchase them through the Environmental Health Association of Nova Scotia. Dryerballs save money and energy use. See www.environmentalhealth.ca/dryerballsales for participating merchants.

3. Ditch the dry cleaning.

Dry cleaning is typically done with perchlorethylene (perc), a chemical which is known to be carcinogenic. If clothes go from the cleaner to your bedroom closet, guess what you breath while you sleep? Think twice before buying clothes which need to be dry cleaned, unless you are using a cleaner who has switched to a wet wash or perc free process. At the very least, air dry-cleaned clothes outside for a day or two until the smell is gone and do not store in the bedroom.

With thanks to Environmental Health Association of Nova Scotia Update, Fall 2008
www.environmentalhealth.ca