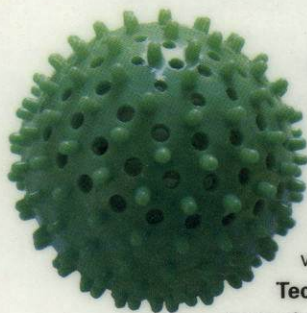


# resource

A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON WASTE • MARCH/APRIL 2002 • VOLUME 1 NUMBER 3

## our cleaning act

Household detergents is an area where individuals can reduce waste as well as environmental impact substantially. We use on average 12lbs of detergent per person every year, just for washing our clothes. Laundry balls cut the release of foam and phosphates into the eco-system and dramatically reduce waste by avoiding creation of cardboard and plastic packaging. They also cost as little as 3p per wash to use, compared to 20p for traditional detergent. The **Resource** team tried out four of the market leaders to see if they really offer a challenge to traditional detergents



### Aquaball

**RRP:** £14.95 (starter kit with two balls and refill pellets)  
**Tel:** 0800 026 0220  
**Internet:** [www.aquaball.com](http://www.aquaball.com)  
**Lasts for:** 60 washes, refillable with new pellets

**Technique:** Cleans by releasing ionised oxygen, which increases the pH level of the water and activates the water molecules. These penetrate deep into the fibres lifting dirt away. (Contains: Higher alkyl sulfate, non-ionic surfactant, sodium metasilicate, calcium- and sodium carbonate)  
**Verdict:** *This rubbery, spiky pair was one of the panel's favourites. "Impressive". "Very nice result, soft, clean and a nice fresh smell" and "Positively funky design". "Compares favourably with Ecover washing powder", were some of the comments from our testers, who forgave Aquaball for having the shortest lifespan of all the samples on test.*



### T-Wave Twin Capsules

**RRP:** £29.95 for two  
**Tel:** 0845 606070  
**Internet:** [www.savant-health.com](http://www.savant-health.com)

**Lasts for:** 500 washes (700 in a top loader)  
**Technique:** Two types of activated ceramics work in unison with magnets to enhance water's solvency. Activated ceramics greatly increase the power of ionized water to penetrate the cloth fabric and lift out dirt particles.

**Verdict:** *These capsules include magnets and activated ceramics, giving sparkling results. "Very impressive, even white sports socks came out clean". "The washing smells clean without being fragrant in the least, which takes a bit of getting used to, because we often associate clean with the smell of detergents".*



### Eco Balls

**RRP:** £29.95 (starter kit with three balls and refill pellets)  
**Tel:** 0208 662 7200  
**Internet:** [www.ecozone.co.uk](http://www.ecozone.co.uk)  
**Lasts for:** 1000 washes, refillable with new pellets

**Technique:** Produces ionized oxygen (increases pH level) which activates the water molecules' natural ability to penetrate deep into clothing fibres to lift dirt. (Contains:  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ ,  $\text{SiO}_2$ ,  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$ ,  $\text{CaO}$ ,  $\text{MgO}$ ,  $\text{K}_2\text{O}$ ,  $\text{Na}_2\text{O}$  sodium carbonate, washing agent, sodium silicate, coconut and other vegetable oils.)  
**Verdict:** *The eco-ball uses a similar technique to Aquaball, but last over ten times longer. "Clothes came out softer than if you had used fabric conditioner and smelt clean and fresh". "I would definitely use this on a regular basis". "Just as good as normal detergent", said the testers.*



### Wonderwash Laundry Ball

**RRP:** £15.90  
**Tel:** 0161 832 7788  
**Internet:** [retone123@aol.com](mailto:retone123@aol.com)  
**Lasts for:** Guaranteed for 500 washes, but it requires no refills and could last indefinitely

**Nice touch:** Also works in the dish washer  
**Technique:** Contains four tiny but very powerful magnets which break the water into smaller droplets. These travel faster, hit the fabric harder and lift off the dirt.

**Verdict:** *The Wonderwash laundry ball differs from the others, as it is based purely on magnets surrounded by a rubber ball. Opinions differed about this product. "Amazing that this can work", "I would recommend that this ball be used with a fabric conditioner", "Using the product I have to say that both laundry and dishwash would probably produced the same results by just using water". "Cleaned everyday laundry very well".*

## Room for improvement

Nearly all of the companies used recycled paper and cardboard for packaging their products, but none of the actual laundry balls were made from recycled materials. All four testers thought that the laundry balls worked better than

expected and they were all converted from using traditional detergents. The main grievance they had was that the laundry balls are not available in mainstream shops and that they should be marketed better!