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Wave

Clean up your act

by Marianne Leather



Cleanliness might be next to godliness, but most cleaning products are hell to the environment and not much better for ourselves. Bleach is harmful to other living organisms and badly degradable; optical brighteners make an irreversible chemical bond with the skin; phosphates can cause weird growths in the aquatic system. Petrochemicals are a rapidly depleting resource. The trouble is it all comes out in the wash.

The European Chemicals Bureau research shows only 14% of the most heavily used chemicals have basic safety data publicly available, so it isn't surprising the British Society of Allergy, Environmental and Nutritional Medicine says chemicals in household products can lead to allergies and fatigue. However, it doesn't have to be difficult to do the right thing, there are loads of environmentally friendly products on the market and we turned into a load of scrubbers at Wave to find out which ones work.

We've ★ the ones we really like.

Multi-Surface Cleaners

ECOVER - MULTI-SURFACE CLEANER: A light, fresh, citrusy smell. Cleans well and left a lovely, gleaming surface, although quite runny - be careful when pouring.

GREEN PEOPLE - MULTI-PURPOSE CLEANER: Smells just like lemon sherbets! Cleans perfectly well. Fairly thick in consistency and a small amount goes very far. Use in conjunction with their Organic Aroma Clean for extra bacterial protection. This is a mixture of essential oils with a pungent, lemony, menthol smell. It feels terribly



luxurious to be treating your surfaces with essential oils if you can be bothered to use it after cleaning. ★

ECO LIMO - MULTI CLEANER: Smells great, gets nice and soapy and cleans well with a little bit of elbow grease.

Laundry Detergent

EARTH FRIENDLY PRODUCTS - ECOS - LAUNDRY DETERGENT WITH NON-CHLORINE BLEACH: Quite unlike most powders it was lumpy, almost damp and smelt, quite frankly, gross. However, after the wash the clothes smelt perfectly fresh, were clean and it even removed green pesto from my cream cardigan. Brilliant. ★

ECOVER - CONCENTRATED WASHING POWDER: Excellent all round powder with no perfume so excellent for sensitive skins. Can leave white residue on low temperature wool washes, though they have a handy, separate liquid wool wash for this purpose.



Wash balls:

ECO PRODUCTS LTD - ECO BALLS: No foam, just three balls to add to your load. Was tested by mother on daughters dirty clothes and to her amazement removed all the dirt, but unfortunately didn't leave her own tight, lycra top smelling so sweet! These work out at an amazing 3p per wash compared with 20-30p for leading detergents.



21ST CENTURY HEALTH - AQUA LAUNDRY BALL: These rid my white pillowcases of mascara and left them smelling wonderfully fresh. ★



Washing up Liquid

ECOVER - WASHING UP LIQUID: This stuff is brilliant. Foamy, smells nice and works. ★

EARTH FRIENDLY PRODUCTS - DISHMATE: Works well, smells strongly of almonds - takes a little getting used to and has a skin irritant caution so gloves must be used.

ECO LIMO - WASHING UP LIQUID: Cleans excellently, and doesn't produce a ton of froth.

Unfortunately your average supermarket has a pretty limited supply of such environmentally friendly products, so we've looked at a few more products which are available from health outlets or by mail order.

ECOVER - STAIN REMOVER: This is a bit like liquid soap. Tested on a waitresses T-shirt it didn't get rid of a greasy stain on the first try, but it certainly lightened it. Maybe next time.

ECOVER - FLOOR CLEANER:

'Lemon Fresh' though didn't smell much like lemon. Declared as 'fantastic' by two cleaners well experienced with the harshest and nastiest of products.

ECOVER - CREAM CLEANER: A non-scratch cream cleaner which didn't remove stubborn stains on the kitchen sink, but was fine for general cleaning.



BIO D TOILET CLEANER: A good cleaner from a company with excellent ethical credentials, but views are mixed on the smell. The production manager loved it but it left others less than overwhelmed.

ECOVER - HEAVY DUTY HAND CLEANER: A thick, lovely smelling, exfoliating cream. It received thumbs up from Jacqui at Terre a Terre, cleaning her mucky hands very well, though it was quite an effort to squeeze out. And as James in the kitchen reported "My hands have never felt so soft, but it took 4 guys to get it out of the tube".

Continued on page 46