



## Watershed-Friendly Solutions for Everyday Living

**Estrella Associates Incorporated (EAI)** would like to encourage you to join them in taking an active role in protecting the water quality of our local watershed. By choosing to use homemade solutions that are more watershed-friendly than typical commercial chemical products, you can help protect and enhance the water quality of our local watersheds. **EAI** is recognized in the building industry as a leader in building residential and commercial projects that incorporate various environmental conservation measures, including Low Impact Development (LID) designs which minimize, control and prevent stormwater pollution of our local water bodies.

When it rains, stormwater flows across driveways, patios, lawns and sidewalks and into our street gutters and storm drains. Along the way, this water picks up soil and vegetation debris, litter, household and garden chemicals, oil residue and other pollutants. This mixture of stormwater and pollutants get discharged, untreated, into our local creeks where it effects our water quality and can harm wildlife. Polluted runoff is the nation's greatest threat to clean water.

The Low Impact Development measures which **EAI** builds into its developments go a long way in helping to prevent the pollution of our local water bodies. While these development measures are not currently mandated by building officials, **EAI** has implemented these features because they know that their efforts will significantly enhance, protect and preserve environmental resources. **EAI** would like to go one step further in helping to ensure that our local ground water, creeks, rivers and ocean water remain healthy. They are encouraging local residents to adopt watershed-friendly solutions for everyday household cleaning, home maintenance and gardening activities. The easy-to-mix recipes printed on **U-Mix-It Safe Spray®** and the solutions provided in this Clean Home Clean Watershed menu card are all compliments of **EAI**. By using these recipes, you can partner with **EAI** to help keep our local watershed clean and healthy for generations to come.

*Compliments of:*



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## A Quick Review of Safer Alternatives

**Baking Soda:** A useful mildly abrasive cleaner. It is an alternative to chlorine or silica-based products, which can have harmful effects on humans and animals.

**Vinegar:** Used as a general purpose cleaner, hard surface cleaner and glass cleaner. It is an alternative to ammonia-based cleaners and other corrosive products. Vinegar has antibacterial properties.

**Borax:** Can also be used as a general purpose cleaner. It is considered an effective alternative to chlorine or silica-based scouring products which can have harmful effects on humans and animals. Although a generally safe alternative, it should still be used with caution and kept out of the reach of children.

**Hydrogen peroxide:** At a 3% concentration, it is used as a general purpose cleaner and bleaching agent. Considered to be an effective alternative to chlorine based compounds.

**d-Limonene:** Derived from citrus plants, this chemical is the active ingredient in citrus-based solvents and general household cleaners. It is an effective alternative to petroleum-based solvents and cleaners, which can pollute the air and water. Although a naturally occurring compound, it can have harmful health effects, and should be kept out of the reach of children.

## Alternative Household Products/Remedies

**Surface Cleaners:** Refer to the recipe printed on the U-Mix-It Safe Spray® bottle.

**Dishwashing:** For automatic dishwashers, choose a detergent with low phosphate content (read labels). Phosphate detergents can contribute arsenic to our water supply.

**Disinfectants:** Soap and hot water is sufficient for most of your household cleaning needs. Hydrogen peroxide (3% solution) is effective against viruses. Keep surfaces dry. Bacteria, viruses, mold and mildew generally cannot live without dampness. Borax has been shown to have disinfecting qualities, although it has not been through the stringent testing used to qualify materials as disinfectants. Mix ½ cup in 1 gal. water.

**Drain Openers:** Try to avoid using commercial drain openers as they are extremely toxic and upset the natural enzyme balance of sewer/septic systems. Put a strainer on all drains to catch hair and debris. Never pour food and cooking greases down the drain. Pour boiling water down the kitchen drain once a week to keep grease free. Toss a handful of baking soda and ½ cup vinegar down the drain. Cover the drain, sealing in the carbon dioxide gas bubbles as they agitate your clog loose. Let sit 15 min. Rinse with 1 gal. of boiling water. Follow with a plunger. Use a metal plumbers snake to unclog stubborn drains. If you're handy with tools and repair tasks try removing the drain's "P-Trap" and flush outside with a blast of hose water (this will work the majority of the time!).

**Glass Cleaners:** Refer to the recipe printed on the U-Mix-It Safe Spray® household cleaning bottle. Some people swear by the use of a high quality squeegee and a squeeze of dishwashing liquid in a gallon of water. Try lemon juice and water to remove Alkaline deposits, or salt and vinegar. Micro-fiber cloths for glass work very well. Just use water, ring cloth out well and wipe surface clean. Follow with a dry cloth for a streak free finish.

**Oven Cleaners:** Mix 2 Tbsp. liquid dish soap & 2 tsp. Borax in 2 cups warm water. Apply and let sit for 20 min., then scrub. ~ Use a non-chlorinated scouring powder, like Bon Ami. ~ Use baking soda, salt and water paste. Spray baking soda/water solution in oven. Let sit overnight. Spray again and wash off. Cover baked on food with baking soda then an equal amount of apple cider vinegar. Once the bubbling action is complete, wipe off. Avoid aerosol oven cleaners. Don't use any abrasive cleaning material on self-cleaning ovens.

**Microwave Oven Cleaner:** Spray on the All Purpose Cleaner recipe from the U-Mix-It Safe Spray® bottle and let sit for 5 minutes. Wipe off with sponge.

**Wood Stove Glass:** Use wet newspapers to scrub glass. Carefully scrape difficult spots with a razor blade.

**Mildew Removers/Inhibitors:** Refer to the shower cleaning printed on the U-Mix-It Safe Spray® bottle for household cleaning or try vinegar full strength, then rinse. Prevent mildew by improving ventilation, installing a ceiling exhaust fan, and keeping furniture from blocking air passages. Wipe down tub and shower with dry towel or squeegee after each use to prevent mold and mildew developing.

**Toilet Bowl Cleaners:** Use mix of ½ cup Borax/1 gal. water to clean and deodorize. ~ Let 1cup borax sit in the bowl overnight. ~ Coat stains in toilet bowl with paste of lemon juice and Borax or Bon Ami. Let sit about 20 min. and scrub with bowl brush. ~ Clean frequently with baking soda. Sprinkle baking soda around the rim and bowl then scrub. ~ Scrub stubborn stains/mineral build-up with a pumice stone or 400 grit wet/dry sandpaper. Avoid toilet bowl deodorizers that contain paradichlorobenzene (there is evidence that it causes cancer in laboratory animals, it cannot be removed at the treatment plant and is toxic to fish) Some toilet bowl-cleaning products contain acids (read labels) If acids are mixed with a cleaner containing chlorine (like bleach), toxic chlorine gas is released.

**Tub & Sink Cleaner:** Use baking soda like a scouring cleanser. Using non-chlorinated cleanser (e.g. Bon Ami) is very effective and won't dissolve as fast as baking soda. ~ Try fine grain wet/dry sandpaper (400 grit) to remove pot marks in porcelain sinks (gentler than common scouring cleansers). To remove mineral deposits from around faucets, cover deposits with rags soaked in vinegar. Let sit for 1 hour and clean. Note: Vinegar, a weak acid, can dissolve many hard water deposits caused by high mineral content (e.g. calcium, magnesium, iron, etc). A flat "painter's" razor blade (in a retractable tool) works great for scraping off hard-to-remove deposits around faucet bases and bath tub edges.

**Floor Cleaner:** To clean vinyl tile and linoleum, use ¼ cup white vinegar, ¼ cup washing soda and 1 gal. warm water. Remove scuff marks on linoleum with toothpaste. Black heel marks come off with a paste of baking soda and water. Damp mop wood floors with a mild vegetable oil soap. Dry immediately. Clean painted or varnished wood floors with 1 tsp. washing soda and 1 gal. hot water. Rinse with clear water. Dry immediately. To clean polyurethane-sealed wood floors, use ¼ cup white vinegar in 1 gal. water. Dry immediately.

**Metal Polishes:** **Brass:** Mix ½ tsp. salt and ½ cup white vinegar with enough flour to make a paste. Apply a thick coat. Let sit for 15 to 20 min. Rinse thoroughly with water to avoid corrosion. ~ Polish with Worcestershire sauce or ketchup; let sit, wipe dry. **Copper:** Polish with a paste of lemon juice and salt. **Silver:** Boil silver 3 minutes in a quart of water containing: 1 tsp. baking soda, 1 tsp. salt, and a piece of aluminum foil. ~ Rub silver with a baking soda/water paste and a soft cloth; rinse and polish dry. ~ Rub with toothpaste. Use a toothbrush to clean raised surfaces. Be careful not to scratch surfaces and use a light touch. **Chrome:** Wipe with vinegar, rinse with water, then dry. ~ Shine chrome fixtures with mineral oil and a soft cloth. This is good for removing soap scum off faucets. **Stainless steel (including BBQs):** Clean and polish with a baking soda/water paste or a cleanser like Bon Ami or rubbing alcohol. **Pewter:** Rub with a mixture of baking soda and olive oil. ~ Polish with a fine grade steel wool. **Steel:** Rub with cork dipped in olive oil. ~ Rub with raw onion, then rinse with water. ~ Rub with a mixture of lemon juice and salt. Rinse well with water and dry.

**Stains on fabrics:** **Blood:** Immediately clean stain with club soda or sponge with cold water. ~ Saturate with hydrogen peroxide. Let sit a couple of minutes and wash. May bleach out color, so test first! **Chocolate and coffee:** Soak in cold water, rub with soap and a borax solution, rinse, then launder. If necessary, rub with a borax/water paste. **Fruit stains:** Rinse in cold water then rub liquid soap into the stain. Let soak for 10 minutes then stretch fabric over sink and pour hot water onto the back of the stain. Bleach with lemon juice and sunlight or hydrogen peroxide if needed on white or colorfast fabric. **Grease:** Rub with castile soap, let soak, then apply paste of cornstarch and water. Brush off when dry. ~ Cover spot with baking soda or cornmeal. Let absorb the grease and brush off. ~ Scrub spot with toothpaste. **Grass Stains:** Scrub dampened area with a bar of glycerine soap, let soak for an hour, wash normally. **Ink:** Tough to get out. Try soaking in milk. ~ Sponge stain with hair spray or alcohol. ~ Apply cream of tartar and lemon juice paste. Set for 1 hr. **Lipstick:** Rub with shortening to dissolve color; rinse area with solution of washing soda and warm water to remove grease; wash in soapy water. ~ Use rubbing alcohol with a soft cloth. **Oil:** Rub white chalk into stain before laundering. ~ Scrub spot with toothpaste. ~ Presoak with castile soap. ~ Rub a paste of sugar and water on stain before laundering. **Perspiration:** Pretty tough, but try sponging stain with a weak solution of white vinegar or lemon juice, and water. **Rust stains on clothing:** Moisten spot with lemon juice, sprinkle with salt, and leave in the sun for a couple of days. ~ Try a "waterless" auto mechanic's hand cleaner. **Tea:** Stretch fabric over a basin and pour boiling water over the stain: wash as usual. **Wine:** Blot with a soft cloth to absorb wine. Then apply either club soda, rubbing alcohol, borax or white wine (!) to blot out the stain. Use salt to absorb moisture.

### More Watershed-friendly Solutions!

For more watershed-friendly home & garden solutions, visit [www.safespray.com](http://www.safespray.com).

To learn more about EAI and their commitment to building environmentally sensitive and sustainable communities visit [www.EstrellaAssociates.com](http://www.EstrellaAssociates.com)