

What is the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance?

We are an entity of 13 towns working together under an interlocal contract formed in 2015 to carry out a solid waste implementation plan approved by Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources for its 34,755 households, 26 schools and over 1,900 businesses within the 550 square-mile Alliance.

The Alliance implements education, outreach, and other programs to assist residents, schools, businesses, and organizations in complying with the Universal Recycling Law by increasing reuse, recycling, and reducing the amount of solid waste disposed in landfills.

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Alternatives to Household Hazardous Waste



**BENNINGTON
COUNTY SOLID
WASTE ALLIANCE**



**Bennington County
Solid Waste Alliance**
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Weed killer:

Adjust lawn pH, mow high, water sufficiently to maintain grass and prevent weeds.

Wood preservatives:

Use wood resistant to rot such as cedar, locust or oak and protect from dampness and insects

Recreation & Entertainment

Charcoal Fluid:

Use a chimney starter, which is basically a can with a handle. You place the charcoal on top and paper in the bottom, light the paper and that will start the charcoal without the need for fluid.

Hobby Supplies:

Use water-based paints, adhesives and nontoxic glues. For children, use crayons and water-based paints.

Pesticides & Disinfectants

Flea killer:

Use flea comb, vacuum often and wash pet bedding. Pine needles, fennel, rue, or rosemary can be spread on a pet's bed to repel fleas and ticks.

Insect spray for plants:

Blend 6 cloves crushed garlic, 1 minced onion, and 1 tbsp. dried hot pepper and 1 tbsp. pure soap in 1 gallon of hot water. Let sit 1-2 days, strain and apply with spray bottle.

Insect repellent:

Avoid wearing scented products outdoors. Lemon eucalyptus is an effective natural oil to use as a mosquito repellent, with sharp-scented compounds proven to drive mosquitoes away.

Mothballs:

Keep garments clean; wrap in linen or seal in paper packages or cardboard boxes; use cedar chips or dried lavender, wrapped in cloth bags or towels with clothing; kill eggs by running dry garment through a war dryer.

A More Natural Approach

Remove the hazardous waste



The Alliance operates a Household Hazardous Waste collection facility for its residents and small businesses during warm weather months to provide the collection of products labeled as “toxic, corrosive, poison, combustible, danger, or caution, wear gloves, use in well ventilated room keep away from flame”, or similar warnings. Visit our website for more information: www.bcswa.org

Why consider alternative cleaners?



Since many types of chemicals and other materials are banned from disposal in the household trash, they need to be recycled or disposed in special facilities. The cost of disposal is increasing each year and is primarily the responsibility of the towns to cover. Using alternatives can be just as effective, safer, and save on disposal cost.

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Getting Started

Natural Cleaning Ingredients List

Start by stocking a basic list of items, many of which you may already have, that are effective cleaning agents:

- **Baking soda**
- **Borax**
- **Boric acid**
- **Castile soap (liquid)**
- **Club soda**
- **Cornstarch**
- **Hydrogen peroxide**
- **Lemons/lemon juice**
- **Salt**
- **Washing soda**
- **White vinegar**

Keep a supply of rags/old towels on hand to use for cleaning to reduce/eliminate the need for paper towels or synthetic sponges. A spray bottle can be used for regular cleaning of kitchen surfaces (not marble!) and windows. Use an old glass bottle with threaded top that can be attached to a spray trigger from a former cleaner bottle, just trim the straw to fit.

Auto Repair

There are few alternatives to the materials used in automobiles such as gasoline, oil and antifreeze. Purchase only what you need and minimize the amounts needing storage.

Pesticides & Disinfectants

Aerosols:

Use pump or liquid application. Buying only what you need.

Ant Control:

Mix 2 Tabs boric acid, 2 tbsp. sugar and 2 cup water. Soak paper towels and place on dishes for ants. Pour a line of cream of tartar where ants enter. Put a light coating of petroleum jelly around base of pet's feeding dish to keep ants out.

Bug sprays/insecticides:

Handpick or trap insects; keep household clean and food covered; caulk or seal entryways.

Disinfectants:

Borax or pine soap.

Home Maintenance Products

Air freshener:

Use flowers, herbs, or potpourri; place vinegar or vanilla in an open dish; or cloves and cinnamon in boiling water; or leave an open box of baking soda. Source can also be cleaned with baking soda. Leave sliced citrus fruit out for fragrance.

Degreasers:

In 2 cups of warm water, add 2 tbsp baking soda, 2 tsp of Castile soap and 20 drops lemon essential oil.

Glues/adhesives:

Water based glue can be dried and disposed.

Oil-based paint:

Latex paint (can be cleaned with soap and water)

Paint stripper:

Sand or scrape paint.

Cleaning Products

Carpet and upholstery cleaner:

Clean stains immediately with club soda. Sprinkle cornstarch on carpet and vacuum. For red wine stains on carpet, gently blot the stain with a rag and apply a solution of 1 cup hydrogen peroxide with ½ teaspoon of dish soap. Blot solution with another clean rag and follow with a wet vacuum.

Drain cleaner:

Use a plunger or mechanical snake. Pour ½ cup washing soda into drain and then two cups of boiling water. Flush drain weekly with boiling water.

Furniture polish:

Dip cloth in olive, soybean, or raw linseed oil; or mix two tablespoons of olive oil with tablespoon of vinegar and slowly stir into one quart of water. Or mix two parts vegetable oil and one-part lemon juice and apply and rub clean.

General purpose cleaner:

Vinegar or lemon juice diluted with water; or three tablespoons of washing soda (sodium carbonate or soda ash) in one quart of water. (Sodium carbonate can be a skin or eye irritant and can irritate the lungs if inhaled.)

Glass cleaner:

Mix equal parts of water and vinegar in a spray bottle, spray surface and wipe with cloth towel.

Laundry pre-soak:

Make a paste of baking soda and water and apply to dirty spots.

Metal cleanser:

Baking soda (good for chrome) or make a paste of salt, vinegar, and flour as in ½ cup salt, vinegar to dissolve and flour to form a paste.

Mildew remover:

Dissolve ½ cup Borax and 1.2 cup vinegar in warm water.

Multi-purpose cleaner:

Combine 1 tsp washing soda, 2 tsp Borax, 2 tsp liquid Castile soap, 5-10 drops your choice of essential oil into 1-quart hot water.

Oven cleaner:

Wipe spills quickly; wash with baking soda using a scrubber; or sprinkle with baking soda or salt, let sit, and then rinse.

Porcelain cleaner:

Make a paste of baking soda and water, apply to the stain, let it set and then rub clean and rinse.

Rug cleaner:

Sprinkle baking soda on the rug and then vacuum. Club soda can be used to treat stains.

Scouring powder:

Baking soda, salt, or Borax

Showerhead cleaner:

Place shower head in ½ cup of vinegar and 1 quart of water and boil for five minutes to remove stains and lime buildup.

Silver cleaner:

Soak silver in a quart of warm water containing 1 Tsp baking soda, 1 Tsp salt and a piece of aluminum foil.

Spot remover:

Clean spill quickly with club soda or use baking soda paste.

Toilet bowl cleaner:

Flat cola, Borax or baking soda; Borax may cause skin irritation.

More resources:

Alternatives do not exist for all items, but there are some great websites for those interested in reducing the amount of hazardous material in and around their homes. One such source is the Environmental Working Group's Guide to Healthy Cleaning: <https://www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners>

They also offer alternatives to help reduce the amount of hazardous waste generated through the use of personal care products:

<https://www.ewg.org/skindeep/>