



**M**any of us are concerned about hazardous products in our homes. Some commonly used household products contain chemicals that are regulated in industrial settings. However, we use many of these same chemicals in our homes, often without considering the consequences. This booklet outlines some ways that you can reduce hazardous materials in your home.

For information on what household products are hazardous, contact the Lehigh County Office of Solid Waste Management at 820-2003.

## Steps you can take to reduce hazardous wastes in your home

- 1. Be an informed consumer.** Read labels before purchasing a product. Consider whether the product is hazardous, and if a less hazardous alternative can do the same job.
  - 2. Purchase only as much as you need.** If you do need to purchase a product which is hazardous, consider ahead of time how much you will need and purchase only that amount. That way, you won't need to arrange to dispose of the surplus material.
  - 3. Use up what you have.** Many hazardous materials can be used safely if you follow all of the appropriate safety precautions.
  - 4. Consider safer alternatives.** One of the best ways to avoid exposure to hazardous materials is to choose safer alternatives whenever possible. There are non-hazardous alternatives available for many products. These alternatives are equally effective, and less toxic than their commercial counterparts. The following pages include recipes and suggestions to help you make the switch to safer household products. As with many products, some may work better than others. The suggested alternatives are only a sampling of the alternatives available. For more information, consult the bibliography at the end of this booklet. The Lehigh County Office Solid Waste Management makes no guarantee regarding the effectiveness of any of the methods listed in this booklet.
- Be aware that some of the substitute materials mentioned in this booklet are not considered completely non-toxic. They are, however, less toxic than many of the products we commonly use to accomplish the same goals. These materials have been marked with an asterisk (\*) to help you identify them.

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Much of the information in this guide was taken by permission from *Making the Switch: Alternatives to Using Toxic Chemicals in the Home*; Golden Empire Health Planning Center and the Sacramento League of Women Voters.