

## **DIY ways to be good stewards of the environment and human health**

by Charlene Richardson

1. Make your own cleaners by using household ingredients such as vinegar, pure soap, lemon juice, cornstarch, borax and baking soda to clean your home safely and effectively. You can use these ingredients to clean dishes, do laundry and clean the bathroom.
2. Make your own natural compost with vegetable and fruit peels, coffee and tea grounds, and grass and plant clippings. It is much safer for the environment than chemical fertilizers.
3. Select disease-resistant varieties of plants to minimize the use of pesticides in and around your home.
4. Use natural alternatives such as garlic, onion, marigolds, and soap to control pests. You can make a pest-repellent spray with these ingredients and apply it to plants with a spray bottle.
5. Use water-based paint, so solvents like paint thinner don't have to be used for clean-ups.
6. Prevent drain clogs by using a strainer to block the drain. Pour boiling water down the drain 3 or 4 times a month. But, if you must unclog, use a sewer snake or plunger instead of toxic drain cleaners.
7. Use lemon oil or olive oil in combination with vinegar or lemon juice to polish furniture. Use baking soda or vinegar and salt to polish metals.
8. Use citronella plants and oil to repel insects around the house. When you go outside, limit your use of scented lotions and perfumes that attract insects.

These suggestions help the environment and reduce hazardous waste generation around your home to keep your family and the Earth healthy.

**Activity:** Got eco-friendly tips and recipes for insect repellants and household cleaners? List them in the comments below. Random drawings for prizes will be held when social distancing measures have been lifted.

Mālama i ka 'āina—care for and live in harmony with the land. Earth Day every day at MCBH.