

Excerpt from summer 2010 issue of *Your Health Matters*. [CLICK HERE](#) to view entire newsletter.

How healthy is your house?

Pollution is not just an outdoor problem. Your family's health can be affected by toxins in your home's air, paint, heating system and plumbing. Many household items can be hazardous to curious children. The good news is that there are simple, effective ways to improve the quality and safety of your home environment.

Put a check mark next to the items you have completed on this list of home maintenance procedures.

Overall home safety

- For clean air, we have a no-smoking policy in our home.
- Our home was inspected for lead paint and is lead-free.
- To prevent carbon monoxide buildup, a qualified technician checks our chimney and all fuel-burning devices every year.
- We keep air conditioners, heaters, humidifiers and dehumidifiers clean and change filters regularly.
- To prevent mold growth, we periodically check the roof, basement and plumbing for water leaks.

Kitchen

- We store household chemicals in their original containers and in child-safe cabinets.
- We store food in sealed containers and clean up spills promptly to avoid attracting bugs.
- If we have not used cold water for a few hours, we run the tap for a few minutes. Flushing the pipes will help keep our drinking and cooking water free of copper, lead and other impurities.

Hazardous household items include oven cleaners, bleach, detergent, bathroom cleaners and even dishwashing liquid or dish soap. If you have children, install a safety latch on storage cabinets or put these items on high shelves.

Bathrooms

- To prevent mold, we run the exhaust fan or open a window when we shower or bathe.
- We keep hair dryers and other appliances unplugged, away from water sources and out of children's reach.
- We store medicines and supplements in their original containers and in child-safe cabinets.

Bedrooms

- We have a smoke alarm on every floor and carbon monoxide and smoke detectors outside each bedroom area. We test them and replace batteries as directed by the manufacturer.
- We dust regularly and wash bedding in hot water to help control dust mites.