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This green party's agenda: safe scrubbing

By [Susan Thurston](#), Times Staff Writer
In print: Friday, July 25, 2008

Laura Daniels demonstrates her furniture polish made from olive oil, vinegar and lemon juice. She hosted a party at her Tampa home touting all-natural alternatives for household cleaning products. Luis Santana/tbt*



The party favors are boxes of baking soda, recipe cards and spray bottles.

The theme is green.

Green cleaning parties have sprouted nationwide as a fun, easy way to rid homes of toxic chemicals found in common household cleaners.

Women's Voices for the Earth, an environmental group in Montana, started the parties in March to offer people homemade alternatives to hazardous cleaners found under most kitchen sinks. Hostesses provide the recipes and ingredients; the guests whip them up.

Laura Daniels hosted a party this week at her New Tampa home for about a dozen friends and neighbors. On the menu: wine, hors d'oeuvres and furniture polish made from olive oil, vinegar and lemon juice.

"We all say we want to do something to protect the environment, but we don't do anything," said Daniels, 59. "This just made sense."

The \$15 party kit comes with recipe cards, a supply list, container labels, fact sheets and a video to show during the party. The video talks about the link between toxic chemicals in household cleaners and asthma and reproductive problems. It also calls on government leaders to require companies to list ingredients on product labels as they do for food.

There's no sales pitch.

The parties promote all-natural cleaners used long before Easy Off, Formula 409 and other

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products became mainstream. "Ask your grandma what works," touts the video.

Recipes cover an assortment of cleaners, from a toilet bowl cleaner to a creamy soft scrub for counters, stoves and bathroom sinks. The ingredients are cheap and typically found in most homes.

Guests take the products home with the mandate to use them and spread the word to friends and family. So far, 400 people have registered to host parties worldwide.

"I really thought they were going to have some secret ingredients," Marti Woznicki said. "I think I'll give them a try."

Clean home, clean planet

Three eco-friendly cleaner recipes to try out at your next "green party":

Furniture polish: Combine 1/4 cup olive oil, 1/4 cup white distilled vinegar and 2 teaspoons of lemon juice for fragrance (optional). Shake well. Dip a clean, dry cloth into the polish and rub wood in the direction of the grain. Refrigerate if you add lemon juice.

Toilet bowl cleaner: Sprinkle toilet bowl with baking soda, drizzle with white distilled vinegar. Let soak for at least 30 minutes and scrub with toilet brush. For persistent stains, let ingredients soak overnight.

All-purpose cleaner: Combine 2 cups white distilled vinegar and 2 cups water. To reduce the smell of vinegar, add 20 to 30 drops of lemon or lavender oil, available at specialty grocery stores or health food stores. Use on countertops, kitchen floors, windows, mirrors and other hard surfaces. For tough jobs, warm cleaner in the microwave until barely hot. Source: Women's Voices for the Earth (womenandenvironment.org)

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