

What happens when people switch to non-toxic cleaning products?

Hacienda CDC Eco- Healthy Home Survey

Fall 2021

INTRODUCTION:

What happens when people integrate non-toxic cleaning into their lives? In the Fall/Winter of 2020, socially distanced, in-person focus groups and bilingual online surveys were held in Hacienda CDC's housing communities to find out. COVID-19 hit the Latino/x community particularly hard, and the increased levels of disinfecting increased families' and kids' exposure to dozens of different toxic chemicals (ie. bleach) in their products. It should not be a cost burden to obtain environmentally healthy, non-toxic, and sustainable cleaning and personal care products. Listening and learning from Hacienda's residents about their purchasing behaviors regarding cleaning and personal hygiene products, 75 residents participated in either focus groups or online surveys.¹ Based on that input, we came up with affordable [Spanish](#) and [English](#) cleaning and sanitizing recipes and tailored eco-healthy home kits with non-toxic ingredients, and distributed them to these residents. We then surveyed participants a *second* time in the Spring/Summer of 2021 after they got a chance to use up their eco-healthy home kits. This report shows a significant positive outcome in the health of residents.²



Villa de Sueños, a Hacienda property.

¹ See OEC Roundtable Report for full findings, Prepared by Lara Media (February 2021).

² Only 11 participants filled out a second survey.

Initial Findings:

During the Fall 2021 focus groups, residents noted that:

- They usually had to leave the room after cleaning with chemical products, due to the fumes.
- 49% had health problems such as dry skin, rashes, headaches, and nausea with conventional chemical products.
- 79% were concerned about health impacts from cleaning and personal care products and impacts to their indoor air quality.
- 85% noted that cost was a major factor. The pandemic's financial constraints forced them to seek out the cheapest cleaning products available.
- 94% are interested in natural more environmentally friendly solutions.

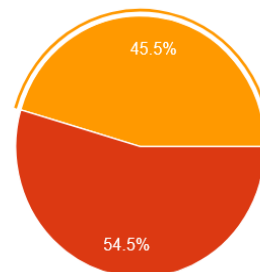
*"I noticed my child was coughing every time I utilized Chlorine. We went to the Dr., and they explained that it was causing additional harm to her child, who had already been diagnosed with Asthma. I began to stop using Chlorine, using alternatives slowly, and educating myself about how to clean without the need to use these harmful chemicals."
- a Hacienda Resident*

Results after the tailored eco-healthy home kits were distributed:

- 100% noted a positive difference in their health after incorporating eco-healthy cleaning into their routine.
- 100% noted they were more likely to buy non-toxic and more environmentally friendly ingredients moving forward.



54.5% noted they already changed their purchasing habits some, while 45.5% noted they changed their buying habits a lot.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

This project would not have been possible without the participation of the residents at Hacienda CDC. We are grateful for their collaboration and openness in this partnership.