

Home Safety for Seniors



Information on how older Butler Co. residents can avoid potentially toxic hazards in the home.

Older Americans, just like everyone else, can sometimes be at risk for accidental poisoning or other health hazards from chemicals such as **home cleaning products, pesticides and other substances, or from medications.** There are many things that can be done to avoid these potential dangers:

Labels on Medications and Other Household Products

Never remove a label from any container. If it contains a liquid substance, always pour on the opposite side from the label to prevent moisture from making the label unreadable.

Mixing Substances

Never mix ANY medications together, and never mix household products together unless a label specifically instructs you to do so. Some cleaning products when mixed together will cause noxious fumes that can harm or kill a person in seconds. Mixing medications together without instructions to do so could cause poisoning.

Storage

Never store any household product or medication in areas where food is stored. This will eliminate the chance of mix-ups since some cleaning products can look just like food products. Also, always keep household products and medications in their original containers. Always sort through your household chemicals and medications at least twice per year and properly dispose of those items no longer used. Check with the Butler County Department of Recycling & Waste Management if you are not sure how to properly dispose of these types of items.

Good Light

Always use household products and take medications in well-lit areas to eliminate the chance of mix-ups.

Emergencies

Know the phone number in Butler County for emergencies—**“911”** - and post it on your telephone.

**Butler County
Department of
Recycling &
Waste Management**

**PO Box 1208
124 W. Diamond St.
Butler, PA 16003**

**Phone:
724.284.5305
Fax: 724.284.5315
Email:
skelly@co.butler.pa.us**

Medication Dosage

Know the correct dosage of any medication you are taking. If needed, keep a handy chart of when they are taken each day to make sure you do not take too much!

Proper Disposal

Call the Butler County Dept. of Recycling & Waste Mgt. for information.



List of the Top Potentially Toxic Substances in a Home:

1. Paint and Solvents—their fumes can stress your lungs and heart. Many stores now carry more people/earth friendly paints.

2. Household Cleaners—dangers can come from ammonia, which is known to trigger asthma, elements in chlorine bleach, which is a lung irritant and will kill you if you swallow it, to things like glycol ethers, which are used to dissolve grime and dirt, and are easily absorbed by the skin and can cause nerve damage. Most stores now carry non-toxic and earth-friendly cleaners.



3. Pesticides—there may be a connection between pesticide exposure and Parkinson's disease. Pesticides can be dangerous for those with weakened hearts or lungs, the EPA warns, leading to arrhythmia or even heart attack

4. Clothing—labels aren't required to list chemicals used in finishes, many permanent press fabrics and some older water-repellent and flame-retardant fabrics contain formaldehyde, an upper-respiratory irritant.

5. Draperies, Furniture—before the year 2000 stain protectors on these items are considered to cause cancer. They are now considered safer.

6. Non-Stick Cooking Pans - some can possibly release 15 different toxic chemicals, including two carcinogens, if left unattended on a burner and overheat.

More Information

"Green" Cleaning Tips—for information on cleaning your home with non-hazardous products, see our **Information Series #4—Non-Toxic Cleaning**

Butler Co. Dept. of Recycling & Waste Management —Call (724) 284-5305 to find out when the next hazardous waste collection or medication collection will be held.

Butler County Area Agency on Aging—call (724) 282-3008



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Be Informed and Stay Safe!