



# EWR Good Practices and Case Studies

## EWR GREEN CLEANING

### 1. Details of Action:

EWR Coordinator:	Easter Midlands Regional Waste Management Office
Name of Action Developer:	St Fintan's National School - John Moreau (5 <sup>th</sup> Class Teacher) and Sorcha Kavanagh (Parent Representative)
Name of action:	EWR Green Cleaning
Nominee <b>category</b> :	Educational Establishment
European Special Prize:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Dates of action:	22/23 November 2018
Website:	N/A
<b>Location of action</b>	
Place of implementation:	St. Fintan's National School, Carrickbrack Road, Sutton
City:	Dublin
Region:	Dublin 13
Country:	Ireland

### 2. Action's theme:

- Reduce – Strict avoidance and reduction at source
- Reuse – Reuse and preparing for reuse
- Recycle – Waste sorting and Recycling
- Clean-up activities
- Thematic Focus 2018: Hazardous Waste Prevention: Time to detox!

### 3. Description of the nominated action

St. Fintan's is a National School where children aged between 4 to 12 years attend.

This project was initially conducted by 60 pupils from 5<sup>th</sup> Class (age 11 approx) but due to a keen interest from students, teachers and parents it was then extended to a further 120 from 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes.

We introduced the project at the beginning of the school term [September], explain what we will be doing and why and asked the students to begin collecting materials which we could use [spray bottles etc.] We held the event on the Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> and Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> November when we produced the green cleaning products.

#### Aim

The aim of the project was to increase awareness about waste reduction, reuse and to raise awareness of the dangers of unnecessary, potentially hazardous cleaning products in the home along with the advantages of making your own green cleaning products.

The ultimate objective was that the children along with their parents would be empowered to make their own green cleaning products (non-hazardous) and reduce the amount of waste produced by reusing containers where possible.



## Background

October in Ireland is “**Reuse Month**”, this is a National Campaign run by the regional Waste Management Offices and we used this as a vehicle to launch our event. A platform for communication to parents was already established through an existing “What’s App” group.

In September children and parents were advised that we intended celebrate EWWR ‘18 by making our own cleaning products with the children by reusing containers from home. We asked them to retain any empty containers they had including spray bottles and glass jars as we approached the date. These were collected during “Reuse Month”.

Sheets of pre-printed “Greener Cleaning” sticky labels were used. Supplied by Roscommon County Council. These labels can be applied to old jars and bottles and each label included the ingredients and directions for making each type of cleaning product (pdf of label sheet attached).

### Ingredients used included:

- Lemons,
- white vinegar,
- essential oils,
- baking soda,
- citric acid and
- washing up liquid.

### Finished Products:

- All-purpose cleaner,
- toilet fizzers,
- air freshener,
- bathroom cleaner and
- polish.

### On the day

Children and parents worked in groups of 6 to make their own cleaning products with non-toxic ingredients. Everyone learned about how easy it is to switch to less damaging cleaning agents. They also learned about how much waste we produce and that by reusing containers we reduce our impact on climate change.

## 4. Reason why the action was selected for the EWWR Awards:

### A. Visibility and communication:

The action developers communicated to parents via a WhatsApp group, posters were made by the pupils which were displayed on the worktops and the hallways. They borrowed equipment from a local secondary school such as protective eye-wear, science coats, gloves and funnels. This made it a fun, dress up event and generated a lot of interest and questions. 16 parents volunteered over the two days to assist the teams of students.



All 600 pupils in the school passed the project area and were amused by the workshop and all the equipment involved. On the first day of the workshop there was so much interest from other classes that it was extended to a further 120 pupils the following day.

Afterwards a Newsletter was issued to pupils and parents communicating the action we held and the importance of both waste reduction and green cleaning.

### **B. Originality and exemplarity:**

The action developers made environmentally friendly cleaning products and they did it with reused containers. Ingredients were purchased from a minimal waste grocery store where you could bring your own containers to purchase the ingredients. The children felt they could actually make the products at home too.

### **C. Lasting impact and follow-up:**

Parents and pupils were involved on the days of action and worked together in groups, this in itself has created a long-lasting fun and educational memory. The children learned about the ingredients, the affects when combined and how getting back to old traditional ways can be relatively easy.

The all-purpose cleaner that was made is used in the classroom as required. Afterwards children were able to bring home the selection of cleaning products they made, giving them pride in their accomplishment and spreading the awareness to the rest of their household. Furthermore, they used the products so they were able to test them for themselves and prove that less toxic products were equally as good.

### **D. Quality of content:**

This action included so many important messages:

- a) Avoiding non-toxic chemicals
- b) Reduce plastic waste
- c) Increase reuse
- d) Using a zero waste store for purchases

The fact that the children were able to make and use the products triggered their awareness to all the above. Parents that volunteered to assist on the day remarked how easy it was to make a change and how they learned about simple ingredients being just as powerful.

Roscommon county council have also produced a series of videos showing how to make the cleaning products so this can be used a refresher for those who took part but it is also a way for the children and the parents to share the knowledge. Participants can also take a look at [MyWaste](#) to find out more about hazardous waste and they can download the labels used in this action.

## 5. Results:

180 children ranging in age from 10-12 years and 16 parents volunteers.

This action demonstrates learning about reduction and reuse along with an unnecessary reliance on chemical household cleaning products. Due to the nature of this project it started months before the actual activity took place which allowed for dialogue to happen with both the kids in class and amongst the parents on the WhatsApp group. Due to this long lead up it would have allowed all involved to see how many cleaning products they buy and it would also make them think about what they contain.

The action developers feel that this lead in time will help to make the learning about the unnecessary hazardous materials we unknowingly bring into our homes stick and will really help to bring about change. By making the cleaning products in the class the kids involved now understand what each of the components do and hopefully it will be a message that sticks and they will bring this learning to other parts of their lives and question why unnecessary products are being sold to us.

## 6. Find out more:





## Green Cleaning Labels

Your home will sparkle with the help of these simple, eco-friendly recipes. Just peel off and apply to empty jars, bottles or spray bottles. Video tutorials and printable labels are available to download on [www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/services/greencleaning](http://www.roscommoncoco.ie/en/services/greencleaning)

ALWAYS TEST ON A SMALL AREA BEFORE USE

**ALL PURPOSE  
Cleaner**

1 PART WHITE VINEGAR • 1 PART WATER  
A FEW DROPS OF ESSENTIAL OIL (OPTIONAL)

COMBINE ALL THE INGREDIENTS IN A SPRAY BOTTLE AND SHAKE BEFORE USE.  
NOT SUITABLE FOR GRANITE AND MARBLE.

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

COUNTER TOPS • MIRRORS • WINDOWS

ALWAYS TEST ON A SMALL AREA BEFORE USE

**BATHROOM  
Cleaner**

JUICE OF 1/2 LEMON • 3/4 CUP BAKING SODA  
3 TBSP LIQUID DISHWASHING SOAP • 1/2 CUP WHITE VINEGAR

PLACE BAKING SODA IN A BOTTLE. ADD THE REMAINING INGREDIENTS SLOWLY (MIXTURE WILL FIZZ). MIX BEFORE USE.  
APPLY WITH CLOTH AND RINSE AFTER USE.

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

TILES • BATHTUBS • SINKS

ALWAYS TEST ON A SMALL AREA BEFORE USE

**ALL-IN-ONE  
Polish**

1 TBSP OLIVE OIL • 1/2 TBSP LEMON JUICE  
1 TBSP WATER

COMBINE ALL THE INGREDIENTS IN A SMALL JAR AND SHAKE WELL. POUR ONTO A CLOTH AND USE AS POLISH.  
STAINLESS STEEL: BUFF IMMEDIATELY WITH DRY CLOTH.

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

WOOD • STAINLESS STEEL

ALWAYS TEST ON A SMALL AREA BEFORE USE

**Floor  
CLEANER**

1 CUP WHITE VINEGAR • 1 CUP SODA CRYSTALS  
3/4 CUP WASHING LIQUID • 2 TBSP LEMON JUICE (OPTIONAL)

WEAR GLOVES. ADD SODA CRYSTALS TO VINEGAR SLOWLY.  
STORE IN LARGE JAR. SHAKE GENTLY TO MIX BEFORE USE.  
ADD 1/2 CUP PER 8 LITRES OF HOT TAP WATER.  
NOT SUITABLE FOR WAXED FLOORS.

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

TILES • LAMINATE • WOOD

ALWAYS TEST ON A SMALL AREA BEFORE USE

**TOILET  
Fizzles**

1 1/2 CUP BAKING SODA • 1/2 CUP CITRIC ACID • 1+ TSP WATER  
15 DROPS OF LAVENDER, PEPPERMINT AND LEMON ESSENTIAL OIL

WEAR GLOVES. MIX THE BAKING SODA AND CITRIC ACID IN A SMALL BOWL. ADD APPROX 1 TSP WATER AND ESSENTIAL OILS.  
PACK FIRMLY INTO ICE CUBE TRAYS. ALLOW TO DRY FOR SEVERAL HOURS. REMOVE GENTLY AND STORE IN AN AIRTIGHT JAR.

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

LEAVE OVERNIGHT FOR BEST RESULTS

ALWAYS TEST ON A SMALL AREA BEFORE USE

**Air  
FRESHENER**

1/2 CUP BAKING SODA (PER JAR)  
8-12 DROPS OF YOUR PREFERRED ESSENTIAL OIL

PUT BAKING SODA AND ESSENTIAL OIL IN A JAR AND SHAKE TO MIX. PIERCE LID WITH HOLES.  
ALSO WORKS AS A CARPET CLEANER. SPRINKLE ON VACUUMED CARPET. VACUUM AFTER 24 HOURS.

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

ALSO A CARPET CLEANER

Developed by  
Roscommon  
County Council



[Link](#) to cleaning labels.