



Community Health

This month in THE GREAT BODY SHOP, we'll be talking about the environment and community.

Lesson 1: Your Community—Keep It Safe!

Lesson 2: Your Community—Keep It Healthy!

Lesson 3: Your Community—Keep It Clean!

Lesson 4: Your Community—Keep It Drug & Violence-Free!

Scary Statistics

According to the EPA, Americans generate approximately 4.5 pounds of solid waste per day! Here's how you can make the environment safer and healthier:

1. Use natural cleaners instead of commercial products. Scour pans and countertops with salt and baking soda; use lemon to cut grease; wipe down stoves with white vinegar.
2. Avoid disposable products whenever possible.
3. Don't throw out batteries with your household garbage. Batteries contain cadmium and mercury, which pollute landfills. Try switching to rechargeable batteries.
4. When doing errands, put small items in a bag you are already carrying, instead of getting a new bag at each store.
5. If you change your own motor oil, never pour the used oil onto the ground. Bring the oil to a gas station to be cleaned and recycled.
6. Rinse plastic supermarket bags and reuse. (Don't turn these bags inside out or ink may come off on food you store in them.)
7. Recycle paper, plastic, aluminum, and glass products.
8. Walk or ride your bike whenever possible.

Lead Check

Lead poisoning is a disease caused when too much lead is taken into the body. Lead poisoning can cause:

- brain, kidney, and nervous system damage
- damage to red blood cell production
- lowered I.Q. scores

Children are more likely to get lead poisoning than adults, and the lead they swallow or inhale will do greater damage.

LEAD PAINT is the greatest source of lead poisoning. Your child is at greater risk if your home was built before 1978, when lead was banned from paints. Peeling paint is very dangerous, but so is the fine lead dust that accumulates on window sills and baseboards. Test paint with a lead-test kit available at many hardware and home building supply stores. Lead paint is most often found on interior trim and exteriors.

LEAD IN SOIL is a problem if you live near a highway (lead accumulates in the soil from gasoline exhaust), have peeling paint on the outside of your house, live near certain factories, or have used a lead-based insecticide. Use a lead-test kit to test soil; follow instructions carefully. Don't allow children to eat snow or icicles.

DRINKING WATER may contain lead if pipes are made of lead, or if they contain lead solder. If they do, use water from the cold water faucet when drinking, cooking or mixing baby formula. Let water run for one minute to "flush out" the water.

Signs of lead poisoning include: crankiness, lack of appetite, vomiting, constipation, fatigue, and stomach aches. However, many children show no signs of illness. Some city health departments will do a free blood test for children; if yours does not, ask your child's doctor about a blood lead test.

