Homemade Laundry Detergents

The process of making homemade laundry detergent is inexpensive and a good option for individuals concerned about product quality, health related benefits of using natural products to clean laundry, environmental impacts, and saving money. Below are three homemade laundry recipes that can be used trying to accommodate such ways of living.

RECIPE #1

1 quart boiling water
2 c. Bar Soap grated (Ivory, ZOTE, Fels-Naptha)
2 c. Borax
2 c. Washing Soda

- Add finely grated bar soap to the boiling water and stir until soap is melted. You can keep on low heat until soap is melted.
- Pour the soap water into a large, clean pail and add the Borax & Washing Soda. Stir well until all is dissolved.
- Add 2 gallons of water, stir until well mixed.
- Cover pail and use 1/4 cup per load of laundry. Stir the soap each time before you use it (will gel).

RECIPE #2

Hot water
1 c. Washing Soda
1 Soap Bar grated (Ivory, ZOTE, Fels-Naptha)

- Grate the bar soap and add to a large saucepan with hot water. Stir over medium-low heat until soap dissolves and is melted.
- Fill a large pail with 2.5 gallons of hot-water, add hot soap mixture. Stir until well mixed
- Then add the washing soda, again, stirring until well mixed.
- Set aside to cool
- Use 1/2 cup per full load, stirring well before each use (will gel).

RECIPE #3 (Powdered)

2 c. of Bar Soap grated (Ivory, ZOTE, Fels-Naptha)
1 c. of Borax
1 c. of Washing Soda

- Thoroughly stir together
- Use 2 tablespoons of detergent per load

A Few Detergent Notes

Liquid Soap will be lumpy, goopy and gel-like. By stirring the mixture before use, the ingredients will re-coagulate. The detergent should be stored in an air tight container to avoid drying out. The homemade soap could be stored in an old (and cleaned) laundry detergent bottle.

It is normal for there to be little or no suds and the laundry water to look gray. This is the result of dirt coming out of the clothes. Store bought laundry detergent doesn't lend to this type of result because of the amount of suds produced.

Is homemade laundry detergent safe for HE washing machines?

HE stands for "high effeciency washer". They are front loading washers that use much less water than conventional machines. HE washing machines use less water; therefore, laundry detergents used must be low sudsing and able to disperse quickly. Using non-HE detergents would create too many suds and 'confuse' the washing cycle, and cause delay making the rinsing of clothes difficult. Homemade laundry detergents are naturally low in suds, which meets the HE washing machine detergent requirement. Homemade laundry detergents have not be found to harm or damage the clothing or washing machine. The choice between homemade or special HE detergents is a personal preference.

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