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EVERYBODY'S  
IRISH  
ON  
ST.  
PATRICK'S  
DAY



# Alive With Pride

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## The 10 Most Toxic Items at Dollar Stores Part I

### Special points of interest:

- The 10 most Toxic items
- Water experiment
- Manager's Corner

*If you have a water emergency after-hours, weekends or on holidays, please call us at 870.633.1571*

When it comes to safety, dollar-store deals might not be a bargain after all. Recent testing of their products found that 81% contained one or more hazardous chemicals. The tests, conducted by the consumer testing group [Healthy Stuff](#), found chemicals associated with cancer, obesity, diabetes, asthma, thyroid and kidney diseases, learning problems, lower IQ, birth defects and early puberty.

### Electronic Accessories

Extension cords, USB charging cords and cell phone charger cables from dollar stores tested high in chlorine, a sign that the items were made with a plastic called polyvinyl chloride, or PVC. PVC is made from vinyl chloride, a cancer-causing chemical that has harmed workers and contaminated communities close to the factories. Pick up these accessories from electronics stores instead.

### Plastic Kitchen Utensils

Those black slotted spoons and spatulas may

contain high levels of bromine, a component in brominated flame retardants, or BFRs. Though these are added to make the products resistant to fire, they've been linked to **cancer, birth defects and impaired brain development**, and have been banned or phased out in the U.S. So what are they doing in kitchen utensils? Suppliers are likely substituting cheap, hazardous recycled content—probably **from old electronics** for virgin plastic. Products made with such recycled plastic can be contaminat-

## Experiment: The top 10 things I learned drinking only water for a month

### Part One of this experiment

Water is one of the best things ever. My biggest lessons from this experiment (in order of increasing importance): every day you drink a whopping 400 calories; there are 8 triggers that motivate you to drink something; caffeine boosts your athletic performance; what you eat and drink are two of the biggest things that impact your energy levels; coffee/tea are just as hydrating as water; take the time to be grateful for all of the

nice things you have; you should drink caffeine strategically, not habitually; and caffeine boosts your focus, but makes you less creative. *Whew.*

**For the entire month of January I drank only water as a productivity experiment.** I had no caffeine-based pre-workout drink to get ready for the gym, no mid-afternoon tea, no red wine on Valentine's Day, and no drinks on

my friend's birthday—the fanciest thing I drank all month was a cup of hot water with a lemon wedge. (I'm definitely kicking myself for not picking an easier month, but hindsight is 20/20 I guess.) To be honest I didn't expect to learn much from this experiment, but looking back, I learned a ton. This article is a long one, but I know you'll get a lot out of it, and I tried to make it as skim-



Michael Posey 3/09

Rockey D. Love 3/26

## Alive with Pride

ed with BFRs, and our regulatory system misses them. Instead, choose stainless steel.

### Flannel-Backed Table Covers

Protecting your table from scratches and stains, these bright, reusable covers seem like a good way to add a festive feel to your feast. But recent testing uncovered high levels of lead, a **neurotoxic metal that is especially harmful to fetuses and children**. It can reduce IQ and cause behavioral problems. Vinyl tablecloths aren't a

# The 10 Most Toxic Items At Dollar Stores cont.

good alternative, because they're made with cancer-causing vinyl chloride. Instead, look for a reusable, washable cloth table cover or a disposable paper or plastic one.

### Metallic Christmas Garlands

Saving on once-a-year items makes **good financial sense**. But these have tested high in bromine, indicating that some are made with recycled plastics containing BFRs. These can seep in to **household dust**, possi-

bly causing **thyroid problems, memory impairment and other health issues**. In general, clear and translucent plastics don't have the hazardous recycled content, so look for see-through garlands or paper varieties, or make your own out of good old popcorn and cranberries.

### Silly Straws

These have tested high for levels of DEHP, a phthalate (pronounced "thal-ate") **used widely in consumer products**, usu-

ally to soften brittle plastics. Some phthalates interfere with the body's endocrine system, and studies have linked phthalate exposure to asthma and allergies, prostate and testicular cancer and type 2 diabetes. Six phthalates, including DEHP, have been restricted in children's products—but silly straws aren't technically children's products, so they can legally contain high levels of DEHP.

Look for more items to watch out for in our next month's issue.

## Experiment: The top 10 things I learned drinking only water for a month

mable as possible so you can easily skip to the parts you're interested in.

### 10. Every day you drink 400 calories

If you're average, every day you drink a whopping 400 calories.

With a bit of basic arithmetic, it's not hard to calculate how drinking more water will help you lose weight. To lose a pound of fat, you need to burn off (or have a deficit of) about 3,500 calories, though

this number varies depending on how fast your metabolism is, and how much water and lean tissue you burn off as you reduce your caloric intake.<sup>2</sup> That means that if you drink only water (or fluids that contain no calories), in 9 days you will lose one pound of fat. That's equivalent to the amount of calories your body burns running at 5mph for 30 minutes every day for 9 days!

**Know the 8 triggers that**

### motivate you to drink

I think one of the keys to changing your **habits** is recognizing what drives your behavior. Taking a second to ask yourself why you're about to drink something is the perfect trigger to make yourself drink healthier.

There is always a reason you drink what you do, and when you drink so much over the course of a day, being mindful of whether that reason is productive or unproductive for your health is definitely worth doing. Personally, I can think of eight

reasons you drink:

1. Socially
2. For energy
3. For enjoyment
4. For nourishment
5. For health reasons
6. Because you're addicted
7. For pleasure
8. For relaxation

Look for substitutes that will reward you instead. (Tune in next month for more.)

Arkansas One Call



Know what's below.  
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# ADEQ

ARKANSAS  
Department of Environmental Quality

## Manager's Corner

The Utility's primary focus is optimizing our processes and continuing to improve our operating efficiency.

It has been our choice to take the long view in charting a course that will ensure the integrity of the system and the ability to respond quickly and cost effectively should we experience a sudden growth pattern.

We currently need to increase our production from plant #4 to supplement plant #2, which has declining wells which may shortly have to be abandoned.

Our (5) five year plan will necessarily include the construction of a new building at the location (The prison well field).

This seems the logical expansion area in that (2) two of our largest water customers are located in that area of town. i.e The Federal Prison and Boars Head.

The second component of our five year plan is to convert to electronic metering of all customers. The documented increases in accuracy in reading should make this cost budget neutral in 5-7 years. There are other attractive features such as leak detection, pressure loss or reduction all instantly via digital communications via laptop or cell phone. Another attractive feature is the ability to turn on and off water service remotely.

The third and last, the development of creative and innovative processes to support great people and to cultivate a bold new vision for The Utility. The integration of new and emerging technologies into our day to day operation. We are committed to the continuous comprehensive training of all personal to ensure process improvement as well as operational efficiency. We are ever mindful that our most cherished asset is our people, who continue to deliver the highest quality drinking water at a reasonable price.

W.H. Calvin Murdock,  
Manager