CHEMICALS & WASTE in your BATHROOM?

Cleans well, smells nice, but is it also safe?

Stop and think for a moment. For the most part, you can’t see toxic chemicals, but that doesn’t mean they are not there.

Your bathroom is a case in point. It’s where every part of your body comes into contact with toiletries and hygiene products, shampoo, soap, toothpaste.

Do you know what’s in those products? Do you know whether they are doing more harm than good? Not all toiletries contain toxic chemicals. But some certainly do.

Lindane, a persistent organic pollutant (POP) listed under the Stockholm Convention and known to be toxic with adverse effects on the immune system, reproductive system and development, was until recently commonly used as active ingredient in anti-headlice shampoos. Whilst there is no information about current production, it is reported that many articles in use still contain this chemical.

Do you have a mercury thermometer in your bathroom cabinet? If it breaks, that mercury, however pretty and playful it appears, is dangerous. Mercury is a highly toxic heavy metal that poses a global threat to human health and the environment from the adverse effects of chemicals and waste. This lounge area installation is brought to you by four organisations of this cluster, namely:

• Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam, & Stockholm Conventions (BRS);
• Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury;
• Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM); and
• UN Environment, Chemicals and Health Branch (UNEP)


Making the Invisible, Visible

The Geneva Chemicals and Waste Cluster is a group of international organisations in Geneva which collectively work to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of chemicals and waste. This lounge area installation is brought to you by four organisations of this cluster, namely:

What can you do?

- Read the next Invisible News sheets to educate yourself about the hazards;
- Visit the websites listed to find out more;
- Seek out safe alternatives when buying toiletries, food, clothing, furniture: READ the labelling;
- Discuss with your children, relatives, neighbours.