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Artificially Fragranced Dryer Sheets

Although I have dispensed with all other artificially fragranced items in my home, I have been hesitant to part with my artificially fragranced dryer sheets.

Dryer sheets, according to R. Kayne of wisegeek.com, are “durable, gauze-like tissues that can be put into dryers to eliminate static cling, soften clothes, and add fragrance”. Living in the country, I use purified well water for my washing, which leaves my clothing smelling slightly of sulfur and other natural elements. In an attempt to mask this odor, I have continued to use artificially fragranced dryer sheets.

I am aware that naturally fragranced dryer sheets exist, however I have been unable to find a brand that effectively eliminates the “earthy” smell from my wash. Frequent perusal of non-toxic dryer sheet reviews on online sites such as amazon.com indicate many people also find these sheets to be ineffective for fragrancing purposes.

I have also tried the recommended practice of adding a few drops of essential oil to a cloth before placing it in the dryer for use as an all-natural “dryer sheet”. Despite using only Young Living oils recommended for this purpose, the metal components inside my dryer soon became coated with a sticky brown residue, and the clothes never smelled “fresh”.

However, upon research, smelling “fresh” is not worth the ultimate cost of using artificial fragrances. According to greenlivingtips.com, “most commercial dryer sheets are impregnated with toxic chemicals including Benzyl Acetate, Benzyl Alcohol, Chloroform, and Linalool”, which, when heated, emit toxic fumes. These chemicals are not only bad for the environment, but some are also known carcinogens.

Mike Adams of naturalnews.com points out that twenty-three “identifiable carcinogenic compounds” are used routinely in artificial fragrances, including perfumes intended for direct use on the skin. As some of these compounds are also solvents, they are easily absorbed through the skin and into the bloodstream—especially when the skin is wet. Adams posits that, therefore, “wearing” these toxic substances is as dangerous as consuming them, and many have been linked to liver disorders, cancer, Alzheimer’s disease, and other chronic diseases.

Naturally (pun intended), after discovering this information, I disposed of my artificially fragranced dryer sheets. In my research, I discovered 100% wool “dryer balls” that can be impregnated with a few drops of essential oil and placed in the dryer with clothing on an air-only dry cycle *after* the clothing has already been heat-dried. So far, I have had great success with these dryer balls, as they effectively soften clothing, reduce static cling, and naturally fragrance my laundry.