

# Materials that support a light toxic footprint:

## – WALL AND FLOOR FINISHES

- ZERO VOC PAINTS, CLAY VENEER PLASTERS, LOW VOC WOOD CLEAR COAT FINISHES FOR FLOORS

## – CABINETS/FURNITURE

- FORMALDEHYDE-FREE PLYWOODS AND MDF'S
- LOW VOC FINISHES

## – ORGANIC MATTRESSES

- ORGANIC WOOL AND COTTON CASINGS
- 95% NATURAL LATEX





# Organic Mattresses-

- ORGANIC WOOL-NATURAL FIRE RETARDANT- CELL STRUCTURE PROVIDES BREATHABILITY (GOOD FOR ALLOWING MOISTURE TO DRY OUT) NOT AN FAVORED ENVIRONMENT FOR DUST-MITES
- ORGANIC COTTON-NO PESTICIDES/HERBICIDES IN THE GROWING AND MANUFACTURING PROCESS OF THE COTTON FIBER INTO FABRIC, BREATHABILITY
- LATEX IS 95% NATURAL RUBBER FROM THE RUBBER TREE



# Formaldehyde-Free Cabinetry

- BOXES :
  - PLYWOOD - COLUMBIA FOREST PRODUCTS: PURE BOND
  - SIERRA PINE: MEDITE AND MEDITEII, AERIS,
  - ROSEBURG: SKYBLEND
- LOW VOC FINISHES: WATER BASED  
STAINS: BRAND
- CLEAR COAT FINISH
- FSC CERTIFIED PLYWOOD, FSC CERTIFIED SOLID WOOD, RECLAIMED WOOD







# Health-conscious cabinets

Why a pediatrician mom chose nontoxic kitchen cabinets for her young family's vintage home

By KEITH PANDOLFI • Photograph by BUFF STRICKLAND



"I wanted kitchen cabinets that wouldn't off-gas harmful chemicals." —PENELOPE SHEELY, HOMEOWNER

Great house, shoddy kitchen. That about sums up the attitudes of Penelope Sheely and her husband Sean after buying their 1907 Colonial Revival in Dobbs Ferry, New York. While most of the place was dressed in handsome millwork, the kitchen's original solid-wood cabinetry had been ripped out in favor of flimsy laminate boxes. "They were these 1970s cheapo cabinets—the kind I grew up with and always disliked," says Penelope. They had to go.

The Sheelys wanted traditional-looking, well-built replacements. But most important, they wanted ones that would minimize their environmental impact and help safeguard their family's health. They considered cabinets made with salvaged lumber and ones finished with nontoxic paints. And they weighed the 20 percent premium they'd have to pay for such green credentials against the benefit of keeping their consciences and their indoor air clean. After months of research, the Sheelys finally found the perfect cabinets. To help streamline your search for eco- and health-friendly cabinetry, *This Old House* asked Penelope to share her best sleuthing advice.

**Q: What were your must-have qualities for green cabinetry?**

**A:** I'm the mother of four children, but I'm also a pediatrician. Kids are bombarded with toxins everywhere they go, so I wanted our house to be a sanctuary. The cabinets had to be free of the formaldehyde typically used in adhesives, and the off-gassing VOCs found in lots of paints. Being locally made was also important so that they wouldn't have to be shipped too far.

**Q: That's a tall order. How did you find a cabinetmaker to fill it?**

**A:** What saved us was a design firm called Green Courage in nearby New Paltz, New York. The owner turned us on to Breathe Easy, a company only 30 miles away from here. Their custom cabinets are made with