

# Sea Mar HEALTHY HOMES TRAINING 2022 Annual Report



## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Many cleaning supplies and household products contain chemicals that can irritate the eyes or throat, cause headaches, and other health problems like asthma. Using safer cleaning products and cleaning methods can help avoid these health risks.

The **Hazardous Waste Management Program** (Haz Waste Program) partnered with **Sea Mar Community Health Centers** (Sea Mar) to promote the use of safer cleaning products by teaching safer cleaning practices to Spanish-speaking immigrants in South King County for a fourth consecutive year.

This partnership is the result of years of working with and listening to community leaders' concerns about the overuse of disinfectants for household cleaning and the hazards of mixing chemical cleaning products. In response, the Haz Waste Program worked alongside Sea Mar to create a training program to teach safer ways to clean homes, ultimately aiming to reduce hazardous material exposures among Hispanic and Latino families. The Haz Waste Program is committed to serving all people who live and work in King County and ensuring that race is not a determinant of hazardous exposure. This project is in alignment with Haz Waste Program's vision and mission.



*Safer Cleaning Kit*

## OBJECTIVES

Participants will have an increased awareness of hazardous cleaning products and how they can practice safer cleaning. Sea Mar Product Trainers provided information and guidance to meet objectives.

### **Increasing Awareness That Some Products and Situations Can Harm Health**

Sea Mar began the training by describing to participants some of the harmful health impacts that certain cleaning products could have on participants or their family members. Many participants reported that they experienced some of these unhealthy symptoms while using cleaning products.

In addition to cleaning products, Sea Mar also raised awareness about the health hazards of mold in a home.

### **Learning To Identify If a Cleaning Product Is Safe or Hazardous**

The participants then gathered their cleaning products and learned how to identify if the products they regularly used could be hazardous to their health or their family's health. Some participants were surprised to find that many - if not most - of their cleaning products had a signal word indicating that the product could be hazardous.

### **Practicing Safer Cleaning**

The Haz Waste Program provided a safer cleaning kit to each participant. These kits included a bottle of white vinegar, baking soda, an Environmental Protection Agency Safer Choice dish soap, a sponge, a high-quality microfiber cloth, and a recipe card. Participants then practiced making and using safer cleaning products. At the end of the training, Sea Mar Trainers asked participants to sign a pledge to use safer cleaning products in one area of their home for two months. All 80 participants agreed to do this.

## TRAININGS

Sea Mar recruited and trained participants from 12 South King County cities and unincorporated King County. All were immigrants representing seven Latin American countries.

Trainings were conducted in Spanish by Spanish-speaking immigrants. The trainings were originally designed to be presented in participants' homes, however due to community exposure risk to COVID-19, Sea Mar continued to conduct trainings virtually using WhatsApp or Zoom.



*Virtual Training by Sea Mar Staff*

## WORKSHOPS

Workshops were conducted in Spanish at Casa Latina, El Centro de la Raza, Senior Center of West Seattle, and Lake City Senior Center. Due to COVID-19, workshops were available virtually and in person. A total of 81 participants from Latin American countries attended the Safer Cleaning Workshops. Social media was also used to invite the community to attend the workshops.



*Safe Cleaning Workshop Participants*

## INDOOR AIR QUALITY

Indoor air pollution can impact the health of everyone in the home. Common household products and materials as well as outdoor events, such as wildfires, can contribute to indoor air pollution and reduce indoor air quality.

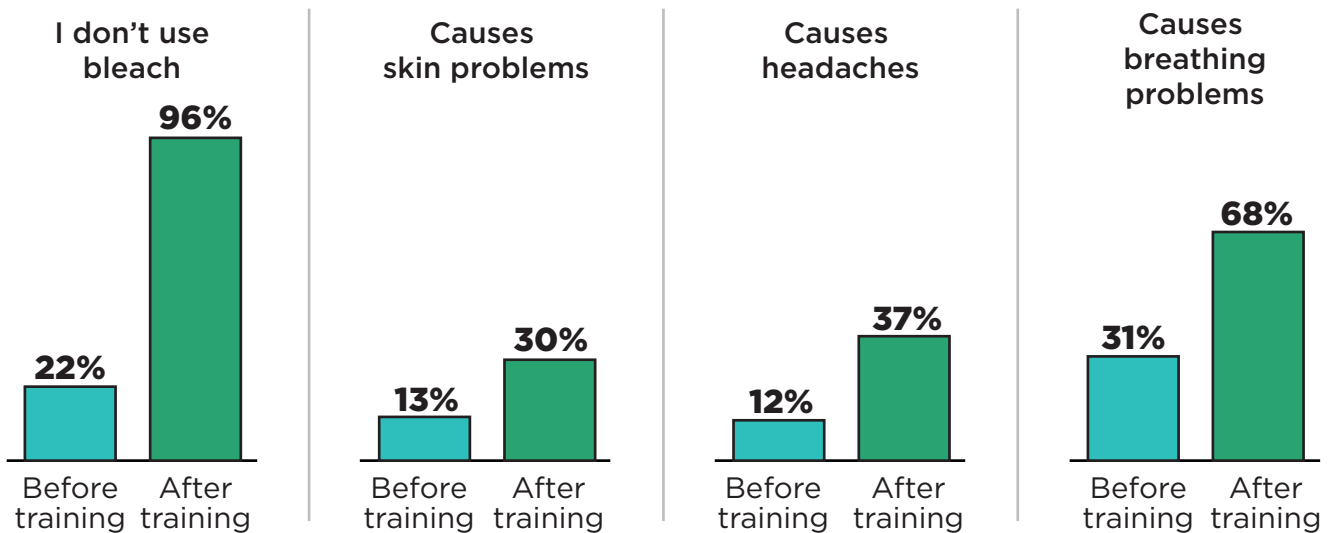
An effective way to improve indoor air quality is to filter indoor air using a box fan with an attached filter. Sea Mar distributed box fan kits to 100 low-income families in South King County. Families who received a box fan filter kit also received in-language training on reducing indoor pollutants and improving indoor air quality.



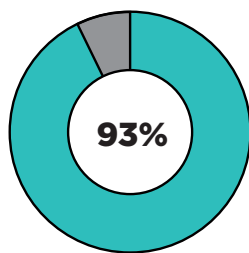
*Box Fan Kit*

# PARTICIPANT ATTITUDES CHANGE AFTER TRAINING

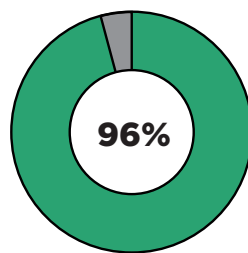
“What health problems do you think are caused by bleach?”



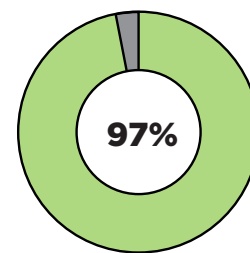
After the training, participants shared how they use cleaning products



Do not mix more than one cleaning product together



No longer use bleach



Can tell if a cleaning product I buy can harm my family

**PARTICIPANTS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES USING HAZARDOUS CLEANERS**  
“When I use it to clean the bathtub, it is very strong and gives me a headache. The doctor tells me that it is not asthma and I do not have it yet, but I am about to have asthma. I used to clean houses, but I stopped doing it because I’m getting sick from using all those products to clean.”



## THANK YOU

The Hazardous Waste Management Program would like to thank the Sea Mar team, Ninfa Quiroz, Yanin Diaz, Martha Acuna, and Maricela Guevara for the positive impact they had on their community. Results indicate not only increased awareness of harmful cleaning products, but also improved health for more than half of the participants. The number of participants who can now identify a safer cleaning product in the store and understand how to make their own cleaning products also increased.



*Virtual Training by Sea Mar Staff*

## FOR MORE INFORMATION



Sea Mar, a community-based organization committed to providing quality, comprehensive health, human and educational services to diverse communities, specializing in service to Hispanics and Latinos.

Ninfa Quiroz, *Community Relations Director*

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Available in alternative formats.

Please call 206-296-4692 or TTY:711



The Hazardous Waste Management Program offers education, assistance, and incentives to businesses and residents to reduce hazardous material exposures where people live and work around in King County.

Taylor Watson, *Project Lead*

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