



The Winde's show us how it's done.

As many of us try to move towards a more natural and environmentally-friendly lifestyle, it can at times feel overwhelming. Where do you start? What are the best products to use? We were invited to visit Minister Alan Winde's home (our Finance, Economic Development and Tourism Minister) to see how he and his wife, Tracy, are incorporating green living into their lifestyle.



At home with the Winde's

What made you decide to use only natural products?

Tracey: The more I read, the more I realised how harmful the chemical products were to my family, as well as the environment. The chemicals from these products end up in our water and seas, and this is having an impact on our marine life.

Some people have not tried natural cleaning products because they are concerned that they do not work as well as the chemical products. Have you noticed a difference between the two?

Tracey: Not really. You may have to scrub a bit harder to clean ingrained dirt with the natural products, but otherwise they work just as well. When my son was very young, he would get a rash when we bathed him. I realised that this was from the product we were using to clean the bath. Now we only use natural products.

Tracey and her family use only natural shower gels, hand washes, shampoos and toothpastes. She has been using the Green Wash balls to do their laundry for the past 3 years and has found them to work just as well as washing powder. Instead of using chemically-based fabric softener she uses a natural product which smells deliciously of fresh oranges. This product has multiple functions as she uses it in her dishwasher and it can be used to clean the floor tiles as well.

Tracey has taken the greening of their home outside and they have a flourishing worm farm. "The worms make the most amazing compost and the fertilizer is rich with nutrients. We only had one mishap with the worms when they got too hot in the summer and a few of them died. We have now built this awning which keeps them cool." The worms are happily chomping on scraps of food and look to be engrossed in their mandate to provide rich compost for the Winde's garden.

“We pulled out the roses in this area and we have started our own vegetable garden. My daughter and I are fighting off the snails but we have just had a wonderful harvest of tomatoes. Growing our own food is very rewarding and you can taste the difference – home grown vegetables are far more tasty!

The Winde’s have also ensured that they are up-to-date with the latest technology to green their home. They have slow-flowing tapes and a water-saving showerhead, as well as installing a heat-pump, which is an alternative to solar panels. “We did our research and found that for our family, the heat-pump would work out cheaper to purchase, while still saving us money on electricity. It uses far less power than a regular geyser and we have been very happy with it. We also have the rain-catcher (barrel) and we use the water in the catcher to water our garden in summer.”

It is wonderful to see how the Winde’s are incorporating as many green alternatives that they can into their home. They are also teaching their children to be more conscious of the impact that they as individuals make to their environment, and that is a lesson that all of us should be made aware of. Every little change leads to greater change.

As we are leaving, Tracy says, “If there is one thing Alan and I would like to share, is that you don’t have to make all these changes at once. Start with the small things and take it from there.”

The Winde’s are a true inspiration and they inspire us all to find ways to make a move towards going green. Always remember to enjoy the journey!



If you are looking for a range of chemical-free products, please contact:

Going Natural
Karen Eichstadt
Tel: 072 610 1478



What are you doing to save our planet?

Please share your tips for green and carbon-neutral living with us. If you or your family are part of an environmentally-friendly project, please let us know. We would love to hear from you. Please e-mail your tips, projects and comments to Better.Together@westerncape.gov.za or call us on **021 483 3806**.

