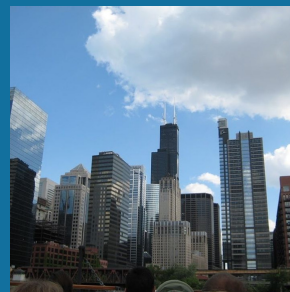
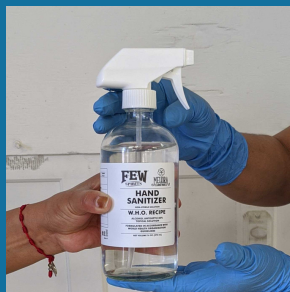
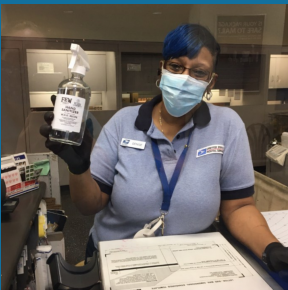




# SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2020



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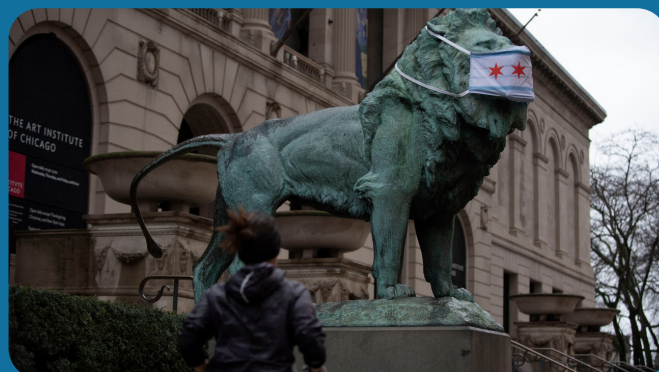


Photo by Colin Boyle/Block Club Chicago

## LETTER FROM THE FOUNDERS

2020 was a challenging year. There's no other way to put it.

We faced a global pandemic. We faced increasing racial injustice, nationally and in our home of Chicago. We experienced more effects of climate change through wildfires, historic winter storms, hurricanes and more.



It's been a lot. But together, with your help, we keep moving forward.

Health and safety comes first. We worked hard to keep our staff safe and keep our cleaning products in stock for you and your home. As a crisis measure, we engaged in price-mending instead of price-gouging, offering hand sanitizer at-cost as well as enabled people to donate hand sanitizer through our site, too. We ended up donating over \$10,000 worth of cleaning supplies to our community members throughout the year. Measures to protect our staff from the very beginning resulted in zero hours lost due to COVID-related issues throughout the course of 2020.

There's still a lot to be done on racial injustice. We're still listening and learning, and have taken action to join the people already working towards equity and justice by supporting causes like My Block, My Hood, My City in Chicago.

The world, as always, is changing. It's more important than ever that businesses consider the triple bottom line - focusing as much on social and environmental concerns as profits. This has always been important to us as a B Corp and 1% for the Planet member. However, we're running out of time to prevent a warming of 3 degrees Celsius globally and every single purchase (or lack thereof) matters more than ever before.

It's been a difficult year. Your support has made us proud to continue creating people- and planet-friendly cleaning products. With your help, we even crossed a major milestone last year of preventing over 1 million plastic bottles from ever existing.

Thank you for joining us on our mission to clean better, and for sticking with us as we continue to help people stay safe.

**Kate & Mike**  
Owners, Founders  
Meliora Cleaning Products

## ABOUT US

Meliora Cleaning Products began when our founder, Kate, found out that companies weren't required to disclose the ingredients used in home cleaning products sold in the US. She tried to identify and understand what ingredients were in her everyday household cleaning products but they weren't listed anywhere. Not on the product packaging or on the website. Then Meliora was born!



Since the beginning, we have strived to improve customer awareness by disclosing every ingredient in every product that we make. We want to ensure that every person knows what ingredients they're using in their homes. Our efforts go beyond our own company. We have also lobbied in support of cleaning product Right-To-Know Acts, including the successful SB-258 campaign that now requires ingredient listings on cleaning products in California.

Besides being people- and planet-friendly, by making sure our ingredients aren't harmful once washed down your drain, our products also get the job done. This means we only introduce a product when it meets our Big Three:

- It **WORKS** to get your home and clothes clean.
- It's **PEOPLE-FRIENDLY**, so you know it's ok to have around your home and family.
- It's **PLANET-FRIENDLY**, so you can be confident that what goes down your drain won't cause any problems.

We saw tremendous growth this past year, buoyed in part by an increased demand for cleaning supplies related to the COVID-19 pandemic. We experienced more than 100% increase in sales in 2020 and we are excited to continue to grow and help more people clean in a safe, efficient manner.

# OUR PRODUCTS



At Meliora Cleaning Products, we've got all your cleaning needs covered, from home cleaning to laundry and bath and body soaps. Our entire product line is 100% single-use plastic-free, and made from ingredients that are safe for the health of you, your family, and the planet.

Our products are as effective as they are sustainable. Not only that, but our products are sold at a price point equal to or lower than conventional products, showing that you don't need to pay more for sustainable options. **It shouldn't cost more to clean better.**

Our product line includes:

## Home Cleaning Products

- All-Purpose Home Cleaner & Refill Tablets
- Gentle Home Cleaning Scrub
- Dish Soap for Hand Washing

## Laundry Products (100% plastic-free as of 2020!)

- Laundry Powder
- Soap Stick for Stain Removal
- Oxygen Brightener Bleach Alternative

## Bath & Body Products

- Soap Bars



## RESPONSE TO COVID-19: TEAM & COMMUNITY

Though it has been a difficult year, your support has made us proud to continue creating people- and planet-friendly cleaning products. **We are beyond ecstatic to state that we had ZERO hours lost to COVID-related illness issues on our team.** Working together, and following the recommended guidelines, helped us ensure we all could make it through this together.

Beginning in March 2020, we...

- closed our factory to visitors and order pick-ups.
- implemented safety measures including regular surface sanitation, physical distancing & face masks and other PPE for all team members.
- supported social distancing & wearing masks at work throughout 2020 and into 2021.
- provided hand sanitizer and surface sanitizer for all team members.
- enabled employees whose jobs do not need to be performed in-person to work remotely throughout the pandemic.



Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! To our AMAZING team!

Recognizing the important role our team played as essential manufacturing workers, we implemented a \$1/hour bonus for our employees at the onset of local stay-at-home orders. This increase became permanent in June 2020.

In order to keep our warehouse clean and sanitized, we shifted our factory schedule to be operational four 10-hour production days per week. This helped minimize our employees' exposure, and reduced their commuting time while giving our employees an extra day to mentally reset each week.

All in-person employees were given an extra 30 hours of paid time off in spring of 2020. We also closed the factory, with full pay, for an additional three rest days during 2020. Our employees used this time to relax with loved ones and to take a much-needed break.

## RESPONSE TO COVID-19: HAND SANITIZER

As we felt the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in our Chicago community and beyond, we wanted to do what we could to help. We were uniquely positioned to volunteer our resources as a cleaning products manufacturing company alongside our employees' skills and knowledge.

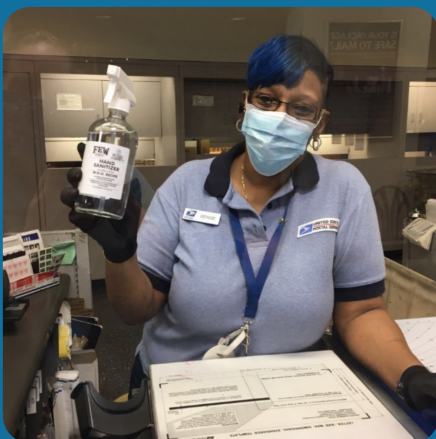
Throughout the pandemic, we have posted blogs and links on our website to educate everyone on the roles soaps, cleaners, and disinfectants play in the fight against COVID-19, as well as to explain how to best use our cleaning products for a safe and healthy home.

When we saw the overwhelming need for hand sanitizer at the beginning of the pandemic, we decided to step up and offer our services to our community. We partnered with FEW Spirits (a distillery based in Evanston, IL) in spring 2020, established an FDA-compliant facility, and offered hand sanitizer at-cost utilizing FEW Spirits' high-quality alcohol.



We opted for price-mending instead of price-gouging with our hand sanitizer. The lack of widespread availability caused many DIY and half-baked recipes to be released into the market. With FEW Spirits, we were committed to doing things safely and responsibly from the start by becoming FDA-compliant.

Over \$10,000 worth of hand sanitizer was donated along with soaps and other cleaning products to several organizations working to support at-risk populations and frontline workers, including fire departments and grocery stores.



On top of that, we also offered an option on our website for customers to donate bottles of hand sanitizers.

## PARTNERSHIPS

We have chosen to pursue partnerships and certifications with like-minded organizations so we can have the largest possible impact.



As a Member of **1% For the Planet**, we commit to donating at least 1% of our sales revenue to environmental causes. For the past several years we have donated at least 2% of our annual revenues to environmental and charitable nonprofits.

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**Women's Voices for the Earth** is our primary nonprofit beneficiary and donation partner.

WVE works to amplify women's voices to eliminate toxic chemicals that harm our health and communities.



**WOMEN'S VOICES  
FOR THE EARTH**  
OUR HEALTH. OUR FUTURE. TOXIC FREE.



Through our work with Women's Voices for the Earth, we joined the **Chemical Footprint Project** in 2019. CFP is a benchmarking tool for companies to use as they look to reduce the use of chemicals of concern. By participating, we are contributing to the broader data collection regarding the disclosure of safe chemicals.

We look forward to using our results to help us identify areas of improvement moving forward.



## CERTIFICATIONS

Certified



Corporation

As a **Certified B Corporation**, we've met rigorous standards around social change, environmental performance, transparency and accountability.

Meliora Cleaning Products has been a certified B Corporation since 2015. In 2020, we re-certified for the 3rd time, restating our commitment to a better approach to business. The rigorous assessment every B Corp goes through ensures that we're doing more than talking about how we value the people and planet around us - we're also working to make them better for the future.

We are proud to have been certified as a **Women-Owned business** in 2020 by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC). To be certified by WBENC, a business must be at least 51% owned, controlled, operated and managed by a woman or team of women. We are honored to be part of a community of female business owners.



The **MADE SAFE**® seal signifies that our products and ingredients have been examined for various impacts including endocrine disruption, buildup in the environment and our bodies, and aquatic toxicity.

The Leaping Bunny certification ensures we are not using animal testing anywhere in our supply chain. We've been **Certified Cruelty-Free** by The Leaping Bunny Program since 2017.



## SUSTAINABILITY TARGETS


Our company was founded on the idea that the products we use every day can be effective in your home and still safe for the planet and people around us.

We work hard to be able to offer our customers safe, effective products in sustainable packaging that limits their impact on the environment. We are continuously working to enhance our processes and to further reduce our limit on the environment. To help track our progress, we set Sustainability Goals.

### Our Sustainability Goals for 2020-2022

#### 2020-2021 Sustainability Goals

 **Waste Reduction:** Reduce our manufacturing waste by 10% over 2019

 **Waste Reduction:** Eliminate an all-time total of over 1 million single-use plastic bottles from the planet through responsible packaging design

 **Transparency:** Release our first annual Sustainability Report

 **Community:** 2% of sales revenue donated back to our local community

#### 2021-2022 Sustainability Goals

**Waste Reduction:** Reduce our manufacturing waste by 10% over 2020

**Waste Reduction:** Eliminate an all-time total of over 2 million single-use plastic bottles by expanding our product lines and continuously improving our packaging

**Transparency:** Develop an operating report for identifying opportunities to improve as a company

# 2020 OVERVIEW

## JANUARY

New product launch. **Oxygen Brightener**, a bleach alternative for laundry that's fragrance-free and plastic-free.

## FEBRUARY

New product launch. Plastic-free (electronic) **gift cards**.

## MARCH

The pandemic reaches the US. We adjusted our processes to protect our team from COVID including PPE, additional time off, hourly pay increases, social distancing and other safety measures.

## APRIL

New product launch. We teamed up with FEW Spirits Distillery to create **Hand Sanitizer**, which we sold at cost. Manufactured in our newly FDA-compliant facility, we provided a price-mending (not price-gouging) solution for people when they needed it most. In our spare time, we released our 1st Annual Sustainability Report.

## JUNE

New product launch. **Zero Waste Soap Bars** which we make with the scraps from other bar production, virtually eliminate our manufacturing waste from the soapmaking process. Our "temporary" pandemic-related pay increase becomes permanent. Through a donation to Chicago-based My Block, My Hood, My City, Meliora supports the Black Lives Matter movement and a need for equality for everyone.

## AUGUST

New product launch. Well, sort of. Our **All-Purpose Home Cleaner** gets better, through refill tablets and 80% less packaging waste.

## OCTOBER

**Laundry goes plastic-free.** A reusable, stainless steel scoop is now included in every canister, making the entire Laundry collection plastic-free. Subscriptions launch on our website, making ordering and saving more convenient. Newly expanded healthcare options are added to our benefits package, making life for our team a little better.

## DECEMBER

With your help we reached our goal of preventing over 1 million bottles from ever existing. We also received our Women Owned Business certification.



2020 was a tumultuous year. With the help of our community and our amazing team, we continued to grow and make an increasingly positive impact on our planet.

It was a wild year - thank you for continuing to support us every step of the way.

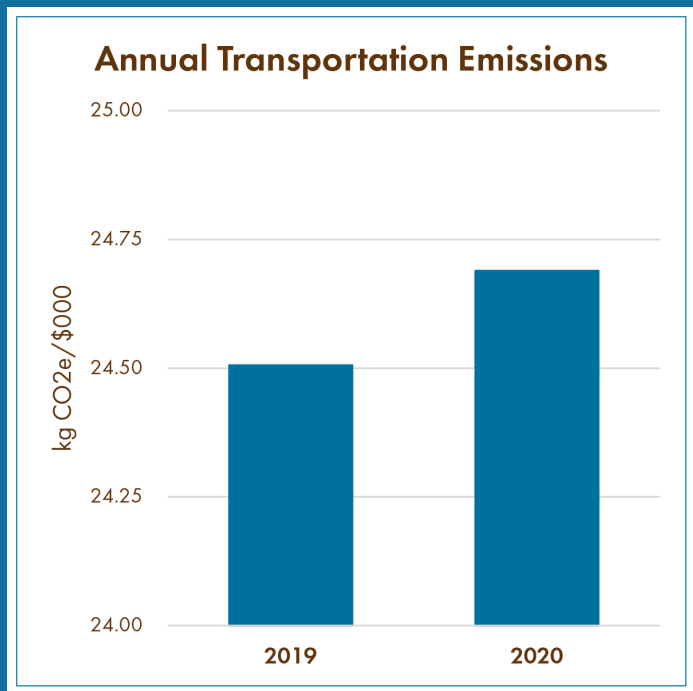
# SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS: ENERGY & EMISSIONS

When considering our company’s environmental impact, our biggest impact comes from the energy used in our manufacturing processes and in our transportation and distribution of products.

In 2020, the energy used in our manufacturing processes emitted 6,877 kg of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e). This was a slight increase over our 2019 manufacturing emissions, but an increase is to be expected given the increase in our units produced. In addition, we expanded the size of our factory in 2020 to accommodate our business growth, which also contributed to an increase in emissions. The environmental impact from the energy used in our manufacturing was equivalent to the impact of using 774 gallons of gasoline.

In 2020, the transportation and distribution of our products to customers emitted 37,533 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e. Although this was slightly more than double our 2019 transportation and distribution emissions of 17,399 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e, the annual emissions are very similar when normalized to revenues.

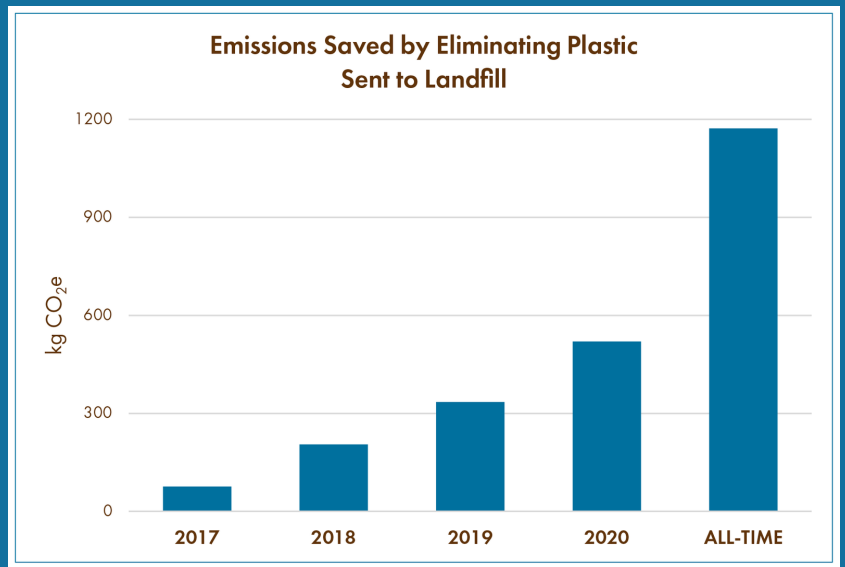
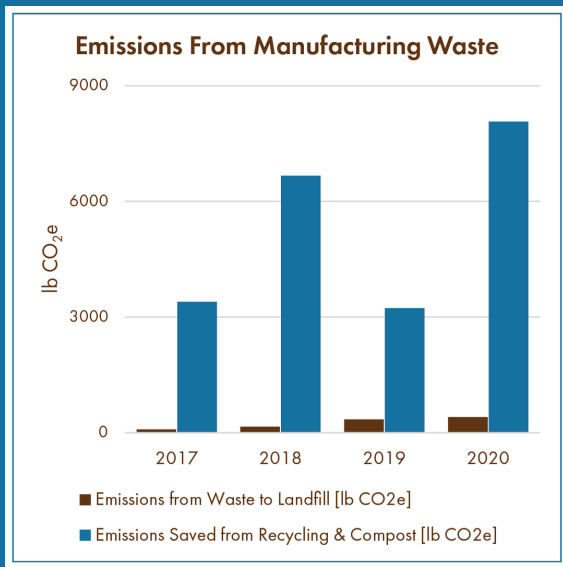
This rise in emissions, similar to our manufacturing energy emissions, is expected as our business grows. We will continue to monitor our emissions for any opportunities to improve efficiencies. The environmental impact from our transportation and distribution in 2020 was equivalent to the impact of the amount of energy used by 4.3 homes in one year.



# SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS: MANUFACTURING WASTE

Our manufacturing process also generates waste, which leads to the release of greenhouse gas emissions. These emissions contribute to the warming of our planet. The climate crisis is growing in urgency; we've begun to experience more frequent and more intense climatic events throughout the world. By actively trying to recycle and compost our manufacturing waste wherever possible, we are able to reuse materials that would have otherwise gone to landfill. Through this reuse, we are eliminating the need to source virgin materials, which prevents the generation of emissions that would have otherwise occurred.

Our emissions from manufacturing waste is shown in the chart below. The blue bar represents the emissions that we prevented from being released into the atmosphere by not sending our waste to landfill.



When normalized to our annual revenue, the amount of emissions from waste sent to landfill decreased in 2020. The emissions we avoided in 2020 by not sending our manufacturing waste to landfill was the same as switching 307 incandescent lamps to LEDs. It's also equivalent to the emissions generated from charging 1,029,550 smartphones.

# SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS: PACKAGING & THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

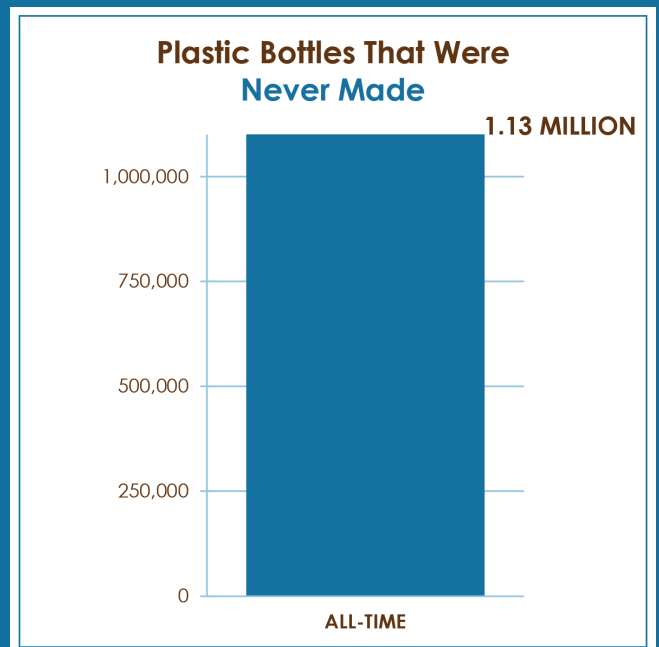
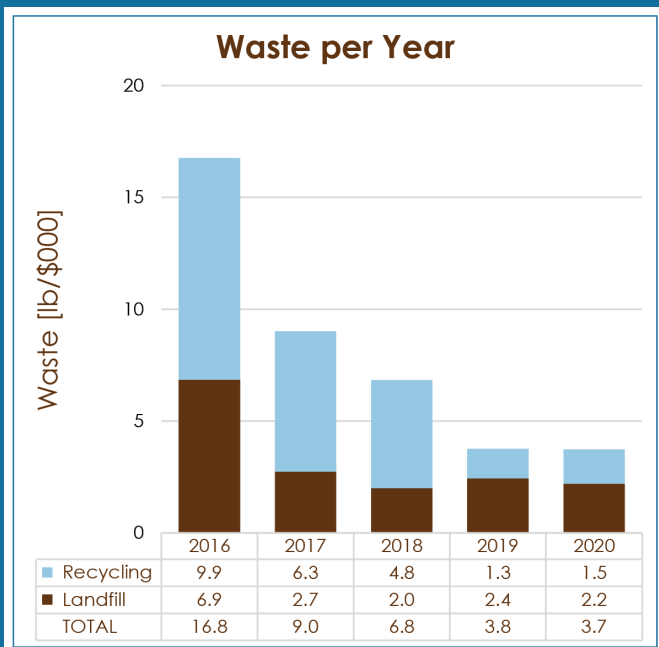
Through the use of our sustainable and reusable packaging, we are looking to support a transition to a circular economy.

In contrast to a linear economy in which products are sold and materials are used and then discarded, a circular economy provides economic, environmental and societal benefits by reusing materials as inputs into new products.

One element of the circular economy is to offer refill options to our customers. Traditional cleaning products come in single-use plastic containers. Emissions are generated whenever material is thrown away and also whenever new products are manufactured. The use of refill options reduces both types of emissions.

Although many companies use plastic packaging that is recyclable, studies show that only 9% of recyclable plastic actually gets recycled on average. The rest of the plastic gets sent to landfill, which has a significantly larger negative impact on the environment and generates larger amounts of greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming.

By using refills of Meliora Cleaning Products, our customers prevented 520 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e from being released in 2020 (assuming a 9% recycle rate). The chart here shows how this number has continued to increase each year in line with our sales growth.



## SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS: PACKAGING & THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

By offering refillable options to customers, we eliminate the need to manufacture a second, third or fourth container using additional plastic. In 2020, this amounted to the avoidance of 45,000 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e. This is the equivalent to the amount of carbon sequestered by 740 tree seedlings that have grown for ten years, or the environmental impact of driving a passenger vehicle 111,010 miles.

We were excited to announce in December 2020 that we had achieved our goal of **eliminating over one million plastic bottles from ever being produced**. The one million bottles that we prevented from ever existing are equivalent to roughly 73.8 tons of plastic by weight. This is the equivalent of 149 grand pianos or 7,380 car tires, if you're into those kinds of comparisons.

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Altogether, by preventing those million plastic bottles from being produced, we have been able to avoid the generation of 104,796 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e. This emissions avoidance has the equivalent environmental impact of using 11,792 gallons of gasoline or burning 115,471 pounds of coal.

Environmental sustainability is a continuous journey for us at Meliora Cleaning Products and we look forward to diverting two million plastic bottles and beyond.

The elimination of single-use plastics from our product line also made our supply chain more resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic. There were a lot of new entrants in the hand sanitizer and cleaning product markets in 2020, which reduced the supply and availability of plastic packaging. Since we mainly use paper and cardboard for our packaging, we didn't struggle with the same type of supply chain disruptions that others experienced.

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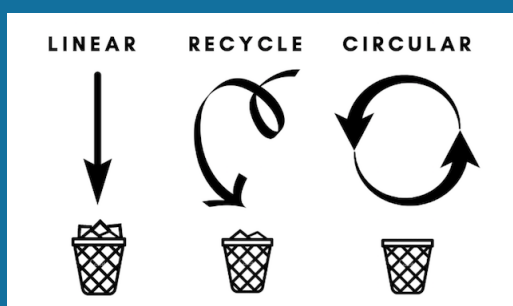


Image by [nourishwithbella.com](https://nourishwithbella.com)

# SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS: PACKAGING IMPROVEMENTS

As part of our pursuit to continuously improve and offer even more environmentally-friendly options, we launched new and upgraded products in 2020 across our Laundry, Home Cleaning and Bath & Body Soaps line that further reduced our environmental impact.

This year, we were able to start offering a stainless steel scoop with our Laundry Powder, making our laundry collection 100% plastic-free! We have been working to make better products since we founded Meliora Cleaning Products in 2013. It's in our name - "meliora" means better. We make sure our products are as people- and planet-friendly as we possibly can. That means not just better ingredients but also better packaging.

Transitioning our product line to be fully plastic-free is critical to us as a company and to the global community. It has become more challenging to find places that accept used plastic for recycling. This means the best solution is to prevent the production of plastic in the first place.



We asked our followers if they were interested in a metal scoop and we were overwhelmed by the positive support. After that post in July, we immediately researched our options and by October 2020, we made our laundry line 100% plastic-free!



## SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS: PACKAGING IMPROVEMENTS

Another product line that we made packaging upgrades to this year was our All-Purpose Home Cleaner and Refill Tablets.

These refill tablets can be used with our refillable glass spray bottle. It's as simple as dropping the tablet in the spray bottle then adding warm water and letting the tablet dissolve into the All-Purpose Home Cleaner spray. Once the refillable glass bottle is empty, add another Refill Tablet to get an additional bottle of cleaner with no trash and no mess, with no measuring involved.



The new 3-refill tablet format reduced the total weight of packaging for each refill by 80% compared to the 18-refill canister that we used to sell. The box for our All-Purpose Home Cleaner Refill Tablets is 100% paperboard, making it compostable/recyclable and zero-landfill. In addition to sustainable packaging, our ingredients are also good for the environment. We strive to make our products safe for the health of our customers and the health of our planet. Our All-Purpose Home Cleaner continues to be septic-safe, groundwater-safe, biodegradable and is MADE SAFE-certified.



We also made improvements to our Bath & Body Soaps line with our Zero-Waste Soap Bars.

These bars are made with a mix of the scraps left over from other soap bars that we manufacture. By using our leftover materials as inputs into new bars, we have been able to further reduce our waste. This makes our process truly zero-waste. Any scraps and cuttings are then tossed into the next batch of Zero-Waste Soap Bars.

## RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTS: SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN

As part of our mission to be a people- and planet-friendly business, we work hard to keep our supply chain as local as possible. We pride ourselves on being able to say that our products are 100% made in Chicago. Our entire manufacturing process takes place in our factory on the West Side of Chicago, from making soap to packaging the finished products. More than half of our total operating costs stay in Chicago and the Great Lakes region. We are glad to be a part of this great city and to be able to offer a product line wholly made in the U.S.

By manufacturing all our products within our own factory, we are also able to personally develop each detail of our manufacturing process. This provides our team with a greater understanding of each step along the value chain, including the environmental impact each product creates on a more detailed level. This allows us to be able to remove unnecessary waste along the way and to find process improvements that improve the environmental sustainability of our products.

To the best of our ability, we keep a focus on our local community throughout our entire supply chain. This allows us to support our local economies while also lowering our environmental footprint since our locally-sourced raw materials don't have to travel as far. For ingredients that we can't source locally, we still try to maintain a community connection.

For example, we are physically unable to source locally-grown and locally-manufactured coconut oil in the Chicago-area, but we do work with a local supplier who has access to sustainable distribution overseas. However, there is a readily available and local supply of sunflower oil, which we purchase from a supplier in Northeastern Wisconsin. Customers can see where each of our ingredients was sourced from in our comprehensive ingredient list on our website. A localized supply chain has economic benefits as well.

As evidenced by the events of 2020, adverse global events can have broad-ranging impacts on supply chains that are spread throughout the world. Because our supply chain is based on a network of regional suppliers for our key raw materials and packaging items, we worked with all of our suppliers to adapt as supply chain disruptions occurred.



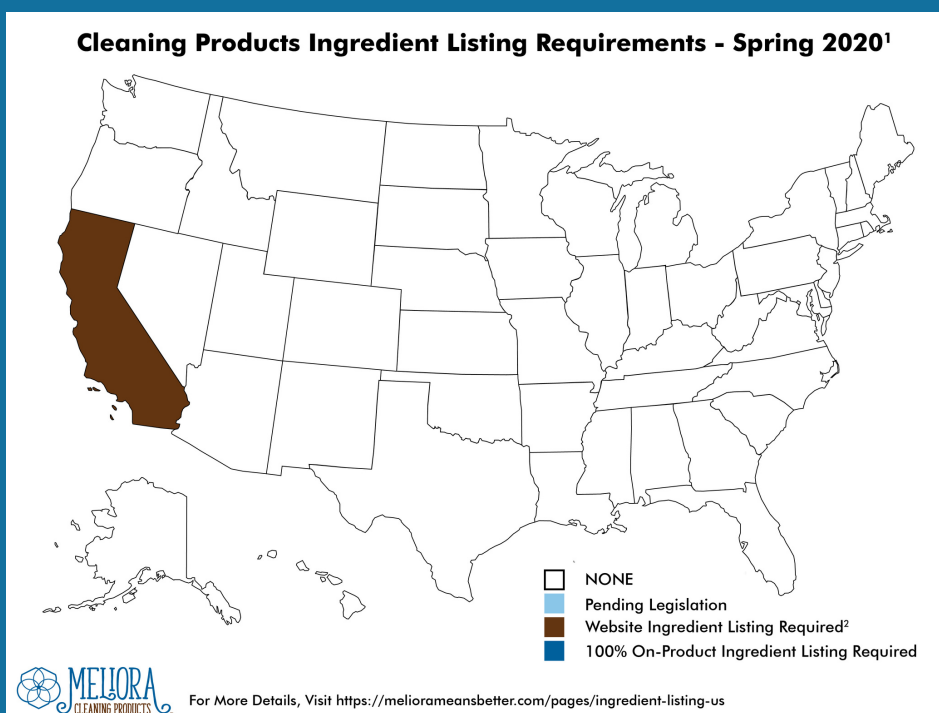
# RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTS: INGREDIENT TRANSPARENCY

A hallmark of our business is our open communication and transparency regarding our ingredients. One of the reasons we founded this company is because we were frustrated with how difficult it was to find a list of ingredients in conventional cleaning products. We wanted to make sure that our customers had access to the information they needed to be informed about what chemicals they're using in their homes. To that end, we proudly list all of our ingredients directly on the packaging for all of our products. We also provide a comprehensive ingredient glossary on our website where customers can view every ingredient used across our entire product line.

Additionally, we offer resources on our website for customers interested in learning about ingredient disclosure laws and requirements, such as the fact that there is no federal law requiring the disclosure of the ingredients used in home cleaning products. Currently, California is the only state (as of 2021) that requires ingredients to be listed on the product and for ingredients to be disclosed on the company website. We will continue to provide updates to our customers through our website as more states begin to implement legislation.

Beyond listing all of our ingredients, we create educational resources for our company on our website blog. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this has included links to articles explaining the science behind the COVID-19 virus and how to properly clean and protect your home.

## Cleaning Products Ingredient Listing Requirements - USA 2020



## RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTS: PRODUCT DESIGN & SAFETY

We are selective in the ingredients that we use because we want to provide our customers with only the safest, most effective products possible. Every product we sell is MADE SAFE certified, which means our ingredients have been screened to ensure they are safe for human health. None of our ingredients contain behavioral, developmental or reproductive toxins, carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, fire retardants, heavy metals, neurotoxins, high risk pesticides, toxic solvents or harmful VOCs.

In addition, all of the ingredients in our products are confirmed to be manufactured without continued testing on animals, as confirmed by our Leaping Bunny Cruelty-Free certification.

We have also received external validation of the safety of our products and ingredients. The Environmental Working Group (EWG) included our products in their *Guide to Healthy Cleaning* where we received a rating of an A, the highest rating possible. In addition, our products are vegan and do not contain any preservatives.

Our products are so safe for your entire family that we were included in the Cleaning & Laundry and Bathroom sections of the Health Pregnancy Guide by MADE SAFE and the Plastic Pollution Coalition. The guide is meant to help parents make better, safer choices for their families and the environment by providing advice about toxic chemicals and to give safe product recommendations.



We do not use any synthetic fragrances. Furthermore, we never use the word “fragrance” on our ingredient labels. This is a catch-all term that companies use on their labels to hide ingredients that have potentially harmful impacts on human and environmental health. There are hundreds of ingredients that can fall under the “fragrance” term in the U.S. that have never been tested for safety impacts. None of those ingredients are found in any products we make.

Instead, we use organic essential oils to create our scents. We include detailed information about the essential oils used in our “Ingredients” webpage. Our blog posts explain the option for customers to add their own essential oils to our unscented products, such as our All-Purpose Home Cleaner. Of course, offering our products with scent-free options allows those who have sensitivities or other preferences the option of the using fewest ingredients possible.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Donations

As part of our partnership with 1% For the Planet, we donate at least 2% of our revenue to environmental and community causes. Our primary donation partner is Women’s Voices for the Earth (WVE). The environmental and health impacts of toxic chemicals disproportionately affect women and girls. WVE advocates on behalf of women to reduce the use of toxic chemicals across the cleaning and personal care industries and in workplaces. In addition, we donate to the Plastic Pollution Coalition, a project of Earth Island Institute that works to create a world free of plastic pollution. In 2020, we also donated over \$10,000 worth of hand sanitizer and soaps to community groups in need and to frontline workers.

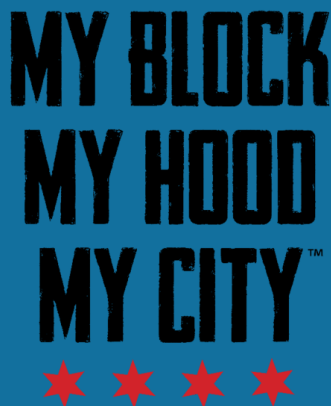


Photo credit: My Block, My Hood, My City

## Black Lives Matter

As a community and a country, we experienced a LOT in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic brought a lot of simmering societal injustices to the surface, including racial inequity. In support of our Chicago community, we made a monetary donation to a local Black-founded and operated nonprofit My Block, My Hood, My City. My Block, My Hood, My City focuses on direct, positive activity and on building connections between neighbors in our hometown of Chicago. We recognize and acknowledge that we need systemic change if we want to have a sustainable future for everyone and we are committed to supporting that change. If we want a better future for the next generation, we need to start taking action today.

# EMPLOYEES

We strive to be people- and planet-friendly. This means that we want to take care of our employees just as much as we want to take care of the environment. As our company has continued to grow, we have been able to expand our employee benefits.

In October 2020, we began offering company-sponsored healthcare plans to all fulltime employees. We also take pride in the fact that we pay all of our workers a living wage. In 2020, we provided our employees with a \$1/hour pay raise to recognize the difficulties and increased risks of working during the pandemic. In June 2020, we made the pay raise permanent for all employees.

Employee health and safety is also important to us, which was an issue that was brought to the forefront for all companies in 2020. We expanded our safety protocols in 2020 and required employees to wear face masks and to social distance. We instituted regular cleaning of high touch surfaces and are proud to say that we had zero hours lost due to COVID-19 related issues throughout 2020 and into 2021.

In December 2020, we were officially certified as a Women Owned Business by WBENC in recognition of our founder Kate being the majority owner and operator. As a women-owned business, we have always sought to provide equal opportunities across gender. We currently have 100% pay equity across genders. The same jobs receive the same amount of pay. In keeping with our commitment to pay employees a living wage, our executive pay ratio to our lowest full-time employee is less than 3:1.

We also strive for an inclusive workplace. In 2020, our permanent employee team was 78% female and 67% minority, as shown in the table below.

