



**Transcript: #441 The Most Dangerous Product in Your Home and How to Detox It  
with Stephen Ezell**

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Hello, everyone. I'm Dr. Wendy Myers. Welcome to the Myers Detox Podcast. And on this podcast, we talk about everything related to how to detox your life, your body, and your home. And if you want to join my email newsletter list and get the latest information on how to detox your body and home, and so many other talks, go to [myersdetox.com](http://myersdetox.com). And just click on anything to sign up for my [Heavy Metals Quiz](#), you can click a link on that, click a link on any ebook to download, and you'll get put on my email list.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Today, we have my really good friend, Stephen Ezell, on the show. And he's going to be talking about one of the most dangerous products in your home today and how to detox your home. And he is great. I always love him on the show. He has such a wealth of information on non-toxic living and how to detox your home. And so he is really a disruptive thought leader in the conscious capital movement. He's positioned multiple companies strongly in their markets, and he has currently created sustainable jobs in five different countries. Most relevant to today's talk, Stephen has built the fastest-growing Eco Chemical manufacturing company in America called Truly Free. And he has pioneered a refillable cleaning revolution with his brand Truly Free. He has inspired hundreds of thousands of families to live a non-toxic life. You can learn more about Steven and his Truly Free line of products at [trulyfreehome.com](http://trulyfreehome.com). Steven, thanks so much for joining the show.

**Stephen Ezell:** I am excited for today, Wendy. We haven't talked in a while, and I'm jazzed up for today.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Okay, awesome. Why don't you tell us, how did you start your non-toxic journey?

**Stephen Ezell:** So, the journey for me started 15 years ago, when my firstborn son, we had five kids, but when our firstborn son was a three-week-old little baby shrimp. Now, we have lots of kids, so if everyone's breathing, no one's bleeding, everything's fine. But when it's your first kid, it's a big deal. Everything's a big deal. So when my oldest son was a tiny baby, I was in charge of one of his first baths. And I was getting him undressed, and it looked like he was scolded in hot boiling water. And I totally freaked out, and I called my wife over, and she's a NICU nurse. I saw her freak out, so we all freaked out and ran straight to the pediatrician. From the pediatrician to the dermatologist, in the dermatologist we were at the pharmacy.

**Stephen Ezell:** And a family member called and said, Hey, what are you using for laundry detergent? And I said, what do you mean? I'm using what grandma always uses, the big bright bottle from the supermarket. And she said, no, you can't use that, you really need to use something that's safer because kids can get allergic reactions. I had no idea. So she said, well, before you give him all this pharmaceutical stuff, why don't you strip his clothes, and wash it in this homemade thing, and see what happens. So we did, and the next day he was fine. That was my aha moment, and then I became a full-blown eco conspiracy theorist. Everything has to go in my house.

**Stephen Ezell:** And then years went by, and we moved from New York to Michigan. I met this really awesome grandma selling laundry soap at the local farmer's market. She needed an investor. That was a decade ago. She has since, well, retired from the business. And now, what started off with three people, concrete mixers making laundry soap in a garage, is now the largest, fastest-growing Eco Chemical manufacturer in the country.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Now, that's amazing. Tell us about your business, what you make, the laundry detergents, and all that.

**Stephen Ezell:** Yeah. So, we started with laundry soap, and we now have, between cleaning products and skincare products, over a hundred products. But when we first started, we were making liquid laundry detergent because that's what you need. You need liquid products for a high efficient washer. And we were selling in health food stores and supermarkets. And I had this idea to build a website, so we started building a website. I didn't know anything about it and started building a website back in '15. And about a couple of weeks before our launch, of what we were going to launch, I had the bright idea to go to the post office and find out how much does it cost to ship four pounds, 50 ounces of liquid laundry products from Northern Michigan to all the major cities; California, New York, Florida, et cetera, and we found that it was going to cost about \$14 to ship our laundry jug. We were planning on charging \$15 for the product. So, we knew that was to go out of business strategy.

**Stephen Ezell:** So we were like, what do we do now? And so we started asking crazy questions like, what if you didn't ship water? And what if, what if, what if? And what came

out of these what if think-tank that we had was the world's first refillable cleaning system. So, you get an empty laundry jug or now a spray bottle with cleaning product once, and then you just get a concentrated packet in the mail when you need it. When you go to a supermarket, or you go to a club store, you get these big honking jugs of 250 loads of liquid laundry products, and you get to put it on a back brace and a-

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Oh, my gosh.

**Stephen Ezell:** And a wheel dolly to get it out the store, right?

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Yeah. And I felt so guilty throwing those gigantic jugs away. I mean, for years I felt terrible.

**Stephen Ezell:** Oh, my gosh.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** And I would recycle them, but you're still like, is it really getting recycled? But it's just a lot of waste and plastic that's horrible for the planet.

**Stephen Ezell:** Totally. So, since we've started, the company used to be called My Greenfills. We've now rebranded the company Truly Free, which is what we represent, freedom from toxic chemicals, and census plastic, et cetera, and just freedom, which is a bizarre idea in today's world. We have saved over 14 million pieces of plastic from ever being produced.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** That's amazing.

**Stephen Ezell:** And many of that would be floating in our oceans right now. Not to mention the millions of gallons of toxic sewage that would be in the water treatment plants or the toxic chemicals that would be on people's backs that they wear every day. So, we've reinvented a category over a decade ago and just pushing the envelope on creativity, green chemistry, plant-based chemistry, and now building a movement. We've got a massive community of hundreds of thousands of family members all over the world that have switched from the store-bought toxic nonsense to refillable safe products.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Yeah. And what is the problem with the laundry detergents in the store? I mean, my audience is pretty well versed about this stuff, but really just drive that point home that I think people really need to rethink every product they're using in their home and putting on their body. And when you wear clothes, you're just soaking in whatever chemical you're washing those clothes with, you're just soaking that in all day long when you wear those clothes.

**Stephen Ezell:** Well, I know that your community is well astute because they know you, and you're such an amazing thought leader in bringing awareness to all this stuff. So, I'll get a little bit more nerdy than I would on a general podcast because I know your community is way more up to speed. So, the takeaway message is that back

in the forties and fifties, the advent of the soap opera, the petrochemical boom, all the bike products of the petrochemical industry came, and like, what do we do with all these byproducts? And out of that came cleaning. And one of the major things that happened in the laundry aisle is that these conventional products, they're usually blue, they're green, in liquid, they're very goopy, and the reason why they're blue or green is there's a class of chemicals that brand this umbrella of ultraviolet light brighteners, UV brighteners, and they're designed to leave a blue or green film on your fabrics.

**Stephen Ezell:**

So that under artificial light, it tricks your eyes into believing that your clothes are bright and they really are. So, when you go to the store and people buy clothes at the mall, over 90% of all the fabrics that you buy at the mall are coded with UV brighteners. And it's only to serve as an optical illusion. It's just subconscious marketing to get people to trick them into buying the clothes off the shelf. And what the laundry chemical industry does is they intentionally leave these chemicals on the fabrics. But under the US Patent Trademark Association or USPTO law, if it's under 1% concentration, which it is, these manufacturers, including me, don't even have to list it on the label.

**Stephen Ezell:**

So, you actually don't know what is on the fabrics and what's being absorbed into your skin. That's one. Second is the perfume industry, which is a crazy industry. Because you could take something as toxic as a complete raw sewage that smells terrible, but in parts per million blended with almonds may smell like Hazelnuts. And so the perfume industry is almost a completely unregulated industry because they're using these tiny parts per million of different compounds to make these fragrances and these perfumes. And the chemical manufacturers don't actually have to tell you what's in the product. So, those are the two main issues.

**Stephen Ezell:**

Then you have all these other classifications of surfactants, buffers, fillers, and pH regulators, which all create this Pharmacopia of nasty stuff that gets put on our body. And that's why we started in laundry, Wendy, and really passionate about that category because it's the largest in the industry. So, think about when you go to the supermarket, you have the laundry aisle, which is laundry everything. Then you go to the next aisle, and it's literally everything else from dish to hand soap to all-purpose cleaners and window cleaners, everything's in one aisle, but the laundry aisle is just laundry detergent or fabric softener. And people are literally wearing these chemicals all day long. And it just leads to a whole bunch of health issues, and people are like, oh, well, it must be something else. Well, you're breathing in, and your immune system is constantly being bombarded with all these chemicals, and it's just not cool. That's why we started there, and we're really passionate about that category.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:**

Yeah. I remember when I used to get my clothes out of the laundry, and I just loved that certain detergents would have this fresh scent, I associated that with it being clean, and nothing could have been further from the truth.

**Stephen Ezell:** Yeah. It's pretty nuts. We use 98% of all of our products have, just essential oils. We do use some plant-based fragrance oils just so that we can carry some scent past the dryer. And we do that intentionally because the majority of consumers if they don't have a sensory experience, it's not clean. And I actually did a little human study almost a decade ago now because I really wanted to know what people really wanted in the laundry. And there used to be a theory that people wanted whiter whites and brighter brights. Now, it's very common knowledge that people really don't care about whiter whites and brighter brights. They care about smell. And that's why the marketing of the eighties and nineties was always about whiter whites and brighter brights and the towels flapping in the wind, and now it's all about people smelling a towel and having this amazing sensory experience.

**Stephen Ezell:** So, I went to Bed Bath & Beyond here in town, Northern Michigan, got two brand new hand towels. I came out of the parking lot, I rubbed one on my truck, made it dirty, went to the supermarket, grabbed the big, bright orange in the blue bottle and, sprayed this dirty now rag with this laundry detergent and fabric softener, drove across the street to the mall with my little hat on, and I walked around and said, Hey, we're doing a test, let me know which one you think is better or cleaner, and which one do you like better? And seven out of 10 people chose the dirty rag because they all smelled it.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Oh, wow.

**Stephen Ezell:** Yeah. So, I became convinced people have been brainwashed and believe that smell is an indicator of efficacy when it's not. But that's what we've been conditioned as a society to believe.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Yeah. And what are the health consequences of that, of people choosing by smell, choosing toxic laundry detergents full of perfume? What are some of the health issues and ramifications of that?

**Stephen Ezell:** So again, I'm not a doctor, and I can't make any health claims because we're a manufacturer, but I'll tell you what the research shows. And I'll tell you a little bit about the industry. So, there's one chemical that, for some reason, the industry is really gravid: SLS, Sodium lauryl sulfate, everyone's like, oh, it's SLS free. And SLS is basically you take coconut oil, and it gets synthesized, and heat with a surfactant, and it creates soap out of coconut oil. And it's pretty harsh on the skin, it's a respiratory irritant, but it's not crazy nasty. There are other groups of surfactants that are dangerous. You don't even want to breathe them. They're super nasty. So, SLS got this really bad rap, which we don't use, of course. But it's in toothpaste, and SLS is in cake mix, so if you get that velvety smooth cake at the store. So, there are surfactants and so many things.

**Stephen Ezell:** So then SLS got this really bad rap, so then the industry switched to SLES, which is the greener version, which means it's sodium lauryl ether sulfate. And that Ethoxylation process, it kicks off a byproduct called 1,4-Dioxane, which is a

documented carcinogen, so when you Ethoxylation, it's a fact that you're actually creating an unknown cancer-causing agent. And there are many green companies that are using SLES as an SLS replacement when it's even more nasty than its predecessor. So the industry's wild and very unregulated, so we decided to do something about it. And we've just been on the cutting edge of plant-based chemistry for years, and pushing the envelope of creativity, using essential oils and based fragrance oils that are the least synthesized in the chain as possible, and do a great job, and outperform the nasty stuff by using natural things.

**Stephen Ezell:** And we're bad at business because these other companies are great business people. They hide all of their formulas, and they'd say, hey, it's a blend of surfactants, or it's fragrance or perfume. And we're really bad at business because we literally list our entire formula on our website, hoping that our competitors will copy us. It serves as a success for us, but we joke around. If we were good business people, we'd hide like them. But we have nothing to hide behind, and we hope that lots of other companies copy us.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** I love that. I love that. And so let's talk about what is the most dangerous product in people's households right now? Because I know you have a whole range of products, and there are so many different chemicals or chemical-laden toxic products that people use in their homes to try to "clean their home." So, tell us what it is.

**Stephen Ezell:** I would say that there are two products that are the most common really dangerous things in people's houses; one is drain cleaner, and the other is oven cleaner. So, those two classes of chemicals are just wicked, especially if it's the easy type of aerosol sprayers for cleaning the oven. But to me, the most dangerous chemical in your house is your laundry detergent

**Stephen Ezell:** Ounce for ounce, the oven cleaner is way more toxic, but how often do you spray your armpits and your body with oven cleaner? Well, if you're a normal human, it's never, you don't do that. One, because within minutes, you're going to get chemical burns and you're going to the hospital, so most people would not be spraying their bodies with oven cleaner. But how often do you wear, not you, but I mean you, the listener, wears laundry chemicals? Well, if you go to the supermarket, you're wearing them right now, you're literally wearing laundry chemicals all day long, when you get out of the shower, your pores are open, and you take a towel that's laden in these chemicals, and you're making micro strides from the chemicals that are dried on this towel, and you're wiping them in your body. And then you're sleeping on them, and you're wearing them, and when you should be detoxifying out of your armpits and behind your knees, you're creating sweat, you're re-hydrating these chemicals, and you're making a pathway for them to get in your body.

**Stephen Ezell:** So, to me, that's the most dangerous category. Even though the acute toxicity of oven cleaner or drain cleaner is way more dangerous, laundry is where to start.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Yeah. I mean, that's a really good point that you make right there because I think people don't really think through these things. They're not really thinking through. They're trying to get rid of the bacteria on their clothing and using laundry detergent with antibacterial agents is my worst nightmare. But can you talk a little bit about that, the problem with that?

**Stephen Ezell:** So, the industry has woken up a little bit, and one of the main ingredients that has been enlightened over the years is Triclosan which is a class of chemicals which is a documented carcinogen that was used in all, mostly the antibacterial soaps and cleaners. And especially in this post-COVID era, everyone's concerned about germs, and we shouldn't be concerned about germs. God gave you an immune system. Take care of that; you're fine. And everyone's concerned about killing bugs. So, laundry chemicals and antibacterial. Most germs and viruses can't survive in an alkaline environment, and laundry detergents, all of them, our included, are alkaline.

**Stephen Ezell:** They can survive in an environment where lipid fats break apart. Well, that's what soap does, that's why everybody's like, hey, wash your hands for 20 seconds, which is soap and water. Because literally the soap itself lowers the surface tension of those oils, and they break apart, so all the pay oil of a germ or bacteria dies. So, you have absolutely zero need for disinfecting your laundry. And if you have a dryer, while your dryer's getting to 180 degrees, that's cooking everything that's in there too. And if you're a purist like we are this time of year in Northern Michigan, we actually have a clothesline, I know it's a novel idea, and the sun kills all that stuff and naturally brightens clothes too. So there's no need to have anything that kills anything in your house, especially laundry.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Yeah. Tell me about Dryer Sheets because I hate Dryer Sheets. I absolutely detest them. And talk to us about that and why those are probably the super, super toxic part of people's laundry routine?

**Stephen Ezell:** The leading laundry sheet, again, I can't mention names. You can, I can't, it averages around 11 documented carcinogens. So, there are a lot of very nasty chemicals, and the majority of them are petroleum-based chemicals because you're designed with non-ion surfactants and negatively charged ions to mitigate static, add UV brightener, but mostly is to add fragrance, add a really "nice smell," to the laundry. So, it's really the solvents that are used in impregnating those sheets with the fragrances is just nasty stuff, I mean, nasty. So again, we needed to replace those. We replaced everything in the home that's Truly Free. So this is actually my favorite product we've ever made. I think you know about our Dryer Angel project.

**Stephen Ezell:** I love this story. So, we wanted to replace dryer sheets because our laundry detergent, our laundry wash, and our softening rinse, which you call final rinse, it does leave a little bit of essential oil smell, but it's not a fragrance bomb, and people want that sensory experience. But when you're dealing with essential oils and plant-based fragrance oils, they don't last a whole line, a long time out

of the dryer because they're volatile, and they don't stick. So, our members were demanding that their clothes would smell nice.

**Stephen Ezell:** So we came up with this Dryer Sheet alternative called Dryer Angels. I don't have one on my desk, but it's a hand sewn angel, it's filled with a saché corn cob material and essential oils. You throw it in the dryer, fluster clothes real nice, smells awesome. With that one product, we funded Deaf in Jamaica, we've started multiple industries in Jamaica, but we have 12 full-time women that sew Dryer Angels in Jamaica. And years ago, that ministry couldn't keep up with our growth, so we partnered with another group out of Southeast Asia. That one product has liberated hundreds of women out of sex trafficking. So, we literally liberate and free slaves. They get rehabilitated, they get healed.

**Stephen Ezell:** And then many, we have another dozen women in Southeast Asia that were formally trafficked and gone through some really amazing transformation stories. They have sustainable jobs sewing Dryer Angels for us. And now we're opening up a sewing shop in Haiti, on the border of Haiti, Dominican Republic, on the DR site. Again, under the intention of creating sustainable jobs in communities where women are at risk or have been formally trafficked. So, it's a real mission-driven product. I'm really fired up about the lives we've changed through it, just through replacing dryer sheets.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Yeah. And I love that. I love that you're doing things to help the planet, not only as far as the chemicals and helping liberate people's homes, help them to make them more non-toxic, but also helping so many women around the world with this project. It's just amazing.

**Stephen Ezell:** Yeah. It's been quite the journey. And again, we started off with three of us with an idea, a guy with a laptop and a concrete mixer mixing up soap. Now it's almost 130 employees all around the world. And it's been pretty wild to see how God has just used us to create change and impact the industry. And now there are lots of companies that are doing refills and chasing after us, which is great. Please, not only do I welcome the competition, the industry has to change anyway, so we're honored that we were the catalyst to start it. It just took us 10 years to be an overnight success. We were the forerunner paving the way for a new industry.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Yeah. And I think another reason you're so successful is you care so much about people. You clearly are just a giving person, a caring person, and you care about your customers. You call them your family. And I just really love the work that you're doing. And I was just really happy to have you on the show again.

**Stephen Ezell:** Wendy, even before you and I became friends, I've always been a fan of your work. I know you've taken an incredible risk in your career, educating and exposing the truth and enabling people to heal on their journey. And the fact that I get to rub elbows, and support, and create value for thought leaders like you, this is life mission work.



**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Yes.

**Stephen Ezell:** Keep up your good work too, please.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Yeah. Thank you. I know we met on the Dr. Mandy TV show, which was a fateful encounter. And it was just a pleasure to meet you. And I loved your segment on that show, and I thought, wow, I just really love your work and what you're doing.

**Stephen Ezell:** Well, thank you very much. We'll keep up the good work I promise.

**Dr. Wendy Myers:** Yes. And so, everyone, thank you so much for tuning in to the Myers Detox Podcast. I'm Dr. Wendy Myers. And I bring you the world's experts on how to have a non-toxic home, how to detox your body, and other topics that are really important to you, helping meet your health goals because you deserve to feel good. And I hope that the show helped you today. Talk to you soon.