



Photo courtesy Debi Bodinus

Designs by Debi Bodinus are all made from eco-friendly materials



Photo courtesy Debi Bodinus

Bodinus incorporates beautiful aesthetics and innovative touches in all of her luxury furniture

Designer Debi Bodinus shares tips for furnishing an Earth-friendly home

Aside from separating papers, plastics and biodegradable wastes, to live a green lifestyle, consumers also need to consider the health and environmental threats posed by toxic chemicals and carcinogens commonly emitted by typical household furnishings. Debi Bodinus, creative mastermind behind Eco-Luxury, a truly green, chemical-free, Earth-friendly furniture collection, explains that the plastics, rubbers, paints and even cushions from most furniture emit poisonous gasses into our environment, the air and eventually our bodies.

"Our homes and our buildings become almost like a chemical soup that we live and work in, (and) these chemicals are being absorbed into our lungs and skin," says Bodinus.

The process is called outgassing. it occurs in nearly all manufactured goods. Chemical-laden materials slowly release various gasses into the air. if outgassing occurs in enclosed spaces, such as a home or office, it can build up and pose serious health risks to those exposed.

Near the top of the offenders' list is formaldehyde, a chemical compound found in nearly everything from cushions and foam to plywood, paints, pigments and flooring. it is known to cause severe headaches and aggravate asthma, as well as cause cancer.

Other carcinogens include VOCs (volatile Organic Compounds) commonly found in paints and dyes, and polyurethane frequently used in foam, upholstery,

bedding and insulation. Perhaps the most dangerous of the cancer-causing commonly outgassed chemicals, however, are flame-retardants like the very popularly produced PBDE (Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers).

It's the dangerous effects of these chemical-laden creations that led Bodinus to develop both Eco-Luxury and her newly released baby line, Eco Baby Luv. "i created this line out of necessity. Our furniture is so highly toxic, and typically it's not sustainable," explains Bodinus.

One of the first things she did in developing her furniture line was find a healthy, sustainable and legal alternative to PBDEs. She found it in naturally flame-retardant organic wool.

By incorporating organic "eco-wools" into the construction of her furniture, Bodinus is able to produce pieces that meet the California fire code, the strictest in the nation. However, the sustainability of her collection far exceeds organic fibers. Bodinus insists on wood harvested only from sustainable forests, water-based glues and dyes free of VOCs, and spring systems and staples made out of 95 percent recycled steel.

"i feel really good about the (completely chemical-free) products that i've produced. They have design flair and style," Bodinus says of her aesthetically pleasing and all-natural furniture.

Bodinus, who has been in the design industry for nearly 25 years, began researching toxic chemicals in common products and materials following her brother's lung cancer diagnosis in 2006. "(after his death) i made a strong commitment to myself that i would no longer design projects that weren't in alignment with what i believed in, and that is to create environments that are healthy and safe to live in," says Bodinus.

For more information, visit Bodinus' websites at www.4greendesign.com and www.ecobabyluv.com. Bodinus is also available by appointment; call  (888) 815-3513 .