

PHOSPHATES

The Chemical Culprits in Your Home and What You Can Do About It

Phosphates are in most detergents and fertilizers today. When we use them they impact water quality.

Why Are Phosphates Such a Problem?

Phosphates are an inorganic chemical found in agricultural fertilizers, manure and organic wastes found in sewage and industrial discharges. Too many phosphates in lakes, rivers and streams cause algae to grow. Algae-covered water is less attractive for fishing and swimming and other forms of aquatic recreation.

Phosphates can feed the growth of toxic- blue-green algal blooms, which are harmful to people, pets and wildlife. Phosphates spur the excessive growth of nuisance algae. When there is too much algae in surface water and the algae dies, the rotting algae can deplete the oxygen in the water and result in fish kills. Severe algal blooms may directly poison animals that consume the algae or cause allergic reactions in people who swim in the polluted water.

Read the reverse for three areas where you can make a positive impact on your community's water and the environment.



Benefits to Reducing Phosphate Use:

- Helps the community keep water treatment costs down.
- Aquatic recreation remains as an attraction for tourists and the local community.
- Supports the environment in its natural state.



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EASY WAYS TO REDUCE PHOSPHATES



In Your HOME

Read labels to find phosphate-free soaps, detergents and household cleaners when possible.

Select the proper load size when using your washing machine.

Try to just run full loads in the dishwasher and washing machine.

Use the correct amount of detergent.



For Your LAWN

Choose natural fertilizers.

Sweep up to prevent runoff.

Mulch when mowing to reduce need for fertilizer application.



For Your VEHICLE

Use a commercial car wash when possible. Many filter and recycle their water.

If washing your car at home, use phosphate-free soaps and don't park on concrete so water is filtered before reaching drainage systems.



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