



Lake George Association

People Protecting the Lake Since 1885

NEWS RELEASE

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For IMMEDIATE RELEASE

No Phosphorus Bill Heads to Governor's Office

LAKE GEORGE, NY (June 30, 2010) -- The Lake George Association (LGA) is seeking support from residents of the Lake George watershed for a New York State environmental bill limiting phosphorus use, headed to Governor Patterson's office for signature into law. The bill, # S3780B, has been approved unanimously by both the state senate and assembly. "We applaud our legislature for this bold action," said Walt Lender, executive director of the Lake George Association.

The purpose of the bill is to limit the amount of phosphorus in dishwashing detergent, limit the use of lawn fertilizer containing phosphorus, and reduce phosphorus discharges into the waters of the state. Since phosphorus in stormwater runoff is a huge threat to the water quality of Lake George, along with other waters in the state, this new legislation will greatly help to protect water quality.

On June 25th the state senate passed the bill 60-0, and today, on June 30, the assembly voted 103-0 to approve the bill as well. Now it is headed to the governor; he has 10 calendar days to act. The LGA is asking Lake George area residents, as well as those who enjoy recreational activities on the Lake, to contact the governor in support of the bill. Citizens may call 518-474-8390 or visit <http://www.state.ny.us/governor/contact/index.html> to send an email.

The first part of the bill amends Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) and prohibits the sale or distribution of cleansing products for household dishwashers containing more than 0.5 percent by weight of a phosphorus compound after July 1, 2010. The bill proposes a longer timeframe for the prohibition of phosphorus cleaning products used by commercial establishments; distribution and sales for these products must cease after July 1, 2013.

The second part of the bill creates a new article, Article 21: Nutrient Runoff, to Title 17 of the ECL. It prohibits the application of phosphorus fertilizer on lawns or non-agricultural turf, except when a soil test demonstrates that additional phosphorus is needed for turf growth, or when a new lawn or non-agricultural turf is being established. Article 21 also prohibits the application of fertilizer on impervious surfaces, and on lawn or non-agricultural turf between December first and April first. In addition, phosphorus fertilizer cannot be applied within 20 feet of surface water, except where there is a continuous vegetative buffer of at least ten feet from the water body. When a spreader guard,

deflector shield or drop spreader is used, the application would be prohibited within three feet of any surface water.

The law also calls for educational signage at retail establishments selling fertilizers and allows local governments to adopt more stringent standards. To read the full text of the bill, go to <http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/> and then search for bill #S3780B.

“While clearly some compromises had to be made, such as the three-foot exception for spreader guards, this law is a huge step forward in protecting Lake George and other lakes in the state,” said Emily DeBolt, the LGA’s director of education. “Towns around the lake can still pass and enforce stricter laws to further protect Lake George, just as the town of Lake George recently did. Not everyone is fortunate to have access to water as clean as Lake George, and because we want our water to stay that way, we are urging our community to contact the governor to support this bill.”

The LGA is a non-profit membership organization of people interested in working together to protect, conserve, and improve the beauty and quality of the Lake George Basin. The LGA is celebrating its 125th anniversary this year. For more information, contact the LGA at (518) 668-3558 or visit the LGA website at www.lakegeorgeassociation.org.

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