

Toxic and Harmful Algal Blooms **"Phosphates in Detergent"**

Since the 1970's, many states have enacted detergent phosphate bans or restrictions in the attempt to minimize eutrophication of lakes. (For more information see the EPA's web site (<http://www.epa.gov>) or download the EPA's publication, The Quality of Our Nation's Water (<http://www.epa.gov/owowwtr1/305b/water.pdf>), or visit the U.S. Geological Survey's web site entitled "Water Science for Schools" (<http://ga.water.usgs.gov/edu/index.html>).

Investigate the detergent phosphate regulations in your state and report your findings to your class. Things you might want to discuss include:

- history of phosphate usage in your state
- legislation that has been proposed and/or passed to regulate the use of phosphates in detergent
- phosphate levels found in your local lakes (historic and recent)
- sources of phosphate in your community today