

# Dishwasher soap ban, change to shoreline act go 'green'

◆ **New laws:** Both measures, signed by the governor yesterday, are designed to protect the environment.

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**MEREDITH** — A measure intended to simplify the process of getting a permit for shoreline work was signed into law yesterday.

Gov. John Lynch also signed a law that will force consumers to change to phosphorus-free automatic dishwasher detergent next July 1.

Lynch described both laws as critical to keeping the state's waters clean.

"We want to be able to turn over an environment to our kids that is even better than the one given to us," Lynch said, surrounded by children, some of whom were fishing on the Meredith Town Docks.

Harry Stewart, director of the Water Division at the state Department of Environmental Services, said the legislation represents "a significant step

forward."

He said the changes to the Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act under Senate Bill 134 — which regulates the use of land within 250 feet of shore — are aimed at making it "more user friendly and understandable" to shorefront owners who may want to alter their properties.

A permit-by-notification process means that a property owner will be able to begin work within seven days and there will be less paperwork than before, he said. The fees are also lower. That measure will go into effect in mid-September.

## Stopping algae growth

Some areas of the country already have a ban on automatic dishwasher detergent containing phosphates. Other detergents and cleansers already are free of the chemical, which promotes the growth of algae in fresh water.

Congress has been exploring a national ban, but has not yet taken action. Other states that have enacted or are considering a ban are Vermont, New York, Massachusetts, Mary-

land, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Michigan and Illinois.

Sunapee State Rep. Suzanne Gottling said the New Hampshire Lakes Association approached her to sponsor the bill.

The only thing the detergent industry wanted to see in House Bill 350 was an assurance that the ban did not go into effect any earlier than July 1, 2010, so it can deplete its existing stock and reformulate products for store shelves.

"But you don't have to wait," Gottling said, urging the public to go to their grocery store and buy "green" dishwasher detergent.

"That's your job," she said, "go and ask about it."

In Spokane County, Wash., which already has the ban, people have traveled to neighboring Idaho to buy dishwasher detergent with phosphates; they believe there is no good, green alternative yet created by the soap industry.

Consumer Reports says there are at least two phosphate-free brands that do the job as well as those with phosphates.