

# Maryland to ban phosphorus in soap

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Maryland lawmakers approved a ban on dish detergent containing phosphorus in an effort to keep phosphates out of Chesapeake Bay.

Gov. Martin O'Malley says he will approve the measure, which was passed by the Maryland House of Delegates Thursday and last week in the Senate, the Washington Post reported Friday.

Environmental advocates say phosphorus is one of the top pollutants in Chesapeake Bay, where it encourages oxygen-depleting algae blooms.

Phosphorus is used in dishwashing detergent to reduce mineral levels in the water and prevent food particles from depositing again on dishes. Detergent makers will have to reduce the amount of phosphorus in their soap from 7 percent to 1/2 of 1 percent.

The Senate version of the bill gives soap makers two years to become phosphate free, while the House has said it wants to give manufacturers an extra year beyond that.

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