

Dishes not as clean as they once were?

The cause of this is not the water. The cause is a new government regulation that went into effect July 1, 2010. This new Law limits the use of phosphates in dish washer detergent to .5% from an industry average of 7%. Phosphates ensure several functions in dishwasher detergents, necessary to ensure effective cleaning. Phosphates essentially soften the effects of "hard" water, combining with the minerals in it, mostly calcium and magnesium, thereby eliminating the spots and film on dishes that can form when the minerals and food bits combine during the wash. Phosphates also make the water's pH more alkaline, which helps in food-bit removal.

Why Were Phosphates Removed?

Phosphates are like a fertilizer. In fact most dish detergents made prior to July 1,2010 contain between 4 and 8 percent phosphate content by weight, about the same amount as household fertilizers, such as Miracle Grow. Sewage treatment plants and private septic systems can remove much but not all of the phosphates from wastewater, so some of it ends up in lakes, streams and rivers. The result is an increases algae and aquatic weed growth in water bodies. Too much algae depletes oxygen needed for healthy fish and aquatic life.

For more info visit the links below.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/19/science/earth/19clean.html>

<http://www.npr.org/2010/12/15/132072122/it-s-not-your-fault-your-dishes-are-still-dirty>