

SAFEGUARDS

SGS CONSUMER TESTING SERVICES

HARDLINES

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CANADA AMENDS PHOSPHORUS CONCENTRATION REGULATION IN CERTAIN CLEANING PRODUCTS

Canada's Government amends the Phosphorus Concentration Regulation under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999. The amendment broadens the scope of the Regulations to include other detergents and cleaners, and lowers the limits on permissible phosphorus concentrations.



Since 1989 the Phosphorus Concentration Regulations included a maximum allowed limit of 2.2 % in laundry detergents. In June 2009, the regulations were amended to

broaden the scope of the restriction on phosphorus in many other varieties of detergents and cleaners, both household use and industrial and commercial.¹ Phosphorus based compounds are common ingredients used in varieties of detergents and cleaners to soften the water, reduce spotting and rusting, keep dirt particles in suspension, and enhance surfactant performance. The release of phosphorus into the environment resulting from the use of detergents and cleaners is linked to the over-fertilization of freshwater ecosystems, including the growth of harmful algae blooms in Canada's lakes and rivers. The over-fertilization of freshwater ecosystems and the proliferation of algae blooms have become matters of concern for human health and the environment.

The revised Phosphorus Concentration regulations come in to effect starting 1 July 2010, with restrictions extend to a broader variety of detergents and cleaners and the lower the limits on permissible phosphorus concentrations.

The rules prescribe the use of following methods for determining phosphorus concentration by a laboratory that is accredited under the International Organization for Standardization standard ISO/IEC 17025:2005 scheme, and whose accreditation scope includes the phosphorus testing methods.

- A Modified Procedure for the Determination of Phosphorus in Detergents, Department of the Environment Report EPS 4-WP-74-2; or
- Automated Method for the Determination of the Phosphorus Content of Detergents, Department of the Environment Report EPS 1-WP-76-1.

The types of detergents and cleaners subject to the regulations and the specific phosphorus limits are summarized in the below table.

Scope	Requirement – Phosphorus Concentration (%)	
	Before 1 July 2010	From 1 July 2010
Household laundry detergents	≤ 2.2	≤ 0.5
Commercial and industrial laundry detergents	≤ 2.2	≤ 2.2
Household dish-washing compounds (include traditional hand dish-washing soap, and automatic dish-washing detergent)	None	≤ 0.5
Household cleaners (include glass cleaners, floor cleaners, sink, tub and tile cleaners, carpet cleaners, disinfectants, waxes and polishes, scouring powders, spot removers, toilet bowl cleaners, and kitchen cleansers)	None	≤ 0.5

SGS will follow up and inform interested parties on developments on Canadian and other international legislation occur.

Throughout our global network of laboratories, we are able to provide a range of services, including analytical testing and consultancy for phosphorus in a comprehensive range cleaning products for Canada and worldwide markets. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.



¹ [Regulations Amending the Phosphorus Concentration Regulations](#)

The Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, SOR/89-501, amended by SOR/2009-178, the [Phosphorus Concentration Regulation](#).

FOR ENQUIRIES:

Global Competences Support Centre: gpsc@sgs.com
 Hingwo Tsang +852 2774 7420 or Hingwo.Tsang@sgs.com

Asia – Hong Kong. Tel: +852 2334 4481 Fax: +852 2144 7001 mktg.hk@sgs.com
 Australasia _ Perth. Tel: +61 (0) 3 9790 3418 Fax: +61 (0) 3 9701 0988 au.cts@sgs.com
 Europe – London —UK. Tel: +44(0) 20 8991 3410 Fax: +44 (0) 20 8991 3417 gb.cts.sales@sgs.com
 Africa & Middle East – Turkey. Tel: +90 212 368 40 00 Fax: +90 212 296 47 82 sgs.turkey@sgs.com
 Americas – USA. Tel: +1 973 575 5252 Fax: +1 973 575 1193 Marketing.CTS.US@sgs.com

www.sgs.com Global Competences Support Centre: gpsc@sgs.com
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