

Housewives Are Gullible On Phosphates -- Lab Man

By NORMA GREEN

Housewives are to blame for the present water pollution, according to James Brown, owner of Salem Laboratories in Plymouth.

The firm, located on Ann Arbor Trail, is an independent consultant on air and water pollution.

"The housewife holds the key to clean water," he said. "She's the polluter."

Recent scientific research, conducted by several groups including the government, has revealed that phosphate is the major contributor to water pollution.

"And the phosphate source is primarily from industrial detergents, which housewives use," Brown added.

"Housewives should be aware, whether they have a septic or sewer system, that the phosphate they use to wash clothes is never eliminated."

BROWN EXPLAINED that phosphorus, which is often times described as a "building block," may also destroy life by eutrophication (accelerated artificial aging) in water.

"Too much phosphorus may upset the delicate bio-balance by stimulating excessive plant growth, which will use up oxygen and eventually strangle the fish," Brown said.

The gullibility of the American public irritates Brown who said:

"Housewives really pay through the nose for phosphate detergents."

"MANY CONSUMERS are misled by the added ingredients, but most are just gimmicks, used for increasing sales," he stated.

"Some there are optical, brighteners which are particles that reflect sunlight and make clothes appear brighter, but all they are is an added gimmick that has nothing to do with the cleaning."

"Phosphorus, which is the main ingredient of detergents is meant to cut grease and suspend dirt," Brown explained.

"Unfortunately, housewives buy an awful lot of stuff they don't need in their detergents."

"DETERGENT manufacturers compound the stuff on the basis of the hardest water in the country," Brown said.

"So in other words, the woman washing clothes in New England is using a detergent capable of working in the hardest water of Texas."

"There are phosphates in the detergent available here that Plymouth women will never be able to use."

"More phosphate doesn't mean that the detergent will do a better job," Brown said.

"Phosphate works to a point, and beyond that it just sits there."

don't have much time to waste," he said.

He cites the recent report on detergent phosphates compiled by the U.S. House Committee of Government Operations.

The committee, in its booklet, lists recommendations for the pollution problem including reducing the phosphate content in detergents, removing enzyme pre-staaks from the market and regionalizing detergent for a specific hard or soft water area.

Labeling the specific ingredients of detergents, and supporting research projects for the development of effective low phosphate or phosphate free detergents, were also recommended.

BROWN SAID that current laws regarding phosphate need to be used to control the pollution problem.

"I don't think it is necessary to have stronger laws," he said. "Enforcement of the existing laws should be sufficient."

"Research is currently being done on alternatives to phosphate detergents. NTA (sodium nitrilotriacetate) is presently being marketed as a phosphate substitute," Brown said.

"It seems to be more effective as a water softener than the common polyphosphates in detergents," he said.

entirely has also been suggested along with the alternative of reducing the detergent phosphate marketed in soft water areas.

Improving sewer facilities would also reduce phosphate eutrophication of lakes and streams, Brown said.

"The sewage treatment at present doesn't touch phosphate," he said. "But if researchers come up with phosphate removal at sanitary facilities, it can be curbed."

"PROBABLY THE hardest thing to overcome is apathy," Brown surmised.

"It looks like we may never

get rid of phosphates in detergents, but they must be minimized.

"Housewives should buy the stuff that has the least amount of phosphate in it," he said.

"If the high-phosphate detergent is continued to be used and the status quo is maintained and the sewage systems are not modified, Lake Erie will become unusable."

Residents may write for a complete listing of detergent phosphates to: Salem Laboratories, P.O. Box 135, Plymouth, Mich.



HAIL TO THE VICTORS — The Farmington Chamber of Commerce paid tribute to the Michigan state champion Little League baseball team, at the annual dinner on Wednesday night at Botsford Inn. W. W. Edger (right), owner and editor of the Observer Newspapers, presented the championship plaque to Kevin Hickey, team captain, while Fritz Wenson, left, and Bob Walden, Coach, second from left, look on. (Evert photo)

University Club Meets

Parents of students at Creighton University, Omaha, Neb., have been invited to attend an annual party Wednesday, Nov. 4, to be sponsored by the Detroit Area Creighton Club in the Top of the Flame Restaurant, 1 Woodward, Detroit.

from the university will include the Rev. John M. Ginsterblum, S.J., associate professor of theology, and Chuck Maxwell, assistant alumni director.

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FIFTH GRADERS in Clarenceville's Westbrook Elementary School point to a bulletin board that hopefully all "trick or treats" will read before Saturday night. Jim Hoskins and Jane Garren wish that everyone will heed Snoopy's warning: "On Halloween Night be Bright. Wear White!" Jim and Jane are fifth grade pupils of Paul Shultz, whose class helped design the bulletin board.

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