



Testimony
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Before the
Environment Committee
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CWWA supports SB—254, AN ACT RESTRICTING THE APPLICATION OF FERTILIZERS THAT CONTAIN PHOSPHATE.

Excess phosphorus levels can stimulate algal growth in streams and lakes, which can lead to surface water raw water quality problems, such as taste and odor. It may also clog filters and increase the cost of treatment that is needed to maintain water quality.

Increasing phosphorus concentrations in reservoirs also increases the probability of cyanobacteria blooms, also known as bluegreen algae. This is important, not only because they are notorious taste & odor producers, but because cyanobacterial toxins are an emerging contaminant on EPA's drinking water candidate contaminant list.

Recently, scientists at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) have demonstrated how excessive levels of phosphorous can be carried from fertilized agricultural fields via groundwater to streams and waterways, which may adversely affect public water supplies. Phosphorus transport to streams had generally focused on surface-water pathways because of assumptions that phosphorus doesn't dissolve sufficiently into soil water to be carried via groundwater. As a result, phosphorous poses significant concerns to both groundwater and surface water supplies.

CWWA therefore supports efforts to reduce phosphate runoff by restricting the application of fertilizers that contain phosphate during certain periods of the year and promoting the use of non-phosphate fertilizers, where appropriate.

The Connecticut Water Works Association, Inc. (CWWA) is an association of public water supply utilities serving more than 500,000 customers, or population of about 2½ million people, located throughout Connecticut. Membership in the Association is open to all Connecticut water utilities: investor-owned, municipal and regional authorities. As purveyors of public water supplies, our members have an obligation to provide sufficient quantities of high-quality water at a reasonable cost to consumers of the communities served. As an association, CWWA and its members have a keen interest in laws and regulations that affect water utilities or supplies.