

**Don't use our rivers as a  
dumping ground**



Sea fish carcasses in the Mangawhero River

ko au te Awa, ko te Awa ko au  
"I am the River and the River is me"

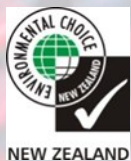


**Help keep our Rivers clean!**

**OUR PRECIOUS RIVERS  
NEED YOUR HELP!**

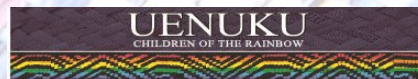


**YOU CAN HELP BY USING PRODUCTS AT HOME  
THAT DO NOT CONTAIN PHOSPHORUS**



**Eco NP**

This brochure has been developed as an initiative of the  
Wai Working Group.



**For more information contact:**  
Ruapehu District Council  
Tel: (07) 895 8188  
Email: [info@ruapehudc.govt.nz](mailto:info@ruapehudc.govt.nz)  
Website: [www.ruapehudc.govt.nz](http://www.ruapehudc.govt.nz)



*A guide to*

**REDUCING PHOSPHORUS IN  
OUR WATERWAYS**

# HELP CAN START AT YOUR KITCHEN SINK!

## What is phosphorus?

Phosphorus is a naturally occurring mineral element found in rocks, bones and a variety of foods. It is essential for the growth of all living cells.

Phosphates are present in many dishwasher detergents, washing powders for clothes, cleaning products and car wash detergents.

Phosphates act to soften the water and make detergents more effective in their cleaning.



## Why is too much phosphorus a threat to our waterways?

Phosphorus fuels and stimulates the growth of algae and plants in our streams. Increased growth then strangles and kills other plants which, when they die, deplete the life giving oxygen in the water making the water lifeless and impossible for organisms to live in.

## How does phosphorus get into our waterways?

Besides agricultural activities a significant amount of phosphorus is found in domestic wastewater which comes from:

- ◆ Dishwashing detergents
- ◆ Laundry and cleaning products
- ◆ Food scraps

## How can YOU help reduce unwanted phosphorus and clean up our rivers?

- ✓ Use dishwashing products that are phosphate free.
- ✓ Use laundry and cleaning products that are phosphate free.
- ✓ Wash your vehicle on grass.
- ✓ Keep food debris out of drains. Choose to compost instead.

LOOK FOR 'ECO' DETERGENT BRANDS WHICH STATE THEY ARE LOW OR FREE OF PHOSPHATE (NP).

LOOK FOR THESE LABELS:



Eco NP

For more info go to [www.environmentalchoice.org.nz](http://www.environmentalchoice.org.nz)



**Phosphorus is destroying the life force of our Rivers.**

*“ko te wai te ora ngā mea katoa”  
Water is the life giver of all things*