

DO SOMETHING!

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Do Something! gets up voluntary ban on phosphates in laundry detergents

The 1.9 billion laundry washes carried out in Australia every year will be phosphate-free by 2014

From 2014, Australians will no longer be able to buy laundry detergents that contain phosphates. It's a big result for Do Something's campaign to stop the use of phosphates in Australia's household laundry detergents.

All the major companies in the Australian detergent industry have now implemented or agreed to phase out phosphates in household laundry detergents. The final companies to commit to the phase-out were:

PZ Cussons Australia

They will phase out phosphates in their Radiant brand by the end of 2012

Colgate-Palmolive

They will reformulate their Cold Power and Dynamo powder detergents by the end of 2013 and their liquid detergents by the first half of 2014

The campaign was initiated by Do Something! Founder Jon Dee, a long time campaigner against phosphates in laundry detergents.

"America banned phosphates from household laundry detergents in the mid-nineties, because of the impacts that phosphate had on their waterways" Mr Dee said.

"It's great to see the local detergent industry stepping up to the plate to voluntarily ban them here too. For consumers, the good news is this ban won't affect the price of laundry detergent or the quality of the wash. But it will help the environment."

Australian households wash 1.9 billion loads of laundry every year.

From a greenhouse emissions perspective, there are real benefits to going phosphate-free. If all Australians switched to the phosphate-free OMO laundry detergent, Unilever's research estimated that it would be equivalent to taking 33,000 cars off the road.

"When Unilever removed phosphate from OMO, the product reduced its greenhouse emissions footprint by approximately 30%. That's a major result and it was achieved without increasing the price or impacting on the quality of the wash," Mr Dee said.

Timeline Background: ALDI were the first supermarket to work with Do Something! on introducing a phase-out date for phosphates in laundry detergents (end of 2013). They were followed within weeks by Coles (in sarah2012) and Woolworths (end of 2011). Do Something! then joined forces with Unilever to launch their phosphate-free versions of OMO, Surf and Drive. PZ Cussons Australia then followed with a phase-out date for Radiant Powder (end of 2012). The final company to give a phase-out date was Colgate-Palmolive for their Cold Power and Dynamo detergents (early 2014).

Jon Dee is available for interviews via Sarah.Bishop@DoSomething.net.au