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ASSEMBLY MAJORITY LEADER

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CLEAN LAKES BILL SIGNED INTO LAW
MAJORITY LEADER NELSON: "MAJOR VICTORY FOR CONSERVATIONISTS"

MADISON – Governor Jim Doyle signed the Clean Lakes Bill into law today, marking a critical step forward for Wisconsin conservationists. For years, phosphorous has been identified as one of the culprits behind algae growth in Wisconsin's lakes. The Clean Lakes Bill restricts the use of phosphorous in lawn fertilizers in order to reduce runoff into Wisconsin waterways.

"Our lakes and rivers are among Wisconsin's most prized natural resources, and the health of our waterways has been an issue of great concern to anglers, boaters and other conservationists for decades," said Assembly Majority Leader Thomas Nelson (D-Kaukauna). "This bipartisan legislation is a major victory for Wisconsin conservationists."

Polluted runoff has been identified by experts as the number one threat to the quality of Wisconsin's lakes and rivers. Excess nutrients like phosphorous contribute to algae and weed growth, ruining prime fishing locations and beaches, and ultimately degrading overall water quality.

The Clean Lakes Bill bans the use of fertilizers containing phosphorous on lawns, golf courses and other mowed grassy areas. There are some common-sense exceptions, including fertilizer on new lawns and in areas where tests show the soil to be deficient in the nutrient. Fertilizers used for agricultural purposes are exempted from the ban. The bill was unanimously approved by both the Assembly and the Senate earlier this year.

"Wisconsin lakes are the reason that millions of visitors choose to spend their free time here every year, fueling the tourism industry and boosting our state economy," continued Rep. Nelson. "In these challenging economic times, protecting our waterways makes sense from a conservation standpoint, and it also makes good business sense."

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