

HIGHLAND COLONIAL BENTGRASS COMMISSION

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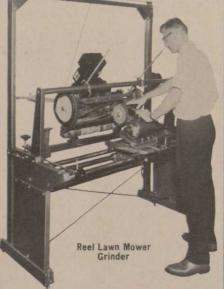
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Vermont takes the lead with tough anti-pollution bills

Vermont's contribution toward protecting the land was made in May, 1969, when the state passed the strongest, most innovative, environmental legislation in the country. The most important aspects of the new laws are these:

- Water pollution will cease to exist. If you dump anything into a Vermont stream you must prove you aren't polluting. In addition, every town must zone waterfront property to prevent potential polluting uses.
- Statewide land use planning and zoning will become a fact. Areas of the state will be zoned to prevent certain types of development and encourage others. It will also prevent what so often occurs when two abutting towns enact codes that permit a heavy industry zone in one town to bump into a residential section in another.
- All new developments and subdivisions must be licensed and approved by the state. This is the bill (H-417) that regulates the quality of sewerage and water systems and that creates the right of the public to protest effectively before work is begun.
- Any project planned for land above 2,500 feet will be subject to the rigorous scrutiny of H-417, irrespective of the project's size. According to Professor Hubert Vogelmann of the University of Vermont, this is the first time that the problems of total environment were taken into account when legislation was passed, and this opens the way for many new concepts of environmental legislation to be passed.

Other bills regulate incinerators and garbage dumps to prevent air pollution, control the appearance of mobile home parks, and permit the government, state or local, to buy farmland for future development while allowing the farmer to continue using it.