

**PUBLIC INFORMATION SERVICES**  
175 State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
(651) 296-2146  
(800) 657-3550  
Fax: (651) 297-8135



**Minnesota  
House of  
Representatives**  
Steve Sviggum, Speaker

## **NEW LAWS TAKE EFFECT JAN. 1, 2005**

*Editor's note: The following is a listing of selected new laws passed during the 2004 Legislative Session that take effect Jan. 1, 2005. A complete summary of all laws passed by the 2004 Legislature is available online from the House Public Information Services Office. Go to [www.house.mn/hinfo/2004nulaw.htm](http://www.house.mn/hinfo/2004nulaw.htm)*

### **Debt collectors must be registered**

A new law effective Jan. 1, 2005, changes the way individual debt collectors are regulated.

While collection agencies will continue to be licensed through the Department of Commerce, individual collectors will simply need to be registered with the department. The goal is to streamline the oversight process without detracting from consumer protections. Rep. Doug Stang (R-Cold Spring) and Sen. Dan Sparks (DFL-Austin) sponsored the law.

HF2187\*/SF2650/CH208

-----

### **Phosphorus fertilizers banned**

A statewide ban on the use of phosphorus fertilizers on established residential lawns takes effect Jan. 1, 2005.

The purpose of the new law, sponsored by Rep. Denny McNamara (R-Hastings) and Sen. Dan Sparks (DFL-Austin), is to protect Minnesota's lakes and rivers from an overabundance of phosphorus that can cause algae bloom.

The law provides certain exceptions for golf course applications as well as residential applications to establish or rejuvenate turf with insufficient phosphorus levels as determined by Agriculture Department-approved lab tests.

HF2005\*/SF1999/CH179

-----

### **Extending cleft palate coverage**

Included in a new health and human services law is a provision, effective Jan. 1, 2005, that will extend health plan coverage for cleft lip and cleft palate treatment up to the limiting age of coverage. Under current law, coverage of medical and dental expenses is limited to dependants up to age 18, but the new law allows coverage up to age 19 and up to age 25 for certain students.

Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) and Sen. Sheila Kiscaden (IP-Rochester) sponsored the law.

HF2277\*/SF2179/CH288

-----

### **Insuring day care providers**

A new law sponsored by Rep. Michael Nelson (DFL-Brooklyn Park) and Sen. Ann Rest (DFL-New Hope) prohibits insurers from declining to issue or refusing to renew homeowner's insurance policies solely because the property houses day care services for five or fewer children.

HF2801/SF1922\*/CH239

-----

### **Regulating exotic animals**

Aiming to smooth ruffled feathers between owners of exotic animals and their neighbors, a new law will require owners of animals such as bears, lions and tigers, chimpanzees and gorillas to register with the local animal control authority.

Also under the new law, sponsored by Rep. Steve Strachan (R-Farmington) and Sen. Don Betzold (DFL-Fridley), a microchip would need to be implanted if the animal is sedated or if it doesn't already have the chip. Failing to do so could result in misdemeanor charges against the owner. If an animal dies, breeders who run USDA-licensed facilities could replace it in perpetuity, but pet owners could replace the animal only once.

Some exotic animals would be exempt from the new law, including those in accredited zoos, sanctuaries, circuses, rodeos and county fairs.

HF1593/SF1530\*/CH264