

FROM THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR DUKAKIS

STATE HOUSE BOSTON 02133

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Governor Michael Dukakis Tuesday signed into law the Environmental Recodification Act, which substantially completes the reorganization of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. The act makes specific changes in Massachusetts environmental and agricultural law necessary to implement reorganization.

The first part of Environmental Affairs reorganization became effective on July 1, 1975, when various state agencies were brought under a five-department Environmental Affairs agency. The five departments are: the Metropolitan District Commission, Food and Agriculture, Environmental Quality Engineering, Environmental Management, and Fisheries, Wildlife and Recreational Vehicles. Recodification removes all reference to the former Department of Natural Resources, and places authority in the hands of Environmental Management, Environmental Quality Engineering, and Fisheries, Wildlife and Recreational Vehicles.

In signing ceremonies in the Governor's office (4:30 P.M.), Dukakis said: "State responsibility for the environment has grown substantially over the past two decades. Much of the growth has occurred piecemeal, with no rational scheme. This act provides for a more effective and orderly governmental process. Now environmental decisions can be made and implemented more efficiently by Secretary Evelyn Murphy, and the work of various environmental agencies can be more effectively coordinated under her authority."

Secretary Murphy said: "In a time of economic austerity, the reorganization of Environmental Affairs will prove a boom to the developmental community as well. Environmental reorganization ensures comprehensive environmental management, and allows for streamlining of permitting and other governmental activities."

The Governor added that changing the name of the former Department of Agriculture to the Department of Food and Agriculture marks the new emphasis placed by this administration on food production in the state.

Dukakis praised three members of the Legislature--Senator John W. Oliver (D-Amherst), Representative Steve T. Chmura (D-Ludlow) and Representative Richard J. Dwinell (D-Millbury)--for their leadership role in securing passage of the Recodification Act.

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