



Distilled biosolids and residuals news for New England and eastern Canada

June 23, 2020

**EVENTS...**

Maximizing the Value and Opportunity of Biosolids [Webinar Series](#), the Mid-Atlantic Biosolids Association (MABA)'s Online Summer Symposium, **July 2nd through August 4th**.

NEBRA's PFAS and Biosolids/Residuals Nationwide Update, **July 10th** at Noon. Go to [NEBRA Events](#) for more information.

Water Environment Association's Utility of the Future applications are due **July 17**. [Submit](#) your application today!

NEBRA's Lunch & Learn about Biosolids Management in the Maritimes, **July 24th**, Noon to 1 pm EST. [NEBRA Events](#).

The Science and Control of Odors: Part 2, **August 7th**, Noon to 1 pm EST. [NEBRA Events](#).

The [PFAS Forum](#) is still scheduled for **September 9th through 11th** at the Renaissance Tampa International Hotel in Tampa, Florida.

[More events...](#)

**States Can Learn from Michigan's Work on PFAS in Wastewater and Biosolids**

In late April 2020, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) released a summary of two years of investigation of PFAS in the state's wastewater and biosolids and the actions taken to address them. Michigan was one of the first states to take significant actions on PFAS, with widespread testing that uncovered numerous industrial and fire-fighting sites impacted by PFAS. Others can learn from Michigan's experience with PFAS in wastewater and biosolids. [Read more in NEBRA News...](#)

**NEBRA Collaborating on PFAS Projects**

NEBRA has been collaborating with several like-minded organizations to address our members specific requests for help related to PFAS. In particular, members expressed the need for help in communicating with their customers and elected officials and for information about the cost impacts of PFAS regulations on managing wastewater and biosolids.

[More about PFAS projects...](#)

**Synthetic chemicals in household cleaning products, firefighting foam, food packaging, clothing, and beauty products are driven by consumer demand for safer living.**

Are you making informed choices? Talk to your local water quality professional about **PFAS**.

**SAFETY. SCIENCE. SOLUTIONS.**

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**CHECK IT OUT:**

WEF has made it easy to let your Congressional delegation that you support funding for water utilities as part of the COVID-related economic recovery packages being considered. Click [here](#).

WEF's compilation of [Residuals & Biosolids Issues Concerning COVID-19](#) includes an overview of the virus in sludge/biosolids, the effectiveness of the disinfection processes, likelihood of transmission, and recommendations compiled by numerous experts.

WEF has also updated and expanded [The Water Professionals' Guide to COVID](#).

WEF [Roundtable #5](#) on COVID featuring leaders from **NEBRA members NYDEP and Hazen & Sawyer**.

The Water Research Foundation (WRF) has released its [Biosolids Research Summit report](#). The report is free - just set up an account on the WRF website to access it for download.

New from NEBRA! **PFAS and Biosolids & Septage on Northeast Farms** ([1 pager](#) and [4 pager with references](#)).

Blog from [Recycling Works Massachusetts](#): Massachusetts Sees Additional Growth in Commercial Organics Diversion.

NEBRA Member **Orege** signs an [agreement with Alfa Laval](#) which will combine the companies solids handling and sludge conditioning expertise to deliver "innovative and sustainable" wastewater solutions.

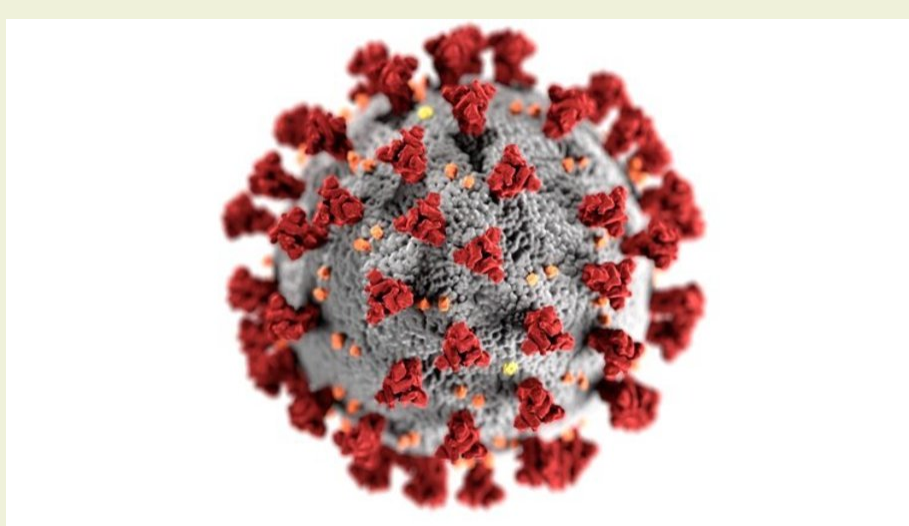
From Smithsonian magazine: ["Artificial Intelligence Gives Researchers the Scoop on Ancient Poop"](#)

University of Massachusetts [announces](#) 2020 Public Service Endowment Grants including the project **"Collaboration between University and Municipality to Decrease Economic and Environmental Burden of Sludge Disposal"** with the Town of Athol.

Review of the new digital game ["Sludge Life"](#) which is free for a year from Epic Games Stores.

**NEBRA Files Amicus Brief in NH Supreme Court Amidst Turmoil Over NH PFAS Regulations**

The New Hampshire Supreme Court might help decide whether or not the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) drinking water standards will go into effect soon or not. In 2019, NHDES adopted regulations setting maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for PFAS in drinking water in the teens of parts per trillion, one of the few lowest such standards anywhere in the world, and far lower than the 70 ppt health advisory value set by U. S. EPA. The NH groundwater standards follow the drinking water standards, and would also be in the teens of parts per trillion (ppt). When Plymouth Village Water and Sewer District and others filed a suit against NHDES in court last fall (see NEBRA story), NEBRA filed an amicus ("friend of the court") brief. Now, as the case has moved to the NH Supreme Court, NEBRA has filed another brief in support of the plaintiffs' claims and the Merrimack Superior Court's injunction that is keeping NHDES from enforcing the new standards. Other parties also filed briefs. [More...](#)



**WBE Continues to Evolve and Aid in COVID Fight**

Wastewater-Based Epidemiology (WBE) is not new and has been used in the past to detect the polio virus and even community drug use by sampling and analyzing wastewater. The ability to focus that detection on certain sewer sheds and even certain large facilities such as hospitals promises to be a viable tool for medical epidemiologists to employ in predicting the second and third waves of the SARS-CoV-2 virus outbreaks being predicted by many experts. WBE is now being used all around the world to look for the COVID virus.

In the United States, EPA is leading efforts to develop WBE into a coronavirus surveillance tool. EPA's Office of Research & Development has teamed up with the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the City of Cincinnati on a 6-month research pilot. Cincinnati was chosen because it has a combined wastewater and storm sewer system. That is one of the questions researchers have: how does storm water dilution or industrial inputs impact the testing results. They aim to know how long the virus lives in waste and how best to sample and analyze for the virus' RNA found in feces and wastewater.

The Canadian Water Network has created the Covid-19 Wastewater Coalition an informal partnership of municipalities, utilities, public health organizations and researchers. The Coalition has a team working on WBE in Montreal, another Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) community. [Read more...](#)

**In Brief / en bref...**

**Call for Abstracts: Annual Residuals Conference with NEWEA Going Virtual**

As part of our ongoing adjustments due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have decided to make this year's annual conference a virtual one with a series of on-line webinars packed with the same high-quality content and networking you would expect from the live conference. The conference will take place over several weeks in October. In addition to the latest and greatest technical content, there will be networking and exhibitor opportunities. A virtual tour and other fun virtual events are being planned as well. NEBRA/NEWEA are calling for abstracts on the following four topics:

1. COVID-19 Residuals Management Impacts
2. PFAS Research and Impacts to Residuals programs
3. Residuals Master Planning and Co-digestion
4. Odor and Impacts on End Use

Abstracts can be submitted [online](#) to NEWEA by **Friday, July 31, 2020**.

**Biosolids Permit Holders Meet with MassDEP**

NEBRA, along with the New England Water Environment Association and the Massachusetts Water Environment Association, wrote to Commissioner Martin Suuberg of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management (MassDEP) on May 21st. In the letter, NEBRA, NEWEA, and MAWEA asked for a meeting to better understand a new request for biosolids management information that appears aimed at modeling PFAS fate and transport in soils at biosolids land application sites. The MassDEP request was emailed to Approval of Suitability (AOS) permit holders in early May. MassDEP asked for information about the typical application areas, rates, and frequency, as well as the concentration of carbon in the biosolids products, pH of the biosolids, and any constituents of PFAS in the biosolids if that data was collected.

The group of concerned NEBRA/NEWEA members met on June 8th with the level water program staff as well as MassDEP planners and researchers. The group learned that MassDEP's Office of Research & Standards (ORS) is in the process of assessing PFAS leaching models to determine which parameters are the most significant. Stephanie Cooper, Deputy Commissioner for Planning, assured the group that this was preliminary work and MassDEP fully intends to have a robust stakeholder process as their PFAS policies and regulations develop. Following the meeting, NEBRA shared the data it has collected on PFAS concentrations in biosolids and MassDEP staff is continuing discussions with NEBRA members who are experts in agronomy and biosolids management.

**Updates from EPA on Biosolids and PFAS**

The Environmental Protection Agency welcomed a new member to its biosolids team in late May. Liz Resek, the Biosolids Lead for EPA's Office of Science and Technology in late May. Liz Resek, the Biosolids Lead for EPA's Office of Science and Technology announced in an email on June 26th that Elyssa Arnold will be leading efforts on assessing pollutants found in biosolids – the top priority for the EPA Biosolids Program. Ms. Arnold is taking over for Reuben Baris who left EPA at the end of March. In other news, EPA has issued a [PFAS Plan Update](#). EPA has also launched a new [PFAS Innovative Treatment Team](#) (PITT) to increase research efforts on how to remove, destroy, and test PFAS-contaminated media and waste. EPA is preparing to publish the [final rule](#) implementing statutory addition of 172 PFAS required to be reported to Toxics Release Inventory (TRI). The rule will establish a 100-pound reporting threshold for these substances.

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**THANK YOU!**

**NEWS from NEBRA**

Fast news stories are available on the NEBRA website ["News"](#) page.



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