

Subject: Distilled news - NEBRAMail October 2014

Date: Friday, October 31, 2014 at 1:14:53 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: NEBRA

To: ned.beecher@nebiosolids.org

If you're having trouble viewing this email, you may [see it online](#).

Share this:   



Distilled biosolids and residuals news for New England and eastern Canada

October 31, 2014

NEBRA'S INVOLVED...

[Northeast Recycling Council \(NERC\) fall conference](#) Nov. 7 in Amherst, MA

[JETCC workshop on biosolids dewatering](#) on Dec. 2.

CHECK IT OUT...

- Co-digestion of food scraps at Los Angeles County is profiled in this [MSNBC video](#) (starring former NEBRA Board member Jamie Ecker).
- Virginia [news article](#) on farmer appreciation of biosolids recycling.
- Debunking biosolids myths is the topic of this new quasar [fact sheet](#).

North East Residuals & Biosolids Conference

...it's over...

Thanks all the fine presenters and organizers!

[Presentations now available for download.](#)



Maine DEP Proposes Biosolids Rule Changes

Public hearing November 6th in Augusta

In mid-October, Maine's Dept. of Environmental Protection proposed regulatory updates of some of its solid waste management rules. While many of the proposed changes are editorial and minimal, there are potential impacts on the management of biosolids and other residuals.

Most significant is a change to Chapter 418, Appendix A, which lists numerical guidance standards for trace chemicals in biosolids, "replacing Appendix A (Screening Standards for Beneficial Use) with values of constituents listed in the "Maine Remedial Action Guidelines for Sites Contaminated with Hazardous Substances", revised May 8, 2013 ("Maine RAGS"). The Maine RAGS are current risk based standards developed by the Department in collaboration with the Maine CDC.... Replacing the existing Appendix A in this way will make the screening standards of Chapter 418 consistent with existing standards and will ensure that the most current risk based values are being applied. Specifically, the proposed screening standard is 'one-half the concentration of a RAGs listed

EVENTS...

- **Nov. 4, 2 pm Eastern.**
Webinar: Ebola Guidance for the Wastewater Sector.
[Details.](#)
- **Nov. 18 - Baltimore.**
High Quality Biosolids, a MABA seminar focused on technologies & processes to make better products. [Details.](#)
- **Nov. 18, 1:30 pm Eastern.**
Webinar: Land Application of Biosolids, offered by Virginia Tech.
[Details.](#)

Welcome New NEBRA Members:

BIOFerm Energy Systems
Brown and Caldwell

SPONSORS of www.nebiosolids.org

- WeCare Organics
- Agresource
- Eastern Analytical, Inc.
- Synagro Northeast
- Northern Tilth
- CDM Smith
- Resource Mgmt, Inc.
- NEFCO
- Stantec
- Casella Organics

THANK YOU!

chemical, using the lowest value among the concentration values for relevant exposure pathways and scenarios for the chemical', because the general risk standard for beneficial use is more conservative than the standard applied to site clean ups. The 418 screening standard however, not prohibitive; it is simply used as a threshold beyond which an applicant is required to include "a demonstration that the proposed beneficial use of the waste does not pose a significant risk to public health or an unreasonable threat to the natural environment" (ME DEP statement).

This change raises the long-standing question of whether it is appropriate to apply soil cleanup standards directly to biosolids products, even though biosolids are significantly diluted when added to soil and other assumptions of soil cleanup risk assessments are significantly different from appropriate assumptions for a biosolids land application scenario. That discussion notwithstanding, the proposed changes in these numerical guidance standards result in many fewer listed analytes and some significant changes in the numerical standards; some higher, some lower.

Details, including the November 6th public hearing agenda, are on the [ME DEP website](#). The deadline for comments is November 17th. NEBRA will provide comments; members can contact the NEBRA office for more information. (Thanks to NEBRA Reg/Leg Committee, especially Jeff McBurnie & Jason Fleury, for information for this story.)

Whole Foods Market Continues to Ignore Biosolids Sustainability

In mid-October, the "natural grocer" Whole Foods Market rolled out its [new standards](#) that must be followed by growers providing produce and flowers for sale at Whole Foods; it includes a ban on use of biosolids. This past summer, mayors and other leaders of several major U. S. cities that provide effective biosolids products to farmers, including San Francisco and Seattle (King County), sent letters to Whole Foods, urging reconsideration and discussion of the biosolids policy. A separate letter was sent by knowledgeable research scientists from universities across the nation, urging Whole Foods to learn more about the scientific basis and safety of biosolids use on soils.

As King County's letter noted about biosolids: "Benefits include decreased reliance on energy-intensive synthetic fertilizer, healthy and productive soils, increased carbon storage in soils, reduced erosion, and increased soil water retention. The benefits of biosolids appear to align with the core values..., as well as the science-based index Whole Foods developed to



[SUBSCRIBE](#)

and get
NEBRAMail
direct to your
inbox!

NEWS from NEBRA

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

measure performance on important elements of sustainable agriculture. The use of biosolids would rate very highly on many of your measures, including soil health, biodiversity, waste recycling, energy, and climate."

Despite these respectful outreach efforts, so far, Whole Foods has refused to enter into substantive discussions. NEBRA had one short discussion with Whole Foods representatives last winter, during which it was clear they had a lack of knowledge about biosolids. Additional offers to meet in person, provide tours of biosolids programs, and provide additional information were refused. (Matt Rogers, quoted in the article linked above, wrote: "I don't need any further information at this time.")

As the letter from King County said, "We have a common interest in sustainable communities and agriculture. Science has shown us a remarkable synergy between biosolids, soils, and agriculture. Whole Foods' environmental ethic has earned great respect and it is for this reason we urge your company to carefully consider the facts and research behind biosolids use and continue to allow your non-organic suppliers the option of using biosolids. We would welcome any further discussion regarding this matter."

Microconstituents - More Information

- On October 29, NEWEA held a Microconstituents specialty conference at which research scientists and policy people from around the region presented and discussed the latest findings on microconstituents in the environment. Ned Beecher of NEBRA presented a literature summary on the presence, fate, and impacts of microconstituents in biosolids (download from left side of nebiosolids.org).
- Recently, the Royal Society published a special journal edition on pharmaceuticals in the environment. Details are [here](#), including videos summarizing some of the research.

North East Biosolids and Residuals Association (NEBRA)

P. O. Box 422 • 26 Gregg's Way • Tamworth, NH 03886 USA • 603-323-7654 • info@nebiosolids.org

This email was sent to ned.beecher@nebiosolids.org. To ensure that you continue receiving our emails, please add us to your address book or safe list.

[manage](#) your preferences | [opt out](#) using TrueRemove®.

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

