



Distilled biosolids and residuals news for New England and eastern Canada

December 16, 2019

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

**EVENTS...**

Today is the premier of [Brave Blue World](#), a documentary project by the Water Environment Federation and numerous partners.

The 2019 Sewage Sludge/ Biosolids Annual Reports are due to EPA by February 19, 2020. EPA has scheduled several [training sessions](#) on electronic reporting. The Biosolids Annual Report Facility Search recently became available on EPA's Enforcement and Compliance History Online ([ECHO](#)).

The Northeast East Recycling Council is looking for [abstracts](#) for its spring conference. The deadline for submission is December 23rd.

A short course on **Anaerobic Digestion Process Fundamentals and Management** is being offered by Cornell University, January 15th and 16th. For more information, go to College of Agriculture and Life Sciences [website](#).

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Biosolids Team webinar series continues with "Biosolids Incineration: An Implementation Perspective" on January 16th at [2 pm](#).

The National Association of Clean Water Agencies will host it's [2020 winter conference](#) in Atlanta, Georgia, February 4th through the 7th. The conference theme is "Chasing Zero: How Today's Policies Are Shaping the Future of Clean Water."

National **Water Week 2020** will be held April 26th through May 2nd in Washington D.C.

[More events...](#)

**CHECK IT OUT...**

NEBRA's Ned Beecher wrote an Op-Ed piece that was published in [Bloomberg Environment](#) titled "The Costs to Your Community of Chasing Background Levels of PFAS."

Yale Climate Connection recently published an [article](#) about the mitigation and adaptation benefits of reusing biosolids, with a focus on programs in King County, Washington.

The first U.S. installation of **Shincci dehumidifier/dryer** technology is now operational in Brattleboro, Vermont. See NEBRA member Charley Hanson of Resource Management, Inc. narrate a [video](#) showing the equipment in operation.

The National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) has published a [guide](#) to PFAS source identification, pretreatment and sampling.

See the Water Research Foundation CEO [Peter Grevatt discuss PFAS](#) with WEF's Travis Loop. Grevatt has an interesting perspective and stresses the need to have conversations about risk.

Florida State University researchers are experimenting with [microwave technology](#) for removing heavy metals from biosolids.

Read "[A History of Human Waste As Fertilizer](#)" for an interesting article about the vital role of biosolids in agriculture.

A sludge tanker [powered by bio-methane](#) has completed a successful trial in the United Kingdom.

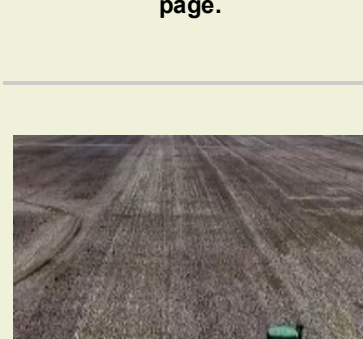
From Penn State news: Slippery [toilet coating](#) (no PFAS) helps with flushing and saves water.

[@nebiosolids](#)[Calendar](#)[Join NEBRA.](#)**SPONSORS of**[www.nebiosolids.org](http://www.nebiosolids.org)

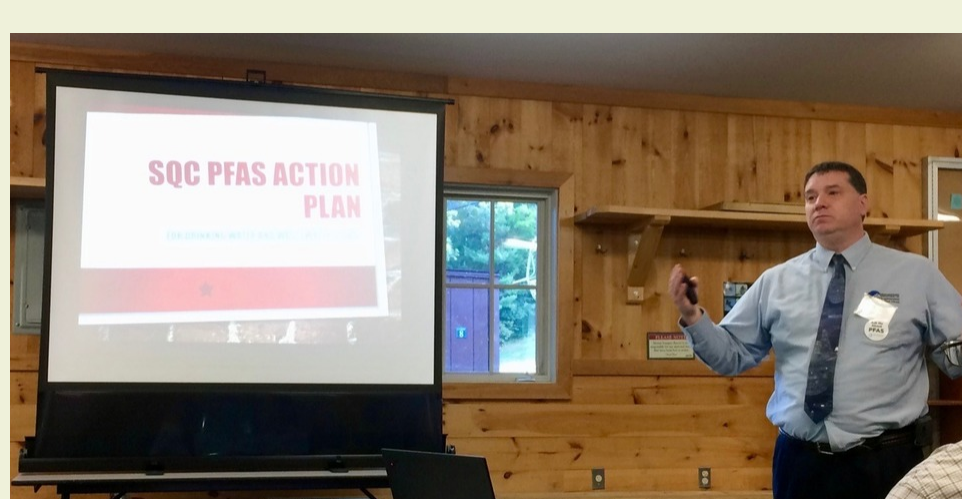
- [NEFCO](#)
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- [Maritime Provinces Wastewater Assoc.](#)
- [Lystek](#)
- [CDM Smith](#)
- [Agresource](#)
- [Synagro Northeast](#)
- [Resource Management Inc.](#)

**THANK YOU!****NEWS from NEBRA**

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

**Breaking News on PFAS Legislation**

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) is moving forward without provisions that would have caused listing of PFAS as hazardous under the Superfund law (the Dingell amendment) or the Clean Water Act (the Pappas amendment). NEBRA worked with the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), the Water Environment Federation and many others to bring concerns about such listing to Congress. Municipalities cannot be stuck with liability for transferring traces of PFAS through wastewater systems and especially biosolids. NEBRA and others are urging, if and when PFAS are listed as hazardous, municipal operations need to have some exemption from liability. For a much more detailed discussion of the final details of NDAA and what's ahead for PFAS-related legislation, see [NACWA news](#).



Ray Gordon of NHDES leads a planning meeting on reducing PFAS concentrations in wastewater and biosolids.

**NHDES Program Leads Efforts to Reduce PFAS in Wastewater/Biosolids**

PFAS – fluorinated compounds that have gained increasing attention from state regulators throughout New England – are found in every wastewater and biosolids sampled in numerous locations around the country. These ubiquitous trace levels of PFAS are received at water resource recovery facilities (WRRFs) from our modern living environments, where they are found in myriad products. NEBRA has been focused on understanding PFAS in biosolids and wastewater for three years, and the most challenging issue is how to address these trace chemicals of concern when they are nearly everywhere. There is no practical way to remove them from wastewater or biosolids. The best approach is to look upstream and reduce inputs to WRRFs. At most WRRFs, there is no big industry to go after but the PFAS continue to come down the pipe from every home and commercial building.

Some staff at New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) recognized this reality early on in 2018. As regulatory reactions to PFAS moved forward, including setting of the strictest set of MCLs (maximum contaminant levels) in the nation, Ray Gordon, Administrator of Residuals Management for NHDES, began to focus on upstream, to proactively reduce PFAS levels wherever and as much as possible.

[Read more.](#) . .

**Report from WEF Biosolids Convening Meeting in November**

NEBRA was invited by the Water Environment Federation (WEF) to attend a "Biosolids Convening" meeting of regulators, utilities, biosolids management companies, researchers, consultants, and biosolids associations like NEBRA from around the country. The two-day meeting was held near the WEF offices in Alexandria, Virginia, November 20th and 21st. There were about 60 attendees in total.

The meeting began with a panel discussion on national perspectives with speakers from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), DC Water, and WEF. All three organizations have prioritized work on biosolids programs as a result of contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) -- especially PFAS. [Read more.](#) . .

**Court Grants Injunction Against Enforcement of New Hampshire PFAS Drinking Water Standards**

On November 26th, the Merrimack County Superior Court decided in favor of plaintiffs Plymouth Water and Sewer District, Resource Management Inc., Charles Hanson, and 3M Company in a challenge to the process by which the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NH DES) adopted its standards for PFAS chemicals in drinking water. The suit was filed September 30th, the day the new lowest-in-the-nation set of enforceable PFAS drinking water standards became effective. [More.](#) . .

**In Brief / en bref...****EPA Advances Elements of PFAS Action Plan**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has taken several steps recently to advance its PFAS Action Plan as reported by numerous [news outlets](#). On December 4th, EPA sent a proposed regulatory determination to the White House Office of Management and Budget to establish a maximum contaminant level (MCL) for PFOA and PFOS. On the same day, EPA published an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking to add certain PFAS chemicals to the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) program. Information about the proposed rule can be found [here](#), with **comments due by February 3, 2020**. EPA is also seeking [public comments](#) by **December 23rd** on its Systematic Review Protocol which outlines how toxicity assessments will be conducted under the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS). EPA is adding PFBA, PFHxA, PFHxS, PFNA, and PFDA to the list of chemicals that will be assessed under the IRIS Program. Finally, EPA is making [grant funding](#) available for research related to the impacts of PFAS on rural communities and agriculture operations. The EPA is offering approximately \$4.8 million in grant funding for about three research projects. The **deadline to apply is February 11, 2020**.

**NEBRA Responds to Boston Globe Stories on PFAS in Wastewater and Biosolids**

In late November and early December, 2019, the Boston Globe – New England's largest newspaper - published stories on PFAS in landfill leachate at the Lowell Regional Wastewater Utility and on PFAS in Boston's Bay State Fertilizer biosolids product produced by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA). Both stories were hard-hitting, intended to raise public concerns about wastewater and biosolids management related to PFAS. NEBRA swiftly responded to both. The Lowell landfill leachate concern is addressed [here](#). NEBRA's answer to the Globe's question, "Should Boston's Bay State Fertilizer continue to be recycled when it contains PFAS (and considering the Precautionary Principle)?" along with NEBRA's letter to the editor and an annotation of the Globe article can be found at <https://www.nebiosolids.org/pfas-biosolids>.

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