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@NEBiosolids

*Distilled biosolids and residuals news from New England and Eastern Canada*

**November 28, 2023**

## Another Top Notch NEWEA-NEBRA Residuals Conference in 2023

The Northeast Residuals & Biosolids Conference returned to Portsmouth, NH at the beginning of November, drawing more than 130 participants to explore this year's theme of Overcoming Challenges to Resource Recovery. Participants came from as far as California and there was a large Canadian contingent including representatives from the provinces of Nova Scotia, Quebec, and Ontario.





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## NEBRA Holds 26th Annual Meeting – Members Elect 1st Canadian President!

Members of the North East Biosolids & Residuals Association gathered in Portsmouth, New Hampshire (and some online) for NEBRA's 26th annual membership meeting on November 1st, before the start of the 2023 Northeast Residuals & Biosolids Conference. NEBRA members gathered for lunch to hear from officers and committee leaders about what NEBRA's been up to the last year. There was also significant discussion about NEBRA's future with the new 5-year strategic plan and bylaws changes. There were 29 NEBRA member organizations represented at the meeting (13 required – or 10% of member organizations – for a quorum).

New Board members and officers were also elected, and NEBRA welcomed its first Canadian President, **Lise LeBlanc** of LP Consulting.



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## NEBRA Participates in American Society of Civil Engineers' 2023 Conference

## Fighting PFAS, Where Should our Money Go?



### End of Pipe Solutions Are Costly

- Maine Water Resource Recovery Facilities are down to one option, **Actual cost impacts** are extreme
  - 37% to 455% increases, depending on the facility
  - 2nd or 3rd largest operational expense line item for WRRFs
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency cost study (May 2023)
- National Association of Clean Water Agencies cost study (October 2023)
- Supply and demand impacts
- Small treatment facilities will take the biggest hits



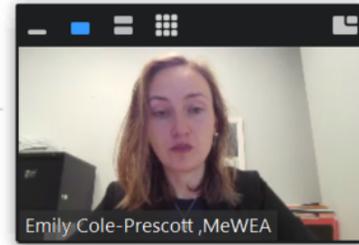
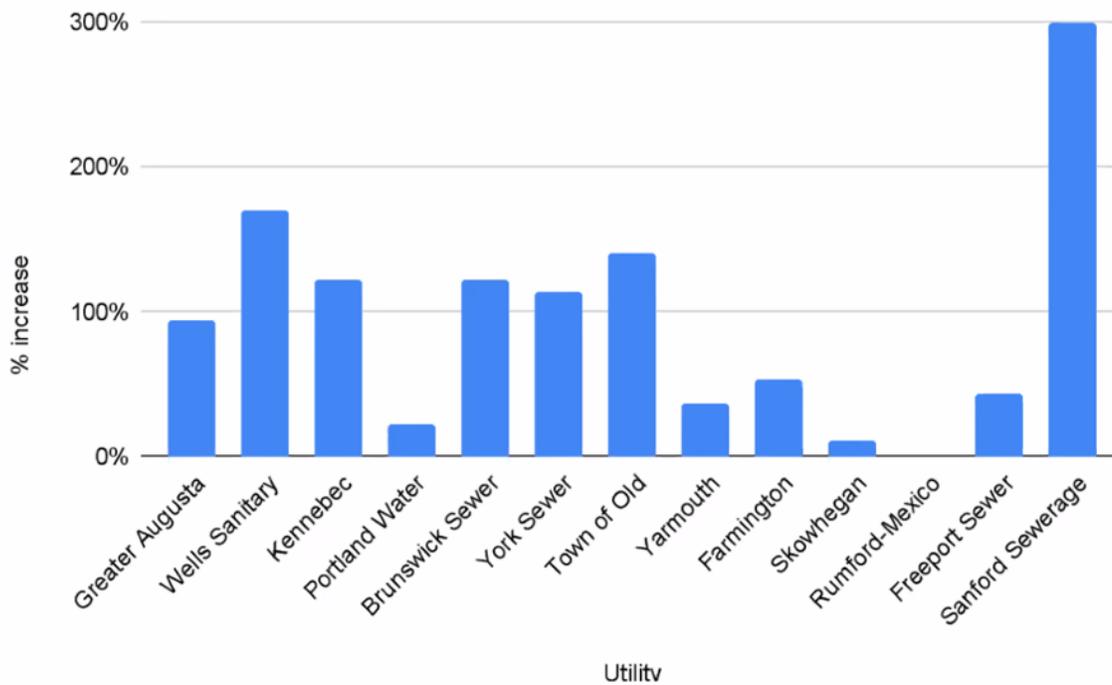
The North East Biosolids & Residuals Association’s Executive Director, Janine Burke-Wells, was invited to speak on a panel titled “Fighting PFAS: Where Should Our Money Go?” last month in Chicago as part of the American Society of Civil Engineer’s 2023 Conference. Moderated and coordinated by CDM Smith’s Ralph Ebert, the panel brought together a variety of industry leaders with various perspectives. They included a regulator, a materials manager, and one of the top experts on PFAS chemistry and removal/destruction technologies.

[Read more...](#)

## EBC Webinar on PFAS in Biosolids Features Many NEBRA Members

The Environmental Business Council of New England hosted a 3-hour webinar on October 11th on “The Fluid Nature of Handling PFAS in Biosolids”. Most of the panel was made up of NEBRA members or collaborators with presentations on challenges and opportunities related to managing PFAS in biosolids. About 75 people were in attendance.

Kicking off the webinar were Tim Wade, President of the Maine Water Environment Association, and Emily Cole-Prescott, past Chair of MEWEA’s Government Affairs Committee. Cole-Prescott’s tenure included the time period when the Maine legislature was acting to ban recycling biosolids in a state that has a long history of promoting beneficial reuse. The pair of speakers from MEWEA reviewed some basics on biosolids and talked of landfill challenges and other unintended consequences of Maine’s ban on biosolids recycling. Cole-Prescott expressed frustration that Maine water resource recovery facilities (WRRFs) were treated as polluters during the 2022 legislation discussions. She presented cost data, showing increases in solids handling expense across Maine WRRFs.



## Disposal Budget Increase 2022 to 2023

Read more...

### En Bref -- In Brief

#### York, Maine, Is Suing PFAS Manufacturers for Wastewater Contamination

York Sewer District in Maine [filed a lawsuit](#) in late October against 3M, DuPont and others, seeking damages and cost recovery for cleaning up PFAS in its wastewater effluent. York is being represented by SL Environmental, a law firm out of New Hampshire. The lawsuit will be a good test case as York has no significant industrial sources of PFAS in its collection system so the PFAS being received at the plant are coming mainly from household or domestic sources. York's Superintendent, Phil Tucker, is a new member of the NEBRA Board of Directors. He has arranged for attorney [Bob Bilott](#) of Dark Waters' fame, to speak with NEBRA's Reg-Leg Committee at its meeting in January.

#### New Hampshire USGS Study of PFAS in Soils is Complete

The study of PFAS in New Hampshire soils by the United States Geological Survey (USGS), in conjunction with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), has been completed and the data has been published by the USGS. [Phase 1](#) of the study looked at concentrations of PFAS existing in soils across the state and involved 100 soil samples at a variety of depths for 36 PFAS, with controls for known PFAS sources. [Phase 2](#) was a laboratory study to get at the solid/water partitioning coefficient for PFAS in New Hampshire soils and biosolids. [Phase 3](#) was a field-scale investigation of PFAS leaching from shallow soils to

groundwater at two sites with known histories. NHDES' Anthony Drouin will discuss this research and how it will be used in developing sludge quality screening standards for land applied biosolids at the January Research Committee meeting.

## **Updates to the BEAM Progressing Slowly But Surely**

NEBRA has once again embarked on updating the Biosolids Emissions Assessment Model (BEAM) with the latest science on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from various sludge treatment processes and biosolids end uses. NEBRA has contracted with **Northern Tilth** to facilitate the work of the Science Review Team (SRT) consisting of five PhD researchers and/or experts in various aspects of GHG emissions from solids handling operations. This year's SRT includes returning members Sally Brown (University of Washington), Emma Shen (Jacobs), and Céline Vaneeckhaute (Laval University) and new members Tarek Abichou (Florida State University) and Ruth Richardson (Cornell University). NEBRA's "BEAM Team" is also considering numerous enhancements to the spreadsheet calculator in the future based on user feedback and newer biosolids processing technologies (such as hydrothermal carbonization, supercritical water oxidation, and gasification). NEBRA has applied for a grant from the Northwest Biosolids Association to fund the major BEAM upgrades.

## **NEBRA Committees Gearing up for 2024 – Make a Resolution to Get More Involved!**

As reported to the members at the annual meeting on November 1st, NEBRA's committees are doing great work; members helping members to achieve NEBRA's mission to cooperatively promote sustainable diversion, recycling and beneficial use of biosolids and residuals from the municipal and industrial sectors. And it takes a village! Here are NEBRA's current committees with available opportunities (and monthly meeting schedule):

Finance & Budget – more members welcomed (2nd Mondays at 11:30 am EST)

Membership Committee – seeking a Vice Chair and more members (2nd Thursdays at 10 am)

Reg-Leg Committee – welcomes any member interested in staying on top of federal/state/provincial legislation and regulations around biosolids and residuals (3rd Tuesdays at 2 pm)

Research Committee – seeking a Vice Chair and more members (4th Wednesdays at Noon)

Residuals Committee – seeking a Vice Chair and more members (3rd Tuesdays at 10 am)

Carbon (& Nutrient) Trading Committee – seeking a Vice Chair, more members (4th Tuesdays at 1 pm)

Sign up for a committee on the NEBRA Member Page.

## **CHECK IT OUT!!** *Interesting Research & Engineering*

3D-Printed 'Living Material' Could Clean Up Contaminated Water (ucsd.edu)

Engineered E. Coli produce electricity from wastewater (anthropocenemagazine.org)

New project aims to produce bio-based polymers from wastewater sludge | Sustainable Plastics

Eggs found to remove salt and microplastics from seawater (interestingengineering.com)

Smart Toilets and Licking Rocks: Ig Nobel Prizes Celebrate Strange Scientific Achievements | Smart News | Smithsonian Magazine



## **Upcoming Events**

**December 8:** NEBRA Lunch & Learn about Ultra-High Temperature Ionic Gasification for Biosolids

**December 11:** Connecticut Water Environment Association's Managers Forum (all day)

**January 12:** North East Digestion Roundtable on the latest enhancements for Anaerobic digestion

**January 16:** Maine Water Environment Association's legislative breakfast

**January 21 - 24:** New England Water Environment Association 2024 Conference & Exhibit in Boston.

For a complete listing of Events, go to [www.nebiosolids.org/events](http://www.nebiosolids.org/events).

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