



CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION of SANITATION AGENCIES

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December 19, 2007

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The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Chairwoman
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Subject: California Biosolids Management

Dear Chairwoman Boxer:

The California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA), representing over 90 percent of the sewered population of California, appreciates your interest in biosolids, as articulated in your October 3, 2007 letter to Administrator Stephen Johnson of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). CASA has long been a proponent for a strong national biosolids management program based on a sound scientific foundation. We also agree that it is critical that EPA allocate sufficient staff resources to ensure implementation of, and compliance with, scientifically based regulations.

CASA members are actively involved in recycling biosolids to agricultural land as a soil amendment or fertilizer. Farmers all across the nation recognize the many benefits of this nutrient rich organic resource as a truly sustainable recycling solution. Compost operations which utilize green waste help communities meet the recycling mandates of AB 939 in California. Land application of biosolids and compost reduces the need for synthetic fertilizers, which utilize fossil fuel for their production, while improving crop production and soil fertility.

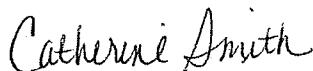
California also leads the country in developing solutions to the climate change challenge. CASA members are involved in planning, pilot testing and implementing a number of green initiatives that have a direct relation to biosolids. Publicly owned treatment works are in a unique position to help reduce California's carbon footprint through other innovative Waste-to-Renewable Energy projects. Indeed, many such facilities are currently under development. We are very pleased with the effectiveness of one regional program, the Rialto, California project, where biosolids will be transformed into a renewable fuel that can be used in lieu of coal. The byproducts will also be utilized to make cement. Another project in northern California involves seven Bay Area agencies that are planning to develop a regional Waste-to-Energy facility.

Ensuring Clean Water for California

These projects evidence our commitment to a sustainability philosophy that will reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, recycle a valuable resource, and offset greenhouse gas emissions. CASA hopes that you will agree that biosolids, properly managed, are a resource that can be part of a sustainable future, including contributing to the climate change solution. Maintaining a range of reuse options is critical to this undertaking. Please be assured that we share your interest in ensuring that biosolids management meets all appropriate standards and requirements, and CASA and its members have invested significant time and resources to assure that our management of biosolids is protective of public health and the environment. CASA would greatly appreciate the opportunity to meet with your staff to discuss the issues raised in your letter and to provide our insights on the state of biosolids management and how we can jointly work to encourage the use of this valuable resource.

If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Greg Kester, CASA's Biosolids Program Manager, at 916-844-5262 or via email at gkester@casaweb.org, or our Washington representative Eric Sapirstein at 202-466-3755. CASA appreciates the support you have provided to ensure that a strong and viable federal partnership continues to support clean water needs.

Sincerely,



CATHERINE SMITH
Executive Director

cc: Erik Olson, Committee Staff
Grant Cope, Committee Staff
Eric Sapirstein, ENS Resources
Greg Kester, CASA Biosolids Program Manager
Bobbi Larson, CASA Director of Legal and Regulatory Affairs
Ed McCormick, CASA Land Issues Forum Chair