

Distilled biosolids and residuals news from New England and Eastern Canada

March 2022

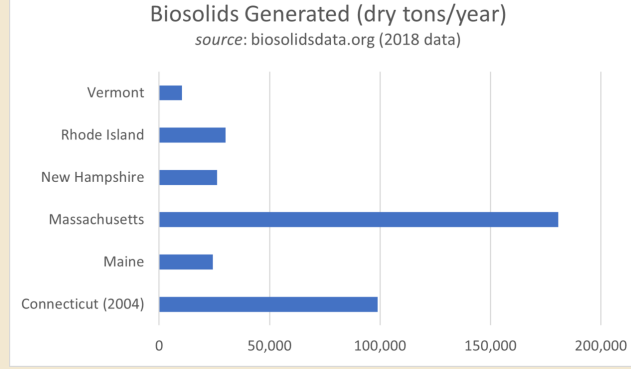
Maine Legislature Poised to Ban Land Application of Biosolids

On March 2nd, the Maine legislature's Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Committee approved LD-1911, "An Act To Prohibit the Contamination of Clean Soils with So-called Forever Chemicals" as amended, which will ban the land application of biosolids-based materials and the sale of products derived from municipal wastewater and certain commercial and industrial sludges. The ENR vote was seven in favor and two opposed, with four committee members absent. This final version of the bill will now head to the full legislature for consideration.

[Read more...](#)

Massachusetts Legislative Committee Approves Bill for Moratorium on "PFAS-emitting" Structures

On February 18th, the Massachusetts General Court's Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight unanimously approved a favorable report on S-2655, an Act Establishing a Moratorium on the Procurement of Structures or Activities Generating PFAS Emissions. The bill is headed for a vote in the Senate next. If S-2655 becomes law, it will be a major setback for very promising thermal technologies for dealing with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and biosolids (see [EPA research brief](#)), including the proposed biosolids gasification facility in Taunton. The Massachusetts Water Environment Association (MAWEA) [testified](#) against the bill as did Springfield Water & Sewer Commission's Executive Director Josh Schimmel. The North East Biosolids & Residuals Association (NEBRA), the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NWCWA), and others, submitted written testimony.



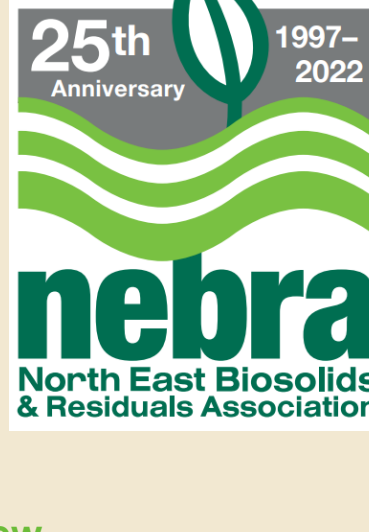
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Vermont Legislature Considers Bill on Microplastics



In this year's legislative session, Vermont State Representative James McCollough, of Williston, introduced H-501, "an act related to physical contaminant standards for residual waste, digestate, and soil amendments", specifically "physical contaminants" also known as microplastics. As originally introduced, H-501 raised many concerns for the Green Mountain Water Environment Association (GMWEA)'s Government Affairs Committee that tracks regulations of interest. H-501 was originally directing the Secretary of the Natural Resources to limit physical contaminants in solids wastes, composts, biosolids, digestate, and domestic septage, among other types of wastes, to not more than 0.5% dry weight of particles larger than 1 millimeter (mm), and no more than 20% of that 0.5% dry weight shall be film plastic greater than 1 mm in size.

[Read more](#)



NEBRA 2021 -- the Year in Review

To sum up major NEBRA activities in 2021 in one word: PFAS. Following adjustments to COVID in 2020, PFAS once again became the prominent topic of activity for NEBRA. Here are some of the highlights from our work in 2021.

The Reg-Leg Committee was very busy in 2021, keeping up with various state legislative and regulatory proposals impacting biosolids. Maine was a continuing battleground, literally losing ground as a result of several high-profile cases of PFAS contamination on farms. NEBRA led some advocacy efforts following the publication of the Sierra Club report titled "Sludge in the Garden: Toxic PFAS in Home Fertilizers Made from Sewage Sludge" which was picked up by the Maine news outlets, among others. Other states continued to focus on PFAS in residuals in 2021, including Massachusetts which generates the most biosolids by far of any state in the Northeast. New Hampshire continued to lead the Northeast Biosolids Improvement Project and Vermont has been focused on pollution prevention initiatives for PFAS in wastewater. Rhode Island and Connecticut -- as well as most of the Canadian provinces -- continue to study the PFAS issue. [Read more...](#)

Jim Jutras Retires

James Jutras, the longtime Water Quality Superintendent and NEBRA member from the Village of Essex Junction in Vermont, retired in early January. He will be missed by the Green Mountain Water Environment Association and NEBRA, two organizations in which he was very active. Jim was particularly interested and engaged in NEBRA's Research Committee and made major contributions, including supporting the 2021 summer intern program.

The New England Water Environment Association honored Jim at its annual awards luncheon in late January with its Biosolids Management Award for his significant accomplishments in the field of biosolids technology and management practices. On behalf of all NEBRA members, congratulations to Jim and best wishes in your retirement!

PHOTO: Jim Jutras on his last day of work, being congratulated by George Tyler, Vice President of the Village of Essex Junction Board of Trustees. *Courtesy of Chelsea Mandigo*



En Bref -- In Brief

Al Page is Turning 95!

Albert L. Page, who led the efforts of the W170, the original multi-state U.S. Department of Agriculture's research committee that provided the scientific basis for the federal biosolids regulations, known as Part 503, is turning 95 on March 19th. Al Page was a long time [Professor](#) of Soil Sciences at University of California, Riverside. In addition to helping provide the scientific support for U.S. EPA's biosolids management rules, published in 1993, he also chaired the first National Academy of Science's [review](#) of the regulations. In honor of his 95th birthday on **March 19th**, Al's daughter has asked his former colleagues and biosolids enthusiasts to send birthday cards to him at 5555 Canyon Crest Drive, Unit 1F, Riverside, CA 92507.

North East Digestion Roundtable

Dr. Jeffrey McCutcheon from the University of Connecticut, joined the North East Digestion Roundtable (NEDR) back in January to discuss a research project being funded by the U.S. Department of Energy with the aim to digitize, automate, and optimize anaerobic digestion operations, especially for co-digestion with food wastes. Using tiny sensors developed by the research team, they hope to get a better understanding of operational parameters and behaviors, real-time, at the Greater Lawrence Sanitary District. If you are interested in participating as a reviewer for this project, please contact [Lara Hahn](#) for the full text of the book and the review template. Review comments are due by **March 21**, a strict deadline. Reviewers that participate in the full review process will receive a complimentary copy of the new edition.

WRF Biosolids Research Project

The Water Research Foundation (WRF) held a kick-off meeting on February 14th for its EPA-funded research "[On Unregulated Organic Chemicals in Biosolids: Prioritization, Fate and Risk Evaluation for Land Applications](#)". NEBRA is part of the project team, serving on the Utility Advisory Committee. WRF's Lola Olabode is the Principal Investigator (PI) working with co-PIs from Purdue University, the University of California at Riverside, the University of Cincinnati, and the Water Environment Federation. A major component of the project is national collaboration and stakeholder engagement, outreach and education. This is a 3-year project, scheduled to wrap up at the end of June 2024.

Reviewers Still Needed for Update to Solids Process Design and Management

The Water Environment Federation (WEF) is planning a revision of the first edition of Solids Process Design and Management for use by professionals engaged in the design, approval, and operation of municipal solids treatment and disposal systems. The upcoming (2nd) edition will update the manual to reflect current practice and understanding of the topic. WEF is welcoming recommendations for updates, changes, additions, or cuts to the published (1st) edition in order to guide the revision effort. If you are interested in participating as a reviewer for this project, please contact [Lara Hahn](#) for the full text of the book and the review template. Review comments are due by **March 21**, a strict deadline. Reviewers that participate in the full review process will receive a complimentary copy of the new edition.

CHECK IT OUT!!

EPA Administrator Michael Regan tours NEBRA member [Saco Water Resource Recovery facility](#).

New EPA Region 1 Administrator David Cash tours [Lowell Regional Wastewater Utility](#) with NEBRA Board Member Aaron Fox.

NEBRA Member New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP)'s resource recovery [webpage](#)

Carbon sequestration [explained](#) -- Ask Organic Valley

EPA's Sustainable Management [webpage](#)

Oldie but goodie: 2015, the [Year in Poop](#)



Upcoming Events

- March 25:** NEBRA [Lunch & Learn](#) about Foam Fractionation
- March 31:** Maine Sustainability & Water [Conference](#), Augusta Civic Center
- April 1:** Maine Water Environment Association's [Spring Conference](#), Black Bear Inn, Orono
- April 5 -6:** The Science of PFAS: Public Health & the Environment [Northeast Conference](#), Marlborough, Massachusetts
- April 22:** Earth Day! NEBRA [Lunch & Learn](#) about the history of biosolids management

For a complete listing of Events, go to www.nebiosolids.org/events

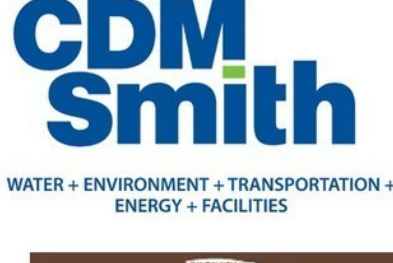
The Mid-Atlantic Biosolids Association (MABA) will be hosting a webinar on **PFAS - What we know, what we're learning, and what's to come**

March 15, 2022 | 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm
Cost: \$20 for members; \$35 for non-members

NEBRA members can get the MABA member discount -- contact [Janine Burke-Wells](#) or [Mary Firestone](#) for more information. Register [here](#).

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