State of Texas Biosolids Program Perspectives

Brian Sierant
Biosolids Work Leader
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Topics for Discussion

Background on state authority and state rules

The Biosolids Program in Texas
  • Staff

Permits and Registrations
  • Statistics
  • Locations

State Regs vs. Federal Regs
  • Management Practices

Proposed Rule Change Updates
  • Cause for opening the Chapter 312 rules
  • Key Rule Items
  • Current Status and Future Dates
Benefits of Land Applying Sewage Sludge

- Source of nutrients for plant growth
- Saves money from using chemical fertilizers
- Lowers cost of disposal for utilities
- Lowers amount of material disposed in landfills
- Processing to higher standards to develop a product for distribution and sale
In the Beginning...

- 1993 – 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 503 became effective
- 1993 – 30 TAC Chapter 312 rules are promulgated to incorporate Part 503
- 1995 - Chapter 312 is updated
- 1998 - TCEQ authorized to administer the EPA biosolids program
- Two updates. In 2005 based on legislation and in 2014 based on a rule petition
TCEQ Biosolids Coordinators

Central Office - Austin

- **Permitting Staff**
  - Technical review and draft permits and registrations
  - Provide technical assistance with the permitting and registration program
  - Work with reporting and rule making

- **Legal Staff**
  - Provide expertise on both state and federal regulations to permitting staff, the regulated community, and the public

Regional Offices – 16 Throughout State

- **Field Ops Investigators**
  - Conduct site assessment evaluations for proposed sites
  - Inspect sites annually
  - Investigate complaints made by public
Permitting and Registration Program

State – TCEQ

• **State Permits**
  ➢ Beneficial Land Use (BLU) of Class B Biosolids
  ➢ Disposal of Water Treatment Plant Sludge in a Monofill

• **Registrations**
  ➢ BLU of Domestic Septage
  ➢ Disposal and BLU of Water Treatment Plant Residuals

• **Notification Authorization**
  ➢ Exceptional Quality Marketing and Distribution of Class A or AB Biosolids

Federal - TPDES

• **TPDES Permits**
  ➢ Biosolids Processing
    • Dewatering
    • Lime Stabilization
    • Composting with green waste
    • Heat Pelletizing
    • Mobile Processing Unit
  ➢ Disposal of Sewage Sludge
  ➢ Incineration
Current Statistics

- 210+ Class A and AB Marketing and Distribution Sites
- 55 Class B Land Application
- 130 WTP Residual Land Application
- 50 Domestic Septage Land Application
- 9 Biosolid Processing (Separate from WWTP)
- 6 Disposal
Domestic Septage Land Application Sites

This map was generated by the Water Quality Division of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries. For more information concerning this map, contact the Water Quality Division at (512) 239-4671. Map contains missing information where data is missing or not available. April 6, 2010.
Water Treatment Residuals Land Application Sites

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Land Application of Class A, AB or B Biosolids
Land Application of Domestic Septage
Processing of Biosolids
Chapter 312 and Part 503

How Federal and State Rules are the Same:

- Pollutant Limits
- Pathogen & Vector Attraction Reduction
- Site Management Practices
Chapter 312 and Part 503

How Federal and State Rules are Different

- Buffer zones and Slope Requirements
- Nutrient Management Plan
- Site Notification Requirements
- Classification of EQ Biosolids
- Quarterly Reporting
- Commercial Liability and Environmental Impairment Insurance
Ch. 312 Rule Proposal

Clarify the intent of existing requirements and improve readability.
Key Rule Items

• “Biosolids” as it pertains to beneficial land application of treated domestic sewage sludge (Class A, Class AB and Class B)

• Applicability of buffer zones at existing land application sites

• Clarify the prohibition of biosolids mixed with grit trap or grease trap waste

• Include “Domestic Septage” in all appropriate sections throughout rule

• Processing authorization under Water Quality vs. Municipal Solid Waste - Domestic Treatment Facility vs. Stand Alone Processing Facility
Key Rule Items

• Include record keeping and reporting requirements for storage, staging and harvesting at land application sites

• Clarify the quarter-mile notice requirements for Class B land application permits to provide consistency with Texas Health and Safety Code (THSC), §361.121(c) – Property boundaries vs. Land Application Boundaries

• Revise current and include new definitions
  ▪ Beneficial Use Site
  ▪ Biosolids
  ▪ Grease Trap Waste
  ▪ Harvesting
  ▪ Irrigation Conveyance Canal
  ▪ Land Application Unit
  ▪ Stabilization
  ▪ Surface Impoundment
  ▪ Turf Crop
  ▪ Waste Pile
Key Rule Items

• Renaming Water Treatment Plant Sludge as Water Treatment Plant Residuals

• Water Treatment Sludge consistent with longstanding registration and permitting practices
  • general requirements
  • metal limits
  • management practices
  • monitoring
  • record keeping
  • reporting
Current Status

- TCEQ website contains the following stakeholder information:
  - Meeting agenda
  - Webcast
  - Slideshow presentation
  - Meeting summary
  - Stakeholder comments
  - Future rulemaking dates

https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/wastewater/sludge
Future Rulemaking Dates

**September 20, 2019** – Agenda backup material

- Proposed rules can be viewed by public

**October 9, 2019** – Commission Agenda for approval to publish

**October 25, 2019** – Rules published in TX Register

- 30-day comment period begins

**November 19, 2019** – Public hearing (TCEQ Agenda Room) at 2pm

**November 25, 2019** – 30-day comment period ends
Future Rulemaking Dates (cont.)

November 2019 through February 2020 – Standard internal TCEQ rule procedures

February 2020 – Agenda backup material

- Proposed rules can be viewed by public

March 2020 – Adoption by Commission and Effective date
Contacts and Assistance

TCEQ Land Application Team
Biosolids Group
Water Quality Division
Phone: 512-239-4671

Brian Sierant
Kellie Crouch
Shelby Williams

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