



Legislation Text

File #: 17-201, Version: 1

Accept the 2016 Annual Biosolids Land Application Report from the Department of Resource Management

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒
Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board accept the 2016 Annual Biosolids Land Application Report from the Department of Resource Management.

The department is not currently recommending any changes to Chapter 25.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

The land application of biosolids may only occur if the application complies with the requirements of federal standards (Title 40, CCR, Part 503), state standards (Regional Water Quality Control Basin Plans and General Orders), and County regulations (Chapter 25). In Solano County, the Department of Resource Management is responsible for the enforcement of Solano County Code, Chapter 25 requirements that locally regulate the application of biosolids onto farmland in unincorporated areas. Chapter 25 was approved with language regulating the land application of biosolids in 1997. It was amended in 1998 to include the requirement of public notifications for land spreading activity and to prohibit application of biosolids during wet weather. The ordinance was modified again in 2005 to prohibit biosolids land application within the boundaries of the primary and secondary Suisun Marsh. In 2012, Chapter 25 was modified once again to include the definition of biosolids compost, clarify and expand soil and ground water testing, and remove the five-year sunset date for these requirements which was October 15, 2012. As required by Solano County Code, section 25-402(a)(9,) the Department is submitting the 2016 annual report detailing activities associated with the land application of biosolids onto farm land in Solano County during the calendar year.

During 2016, thirteen generators provided approximately 7,304 dry tons of biosolids that was land spread over 1,481 acres of farmland as soil amendment. This is an approximately 14% increase in tonnages and a 24% increase in acres applied compared to 2015. All biosolid samples were reported to meet both Class A and Class B standards for all heavy metals with the exception of one sample from the City of Windsor, which exceeded the European Union Limit for copper and Class A for selenium. The Windsor material met all Class B biosolids standards for metals. Five Complaints were received regarding tracking of biosolids onto county roads during the application period. All five complaints were confirmed and violation notices were issued. For comparison, there were no complaints received in 2015, 1 complaint received in 2014 and three complaints were received in 2013. Compliance actions are detailed in the report.

The report also discusses the status of the field research project performed by Blankenship and Associates from 2015 through 2016. The research compared grazed and ungrazed rangelands that have and have not been land applied with biosolids with the goal to evaluate the agronomic related effects to soil, plants, and cattle from the land application of biosolids. The specific items evaluated include; the potential benefits to soil on macro and micro nutrients, water infiltration, soil moisture retention, and the potential for carbon sequestration through the addition of organic material to the soil profile. Preliminary results of the field

research indicated a benefit to overall productivity of areas that receive biosolids application. Blankenship and Associates provided an update of the research findings at the December 2016 Biosolids Stakeholder Group meeting. A summary of the preliminary research findings provided by Blankenship and Associates is included in the staff report. The final research report will be presented in the 2017 Annual Biosolids Report. The report also includes a copy of the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) annual report dated December 2016.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The cost of managing and overseeing the biosolids land application program is recovered through fees collected for site registration and land spreading charged to the applicant. Costs for biosolids material sampling and sample analysis are also charged to the applicant. A per acre surcharge for research, charged to the applicant, is used for conducting research activity to improve our understanding of potential impacts, if any, of the land application of biosolids.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board of Supervisors can also choose to not receive the 2016 Biosolids Land Application Report. This is not recommended as the report is provided in accordance with Solano County Code and details the activity of the department relative to the land application of biosolids in 2016.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

In obtaining information for this report, the department consulted with County Counsel, County Administrator's Office, County Agricultural Department, UC Agriculture Extension, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the San Francisco Bay Area and Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Boards, Synagro LLC, and the biosolids stakeholder group, which includes representation from interested constituents from the Rio Vista Suisun areas of Solano County, East Bay Municipal Utilities District, Fairfield-Suisun Sewer District, Union Sanitary District and the City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. Information contained in the 2016 Annual Biosolids Land Application Report is distributed to participants in the Biosolids Stakeholder Group.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION