



## Legislation Text

File #: 18-149, Version: 1

Accept the 2017 Annual Biosolids Land Application Report from the Department of Resource Management

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

### **DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:**

The Department of Resource Management recommends that the Board of Supervisors accepts the 2017 Annual Biosolids Land Application Report.

The Department is not currently recommending any changes to Solano County Code, Chapter 25.

### **SUMMARY:**

Solano County Code, Chapter 25 requires that a report be submitted annually to the Board of Supervisors presenting the results of the past season's activities on the land application of Class B biosolids in Solano County. The report must also include an update on the generator's progress toward utilizing alternative technologies for the reuse of biosolids other than land application or landfilling along with findings from the research program conducted on biosolids applied rangeland soils in Solano County. The report documenting the results of the 2017 season for the land application of biosolids in Solano County is attached. There were no major issues identified with the Biosolids program in 2017.

### **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.

### **DISCUSSION**

Solano County is one of the few California counties that regulate the land application of biosolids onto farm land as a soil amendment. Since 1997, the Department of Resource Management (DRM) staff has been implementing the local biosolids land application program by enforcing the Solano County Code (SCC) Chapter 25 which incorporates the requirements contained in CFR 40, Part 503 of the federal standards. SCC Chapter 25 was amended between 1998-2012 to include various requirements such as public notification requirement for land spreading activity, wet weather restriction on biosolids land application and spreading, to prohibit the application of biosolids within the primary and secondary marsh areas, and to expand the soil and ground water testing related to biosolids land application. These amendments to Chapter 25 have provided additional public health and environmental protections regarding the use of biosolids. This program is recognized nationally, and is focused on increased public participation, research partnership and proactive enforcement of standards.

During 2017, nine generators provided approximately 6,239 dry tons of biosolids that was land spread over 1,080 acres of farmland as soil amendment. This is an approximately 14.6% decrease in tonnages and a 27% decrease in acres applied compared to 2016. 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. The Windsor material met all Class B biosolids standards for metals. All biosolids samples, as required by County Code Chapter 25, met or exceeded Class B testing requirements. Four Complaints were received regarding odors. All four complaints were investigated and determined to be unrelated to Biosolids application. No odor complaints were attributed to biosolids land application. Odors were found to be associated with the use of licensed fertilizer product. For comparison, there were 5 complaints received in 2016, no complaints received in 2015 and one complaint received in 2014. 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 2018. The research compares 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. Blankenship and Associates provided an update of the research findings at the December 2017 Biosolids Stakeholder Group meeting. The final research report by Blankenship and Associates is presented in the 2017 Annual Biosolids Report. The report also includes a copy of the 2017 Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) annual report that provides and update on the generator's progress toward utilizing alternative technologies for the reuse of biosolids other than land application or landfilling.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

The Board of Supervisors can also choose to not receive the 2017 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 2017.

### **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 2017 Annual Biosolids Land Application Report is distributed to participants in the Biosolids Stakeholder Group.

### **CAO RECOMMENDATION:**

**APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION**