



INDUSTRY PROGRAMS



Australasian Biosolids Partnership E-News

The Australasian Biosolids Partnership (ABP) promoting the sustainable, beneficial reuse of biosolids in Australia and New Zealand

Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the ABP E-news. The ABP E-news is distributed to ABP Subscribers to provide a succinct update on the progress of the ABP project as well as a snapshot of important issues and trends nationally and internationally.

Your comments and suggestions for content in this E-news or on the ABP website www.biosolids.com.au are welcome. Please forward your contributions to the ABP Project Team Andrew Speers aspeers@awa.asn.au or Ann Hinchliffe ahinchliffe@awa.asn.au.

Recent Progress - The ABP Project

Every good project needs a plan, and such is the case with ABP. Recently, the ABP Advisory Board endorsed a Business Plan for the project which, among other things, incorporates a wide-ranging series of initiatives intended to deliver significant benefit to ABP Subscribers and the industry generally. The [Business Plan](#) is available to Subscribers and can be downloaded from the ABP website. The activities included in the plan will be undertaken over the next two years. Initiatives that have recently begun include:

- Finalisation of the website structure and updating of content. The website www.biosolids.com.au is a repository of News, Research Activities, Communication Tools, Data, links to related organisations and sources of information and FAQ. It has sections for both the Public and Subscribers. Over time, with website will continue to grow and will be regularly adapted to serve the interests of Subscribers and the public overall.
- Commissioning of a Community Attitudinal Survey. This survey is being scoped currently. This process will ensure that it is targeted to groups and stakeholders who will most influence discussions about biosolids applications so that we can better understand their views, concerns, the information sources they consider most trusted and related matters. This will feed into our overall communication plan. The ABP is being assisted here by Prof. Geoff Syme of Edith Cowan University in Western Australia.
- Commissioning of a review of biosolids regulation in Australia and New Zealand to encourage, where appropriate, consistency in regulation and sound, scientifically evidence based approaches to the management of biosolids.

Other elements of the Business Plan include development of educational material, an analysis of research needs, promotion of biosolids-related interests to politicians and other decision-makers and the development of communication tools for use by Subscribers, among other things.

Website Enhancements

We are continuing the enhancement of the ABP website www.biosolids.com.au. Our recent focus has been the Subscribers'/Members' section www.biosolids.com.au/members as we gather resources, establish information channels and media monitoring and respond to your feedback. Current [international](#) and [national](#) news items are uploaded to the website each week to provide Subscribers with a snapshot of how biosolids issues are being reported in the media. We undertake an extensive search of news sources to identify material which reports on:

- Resolution of controversies
- New data from reputable authorities on biosolids effects on land, health or related matters
- New angles raised by opponents to the use of biosolids
- Action by third parties, such as retailers, adjacent landowners, etc
- Initiatives from or situations affecting our subscribers

- Major regulatory developments
- Upcoming events, conferences and/or proceedings from previous events

Recommendations of articles and items for the News, Research and Events section of the website are most welcome. Please send to Ann Hinchliffe at ahinchliffe@awa.asn.au.

Focus on Ontario, Canada

The district of Hastings, Ontario, Canada has been the focus of significant controversy over the application of biosolids to agricultural land. The community in question is primarily rural, and while many farmers benefit from, and are keen to have access to, biosolids as a soil conditioner and fertiliser, a strong opposition group has emerged led by those who believe biosolids poses a risk to their health. This sort of debate has been reported before from all parts of the developed world, including Australia. This debate has introduced some new elements, however, in that the opposition group has done the following:

- Taken their protest direct to the citizens of Toronto from whom most of the biosolids are sourced. The focus of the campaign has been to highlight to Torontonians the link between the waste sourced from their city and farmland application and the food they ultimately might consume.
- Enlisted the support of one of the main Opposition Parties - The New Democratic Party (NDP) - in its campaign against the application of agricultural application of biosolids in Ontario. Through this controversy, both the NDP and biosolids have attracted significant media coverage and opinion, expressed through blogs, across Canada.
- Taken the matter to court, on the grounds that the application of biosolids on one farm reduces the value of neighbouring farms. The results of this action have not been decided yet.

The Subscribers' section of the ABP website provides a number of press articles related to this and other international coverage in the [International News](#) section of the site.

News from Subscribers

Barwon Water's \$76 million biosolids drying facility at Black Rock, VIC: Barwon Water's biosolids drying facility is planned for completion in February 2010. Plenary Environment, Barwon Water's biosolids partner will construct and operate a fully-enclosed biosolids drying facility to treat Barwon Water's biosolids to the highest treatment grade possible, allowing them to be used as a nutrient-rich farm fertiliser or a potential renewable fuel. The biosolids drying facility is an important step in Barwon Water's long-term goal to operate a 'no waste' sewerage system - where 100 per cent of recycled water and biosolids are committed to sustainable use. Community consultation has played an important role, and Barwon Water acknowledges the significant input by members of the project's community liaison group, the Biosolids Investigation Group, and other community members, which helped develop criteria for the tender documents. For details see [Barwon Water](#) and news article on the [National News](#) section.

Resources

UN-HABITAT's *Global Atlas of Excreta, Wastewater Sludge, and Biosolids Management*: This new Global Atlas, details the management of excreta, wastewater, and biosolids in 37 countries around the world. For details see [UN-HABITAT](#).

WaterAid Corporate Christmas Cards on sale

Order your personalised corporate Christmas cards now and receive a 5% discount, as well as a donation of 40c per card going to WaterAid. Choose from 20 different designs and personalise with your company's logo and choice of verse. Order online at www.christmascards4charity.com.au/wa.



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