

# DOWN THE PIPELINE

DECEMBER 29, 2016

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## Exceptional Quality Biosolids Update

With the continued shift of municipalities to producing very high quality biosolids, DEQ has found itself facing a financial shortfall in the inspection of land applications. Despite some civil-



ian groups' concerns over lack of state monitoring and control over land application of biosolids, DEQ states "It is important to note that all land application of EQ biosolids cake materials is currently required to be conducted in accordance with site restrictions included in Class B land application permits."

DEQ has concerns with the program's future as the public can't identify EQ materials once land applied. The activity looks to the untrained eye to be like Class B spreading. DEQ anticipates there will be increased calls and complaints.

DEQ wants to implement a permitting structure for agricultural EQ use, with a process for answering questions and fielding complaints. What municipalities require is a light-handed regulatory approach that will allow this highly-treated, marketable material to be easily disposed of. There is also the need to keep an eye to the very near future, a future where flexibility will be needed to handle recovered resources as usable products and not as wastes.

## EPA SURVEY OF NUTRIENT REMOVAL AND SECONDARY TECHNOLOGIES

With a September 19, 2016 notice, EPA kicked-off their study in this area. Comment period ended on November 18th on draft questionnaire. The Agency proposes to make this information request via CWA Section 308, which would be mandatory. Responses

would be due within 30 days and would be limited to calendar year 2016.

Now, EPA claims it will use this study to determine the extent of "optimization" of secondary technologies to remove nutrients in WWTPs. What will

environmental groups seek to use this study for? They will revisit a petition they sent to EPA in 2007 that demanded new technology-based nutrient limits. This could then easily lead to the call for "national nutrient limits" to be applied to WWTPs nationwide.

**FLAME RETARDANTS IN THE ENVIRONMENT**

Flame retardants in clothing may be finding their way into our waterways through laundering processes. It is already known that these chemicals leach out of furniture and electronics.

A study conducted by the University of Toronto and of Alberta Canada found these retardants and plasticizers

from indoor air accumulate in cotton and polyester fabrics. During subsequent washing cycles, these chemicals flow into the wash water.

They discovered that the release rate from the clothing was more than 80% for organophosphate esters and 50-100% for low-molecular weight

phthalates.

These results strongly suggest that our clothing acts as an efficient conveyor of soluble, semi-volatile organic compounds from indoors to outdoors through the simple act of washing them. This holds true whether discharging to your septic tank or to the local wastewater treatment plant.



**IDENTIFYING INDUSTRIAL USERS OF CONCERN**

Since our local industrial pretreatment program has been successfully reducing toxic pollutants from the larger industries over the past 14 years, the time is fast approaching for looking at all of the commercial users to identify potential sources of these same toxic substances.

The unregulated residential and commercial seg-

ments of the wastewater sector now have become the largest volume sources of many toxic substances that enter the POTW of the Town of Bedford.

Substances such as phosphorus, copper, zinc, silver, mercury, and phenols are still of great concern, yet are currently outside of permitting and regulatory control. Thus carwashes,

dry cleaners, dental offices, and car repair shops become points of concern.

So in the next few years the local pretreatment program will be involved in reassessment of all commercial users of the town's sewer system. The two primary pollutants will be mercury and phosphorus along with barium.

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**THE ONGOING SAGA OF MICROCONSTITUENTS**

With the continued use of personal care products, we are witnessing the sustained presence of microscopically sized chemicals and other elements in our nation's water sources.

A reflection of the high drug prescription rates found across our society,

these drugs and their by-products persistently refuse to be significantly removed by the biological treatment processes found in most wastewater treatment plants today. This having been said, it is now time to implement greater efforts in recycling unused drugs and medications within our resi-

dential population.

It is an established fact, that most prescription 's dosage levels are so high that our bodies do not utilize all of it. The majority passes on through our digestive system and down the toilet. Final destination: either septic tanks or your local treatment plant.



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**“ P R O V I D I N G   Q U A L I T Y   S E R V I C E   T O   E V E R Y O N E ”**

**33RD ANNUAL INDUSTRIAL WASTE & PRETREATMENT  
WORKSHOP AND CONFERENCE**

Do you work with pretreatment professionals? Do you work on the industrial end and wonder why your pretreatment contact is worried about a particular item? Do you feel like the pretreatment world has transformed over the years into an unrecognizable beast? If so, then you should seriously consider attending this conference.

On Monday March 6, 2017 there will be a four hour training workshop covering Categorical Standards, Permitting as a Shield, Local Limits, and more. On Tuesday March 7, 2017 there will be updates from the EPA and DEQ along with presentations on flushable wipes, PCB TMDLs, Strengthening Sewer Use Ordinances, and use of alternatives

to high strength waste treatment.

Monday's workshop will run from 1PM until 5PM. Tuesday's conference will run from 8:30AM until 4PM.

Location of this event is at the Omni Charlottesville located on 212 Ridge McIntire Road in Charlottesville, VA

You can register by going to <http://www.vwea.org/event/2017IWP>

There will also be the opportunity to receive continuing education credits in wastewater and/or water treatment.

