

Title: Biosolids Management Position Statement

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BACKGROUND

Biosolids are a natural, safe, and renewable resource that reduces the need for valuable landfill space, improves our environment, conserves natural resources, and supports agricultural communities.

Biosolids production at a Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF) recovers valuable organic matter, nutrients, and energy from treated wastewater. Utilities have been safely, efficiently, and effectively reusing biosolids for decades.

Management of biosolids at WRRFs to maximize resource recovery promotes a circular economy by:

- Providing a cost-effective fertilizer with an organic component that enriches soils; restores fire-ravaged, mined, and other despoiled lands to ecological health; and enhances crop production more effectively than conventional synthetic or mined fertilizers;
- Increasing the water-holding capacity of the soil, reducing runoff and erosion, and minimizing the need for irrigation;
- Generating renewable energy through biogas and biofuels production; and
- Recovering non-renewable phosphorus, as well as available nitrogen and other resources.

Management of biosolids has been shown to mitigate climate change by reducing organic waste and associated methane gas production in landfills, sequestering carbon in soils, reducing the need for non-renewable energy resources, and off-setting energy-intensive and greenhouse gas generating fertilizer production.

ALIGNMENT WITH WEF'S MISSION AND CRITICAL OBJECTIVES

Since 1928, it has been the mission of WEF and its members to protect public health and the environment. This position statement is consistent with our mission and the following critical objectives:

- [3a](#): Be a visible and effective partner that increases public awareness of the value of water, water professionals, and resource recovery at national levels.
- [3b](#): Provide tools for members, Member Associations, utilities, and others to communicate the value of water, water professionals, and resource recovery to the public and decision-makers.
- [4b](#): Drive innovation and research in the water sector

POSITION

Biosolids are a valuable resource that can and should be beneficially managed and used. WEF supports:

- Continued regulation of biosolids under the Clean Water Act in the United States and similar regulations in other countries;
- Consistent and science-based legislations and regulations that support the beneficial use of biosolids;
- Safe use of biosolids in compliance with national, regional, and local regulations;
- Land application of biosolids that returns valuable nutrients and carbon to soils;
- Recovery of the energy in biosolids to generate renewable energy;
- Adequate funding for the advancement and communication of research to further best practices and strengthen public trust in biosolids; and
- Promotion of biosolids as safe for public health, and the highest and best use of a beneficial byproduct of wastewater treatment.