

September, 2008

Biosolids Division Monthly Report

Submitted by:

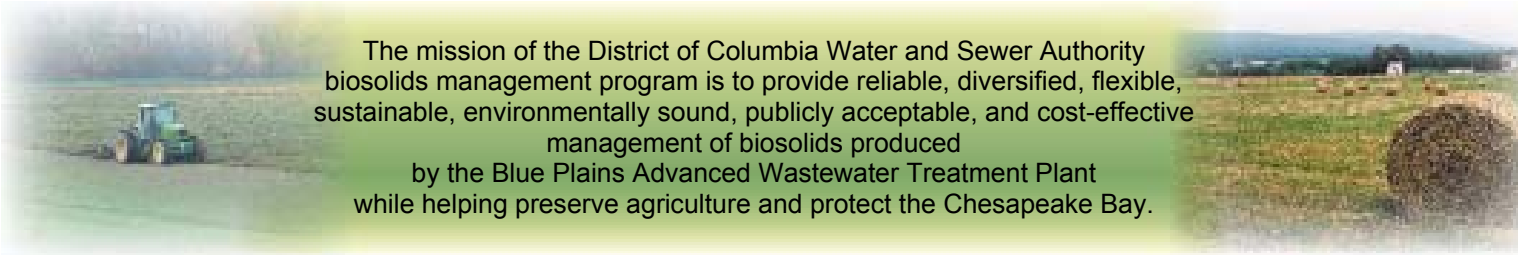
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A wide-angle photograph of a rural agricultural landscape. In the foreground, a green tractor is working in a field. To the right, there are several large, round hay bales. The background shows rolling green hills under a clear sky.

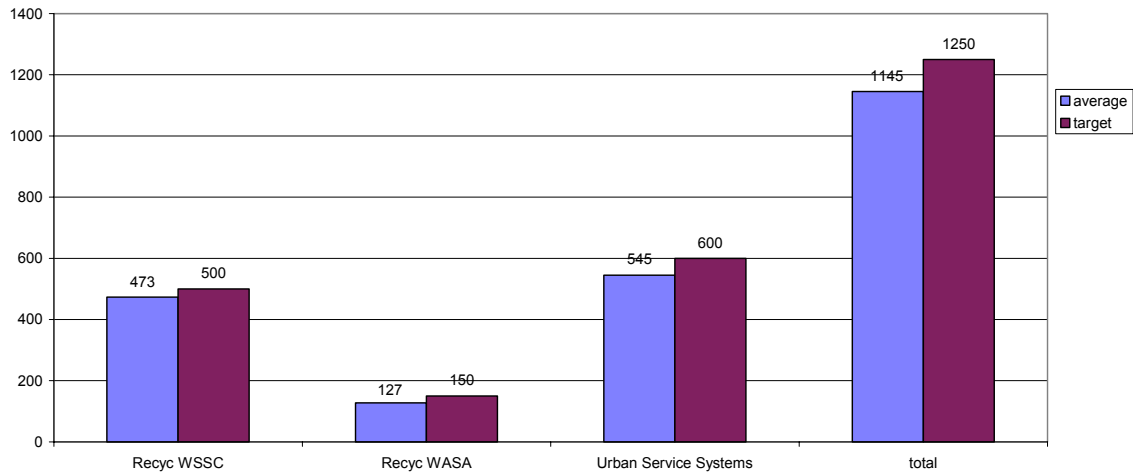
The mission of the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority biosolids management program is to provide reliable, diversified, flexible, sustainable, environmentally sound, publicly acceptable, and cost-effective management of biosolids produced by the Blue Plains Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant while helping preserve agriculture and protect the Chesapeake Bay.

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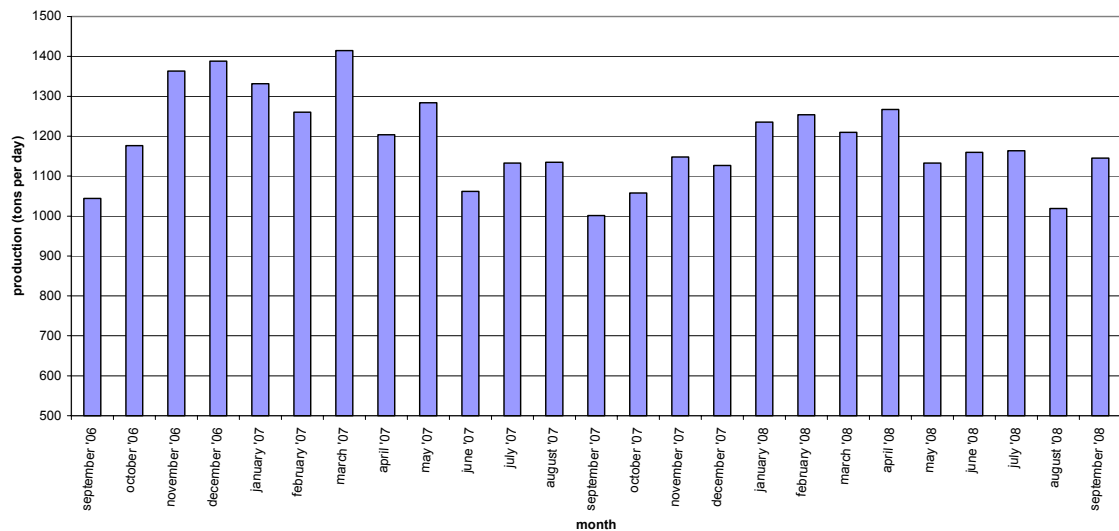
In September, biosolids hauling averaged 1145 wet tons per day. The graph below shows the hauling by contractor for the month of August. The average % solids was 28.95%, and average lime dose was 16%. A second graph shows average tons recycled per day for the last 24 months.

In September, WASA again shipped biosolids to the McGill Compost Facility in Waverly, VA. This is done through the Urban Service Systems contract. In September a total of 669 tons went to compost production.

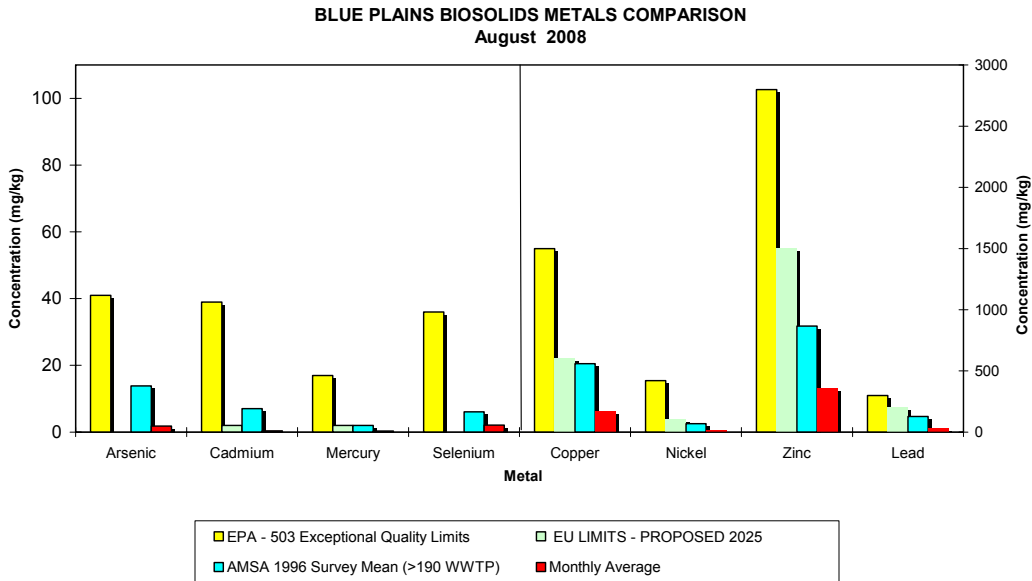
Average Daily Hauling by Contractor for September, 2008



Average Daily Biosolids Production



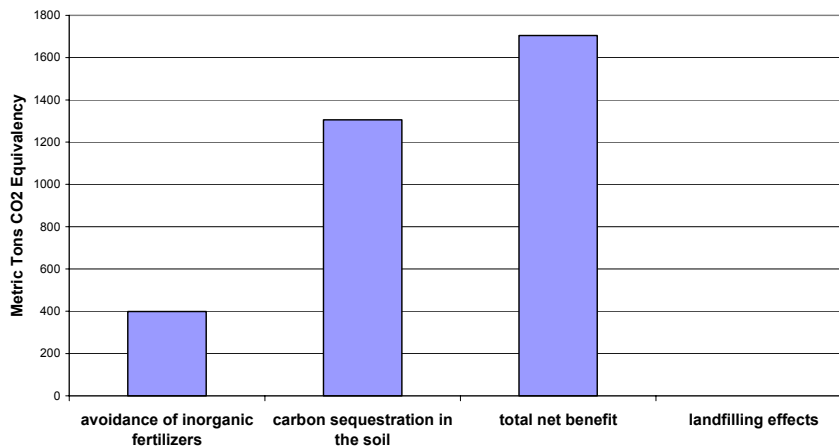
The graphs below show the EPA regulated heavy metals in the Blue Plains biosolids for the month of August 2008. As can be seen in the graphs, the Blue Plains levels are considerably below the regulated exceptional quality limits, the AMSA average levels surveyed in 1996, and even the proposed 2025 European Union (EU) limits.



Environmental Benefits

In August of 2008 staff sent 28464.74 wet tons of biosolids from the plant. In addition, 120.95 wet tons of material came out of storage in August. No tonnage went to landfills in August. The graph below shows the benefits as compared to landfilling all the biosolids in a non-energy recovering landfill. Taking into account the fuel required to transport biosolids to the field, the net benefit is 1,704 metric tons CO₂ equivalent avoided emissions. The graph shows the benefit (carbon credit) of the sequestration, the energy savings due to avoiding conventional fertilizer use, and the total of the two. This is equivalent to taking 3,864,841 car miles off the road in the month of August (assumes 20 mpg, 19.4 lb CO₂ equivalent emissions/gallon gas – EPA estimate).

DCWASA Biosolids Recycling Program
Greenhouse Gas Balance Benefits
August 2008 Hauling Totals



HIGHLIGHTS

In September, staff followed the planning of a hearing by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works to hear testimony regarding the safety of biosolids use. The week before the hearing, the committee changed the hearing to a briefing. The scheduled witnesses included the former director of the Cornell Waste Management Institute, a former EPA scientist, a farmer from Augusta, Georgia, and a manager of public works facility in Utah who successfully reuses the biosolids generated at his plant (representing NACWA). The first three witnesses have publicly stated their opposition to the use of biosolids, the fourth is a believer that the practice is safe.

On September 11, the scheduled day of the event, the Senate Committee's website noted the briefing was cancelled, but that "additional EPW hearings and briefings on EPA's wastewater programs will be announced at a future date." The reason for the cancellation was noted in a September 11th Environment and Energy (E&E) Daily story: "Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Democrats canceled this morning's briefing on U.S. EPA's sewage sludge program late last night after learning witnesses scheduled to testify were using it as leverage in a court case. A Sept. 3 letter obtained by E&E Daily reveals lawyers for Georgia dairy farmer Andy McElmurray and David Lewis, a visiting scientist at the University of Georgia, urged the University of Georgia Research Foundation and individual University of Georgia defendants to settle a case related to the program before a planned Sept. 11 hearing.... In their letter, lawyers for McElmurray and Lewis asked that the university provide Lewis with temporary employment in its Marine Sciences Department 'to help restore his reputation at UGA.' They requested the defendants pay McElmurray and another farmer, G. William Boyce, \$100,000 each for a total amount of \$200,000. They also asked a university researcher to provide a letter stating she agreed with the federal judge's conclusion last spring.... If all terms were met, the lawyers pledged to dismiss the research foundation and University of Georgia individuals from the lawsuit." In the months leading up to the scheduled hearing, the "sludgenews" website (opposed to the use of biosolids) encouraged those who believe they have been affected by biosolids land application programs to write letters to the EPW Committee. Meanwhile, Benjamin Grumbles, Assistant Administrator at U. S. EPA's Office of Water, submitted a letter to the EPW Committee on September 10th, stating EPA's support for the use of biosolids.

On September 17, staff helped host (with the Virginia Biosolids Council) a biosolids reuse technology forum in Richmond. The meetings were the result of coordinated efforts to examine the viability of technologies for efficiently extracting energy from biosolids, or using the biosolids in a method other than the traditional agricultural use we all depend so heavily upon. Attendees numbered approximately 100, and the full day event saw presentations on gasification, e-fuel manufacturing, drying, incineration, mine reclamation, composting, forest application, sludge-to-oil processes, poplar plantations, and carbon footprinting. The full summary report will be shared with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Biosolids Expert Panel to help address the task of looking at evaluating alternative technologies.

At the end of September, staff coordinated efforts to host an independent 3rd party auditor for the year three National Biosolids Partnership EMS interim audit. The auditor spent two days at the plant and one day in the VA observing contractor activities. The final report will be made available upon receipt from the auditor, some time in the next 30 days.

Map of Blue Plains Biosolids Applications and Agricultural \$'s for August 2008

