

101-H Lancer Circle
Farmville, Virginia 23901
April 17, 2006

Barbara Rubin
Loudoun Neighbors Against Toxic Sludge
1496 Teague Drive
McLean, VA 22101

Dear Ms. Rubin:

I'm writing today about your organization, the Loudoun County Neighbors Against Toxic Sludge (NATS), and its website, www.loudounnats.org. I'm very interested in your issue, but concerned that your website does not present a fair view of biosolids. I have several specific complaints that I would like to address:

- Your website seems to use the terms 'biosolids' and 'sludge' interchangeably, although these words do not mean the same thing. You define sludge as a semi-solid mix of organic matter, bacteria, chemicals, and settled solids, and even refer to it as a "toxic soup." The United States Environmental Protection Agency uses the term biosolids to refer to high quality, treated sewage sludge that does not contain large amounts of pollutants. These definitions are not the same, and I think it is misleading to refer to biosolids simply as sludge.
- Your website does not distinguish between Class A, B, and EQ biosolids, but instead refers to them all equally as 'sludge'. Class A biosolids have the strictest standards, and must contain no detectible levels of pathogens. To achieve Class A certification, biosolids must undergo heating, composting, digestion, or increased pH levels. Class A biosolids can be sold to the public for application to lawns and gardens without any application process. These products are not the same as toxic sludge, although your website seems to try to make that association.
- Your website states that the "Neighbors Against Toxic Sludge believes accurate information is empowering," but doesn't present any information advocating the use of biosolids. There are several scientific studies referenced, but there is no mention of scientific studies that have supported biosolids use.

I'm appealing to your group's sense of fairness and honesty, and asking that you publish an unbiased representation of biosolids. Visitors that read your website and don't do further research will not know about the studies showing no negative effects of biosolids, or the many governmental organizations supporting their use. I don't ask that you remove your page or change your argument, but only that you present both sides of the issue.

Sincerely,



Joshua Rainville