

News Appearing in Wage.com - Wage Radio AM 1200 – Leesburg, Virginia

Friday Mar 28th 2003

The Public debate continues- on the relative safety from the use of a controversial fertilizer on local farmlands. The Town Hall in Leesburg served as a forum this week for a trade-off on issues related to the manufacture- & application of biosolids on local acreage. The argument this week came in the potential health affects from the locally-produced material at the Leesburg Wastewater Treatment Plant. Town Officials report the stuff- called Tuscarora Landscaper's Choice- TLC- as safe as possible- meeting or exceeding all regulations.

Local activist & County appointee- Barbara Rubin of Waterford- stated that the studies on biosolid quality could use an update. Rubin urged our state legislators- in the recent Assembly Session- to push for a moratorium on sludge use across Virginia. She wants to stop the application of biosolids on local acreage- whatever the classification. Rubin- again- questioned the safety of the material made & dispersed in Leesburg. The TLC product falls under the EQ designation- standing for Exceptional Quality- commonly accepted as the safest type of sludge.

Barbara Rubin argued against a recent presentation at Town Hall- given by the local Utility Director. She recalled a report to Council by Randy Shoemaker- including a statement that the Leesburg methods represent the safest in existence. The local activist asked the Town Leaders whether these practices area safe enough. Barbara Rubin based her answer on those she qualifies as scientific experts. Barbara Rubin listed positions by physicians calling for the eradication of all pathogens in biosolids processing. Rubin listed the possibility of numerous chemicals in the material- and indications from the Environmental Protection Agency that at least questions the safety from sludge use.

The biosolids activist represents a local citizen-opponent group on the issue- Loudoun Neighbors Against Toxic Sludge- or NATS. She also serves on the County's Biosolids Technical Committee. Barbara Rubin cited health concerns from the use of sludge on farmland in Loudoun County- expressed by several residents. These included two citizens who noted negative impacts to include a foul smell & possible run-off from the substance. Residents claim health affects from the application of biosolids in their proximity- while health officials see no proven connection.

Town Manager Robert Noe countered Rubin's arguments this week in his report to Council. Noe described the production of the EQ substance- Tuscarora Landscaper's Choice- following every industry guideline in its manufacture. The Town Manager reported the facility meeting all standards & exceeding most of the requirements- set by regulatory agencies at the federal & state levels. Robert Noe cited a recent presentation on these issues- in a comprehensive report given to Leesburg Council members & Citizens from Superintendent for Water Pollution Control- Steve Cawthorn. The Town Manager defended the rendering & dispersal of the local EQ biosolids material- Tuscarora Landscaper's Choice. Noe reported the Town performing every action known to the industry to satisfy any concerns. He reported the local product passing all tests. The Town Manager expressed a desire to get the point across to any members of the public who may question the use of these materials.

The sludge issue continues under review at the County level- in ongoing meetings for the Biosolids Technical Committee. The panel considers recommendations for possible changes to the most recent ordinance on sludge application.

The locality maintains the right to restrict the applications- while lacking the power to ban the procedures. Opponents call the use of biosolids a dumping of sewage & other biological waste upon our

News Appearing in Wage.com - Wage Radio AM 1200 – Leesburg, Virginia

landscape. We could see eventual recommendations from the Technical Committee come to public hearing for pending changes to the local application rules. Expect to hear more.

Thursday Mar 6th 2003

The County Government keeps pecking away at a controversial issue- as citizens call for fast action in what they see as a major health concern- for the locality as well as the rest of the country. Our County Board heard a cry for halting the use of biosolids on local farmland this week- as they added some new members onto a technical committee in charge of review & recommendations on the matter. The agricultural industry uses the materials as a fertilizer on their acreage. Some citizens express concerns for the allowance of potentially dangerous ingredients- known as pathogens- contained in processed biosolids.

The Loudoun Supervisors listened- during public comment this week- to a new protest in the anti-sludge debate- from Ranjani Johnson- a concerned local resident & mother of four children. Johnson equated the application of biosolids to the dumping of sewage & other biological waste upon our landscape. She shared the definition of the term- ‘sludge’- as described by the Harper-Collins dictionary of Environmental Sciences. Johnson quoted the source- stating that the material represents a semi-solid mixture of bacteria & virus-laden organic matter, toxic metals, synthetic organic chemicals and settled solids removed from domestic & industrial waste water at a sewage treatment plant. She then commented that this description sounds like a mouthful.

The citizen-activist points to these substances potentially washing into rivers & spread across the County. Johnson asked the Board if they felt more secure in a lack of full disclosure about sludge on behalf of local residents.

Sludge runs in three different grades- with the least harmful taking the title of Exceptional Quality- or EQ- currently processed & offered at the Leesburg Waste Water Treatment Plant. Most anti-sludge voices express much more concern for the Class B Biosolid material- requiring a permit & fee structure for application. The current regulations allow Class B Biosolids- treated sewage containing pathogens- onto the land in close proximity to residents in Loudoun. Much of the State Code favors industry users & manufacturers.

Waste fertilizer represents a multi-billion dollar industry- with powerful lobbying interests. The issue came to the public eye within the past year & a half- with multiple reports of health problems arising for those living close to agricultural land upon which the farmers applied sludge. Loudoun Health Director David Goodfriend cited updated findings indicating the need for at least more testing, research & documentation. Doctor Goodfriend told us there was no evidence- at this time- that biosolids cause any health concerns for residents living near farms- though the study indicated that we need more work to determine that the substances pose no medical hazard. Doctor Goodfriend attributed the spotlight on biosolids coming from a report by the National Academy of Sciences. He described the data bringing in new information since the last County Ordinance on sludge use back in 1999. The technical committee re-formed last Summer- to take on the task of collecting public data & examining possibly stronger sanctions or stricter enforcement of the current guidelines. The locality maintains the right to restrict the applications- while lacking the power to ban the procedures. Local citizen-activists call for much more rapid solutions. Loudoun Neighbors Against Toxic Sludge- NATS- claim a host of recent illnesses caused by the use of biosolid- sewage products- in their vicinity. NATS pushes for a complete moratorium on the use of sludge in Virginia until the

News Appearing in Wage.com - Wage Radio AM 1200 – Leesburg, Virginia

necessary studies can finish. The organization cited health concerns related to the use of these materials- raised by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency- as well as the National Academy of Sciences.

Ranjani Johnson this week offered some suggestions. Johnson urged a temporary measure in dumping sludge into landfills & discouraging local farmers of its use. She called for an alternative to the local Technical Committee- which she claims caters to the sludge industry- with membership made up of producers, truckers & users of the material. The activist challenged the County to demonstrate realistic concerns for health & safety regarding local residents. Johnson suggested a long-term solution in the possibility of incineration.

The Loudoun Supervisors appointed a representative from Neighbors Against Toxic Sludge onto the local review committee on the issue. The Board put Waterford Resident & biosolids opponent Barbara Rubin on the Technical Panel devoted to studying the alternatives. Rubin & her colleagues had protested the membership on the Committee generally containing proponents of the sludge industry.

This week's Supervisor Appointments also include a retired Pharmacology professor, a defense department employee & a biosolids applicator. We could see eventual recommendations from the Technical Committee come to public hearing for pending changes to the local application rules. Expect to hear more.

Thursday Feb 27th 2003

The Town of Leesburg addresses health concerns regarding the use of a somewhat controversial substance on the local landscape. Officials discussed the relative merits & safety level this week for the organic fertilizer produced at the Water Pollution Control Facility. Utility leaders offered assurances to the Mayor & Council and citizens attending the latest work session & Council on the high quality of the materials- dubbed Tuscarora Landscaper's Choice.

The attention came after some specific citizen concerns in recent weeks- over the use of locally-made sludge on playing fields at Ida Lee Park. Officials pointed to those worries better directed to a less stringently-controlled grade of biosolids- in the Class B category. Utility Director for Leesburg- Randy Shoemaker- described the TLC production methods in Leesburg as among the safest & most reliable in existence. Shoemaker reminds us that the local product stands in the top tier on the scale for biosolids- defined by the Environmental Protection Agency. The Utility Director reports the local TLC material in the Exceptional Quality category- EQ- with what he describes as virtually no pathogenic organisms. Superintendent for Water Pollution Control in Leesburg- Steve Cawthorn- shared assurances for those attending Tuesday's Council Meeting at the Town Hall. Cawthorn stated that the Town started the production of the material with the assurance of the safest possible process for the use of biosolids. He reported the methods proven safe, reliable & highest quality. The local official cited approvals by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Virginia Departments of Health an' Agriculture & Consumer Services. Steve Cawthorn referred to a tremendous capital expense invested to provide for the health, safety & welfare of the citizens. Cawthorn promised a continued commitment.

Water Pollution Control Superintendent Steve Cawthorn also addressed those recent citizen concerns at this week's meeting- on the potential dangers associated with a different grade of sludge- the least-regulated of Class B materials. Cawthorn shared his opinion that Class B Biosolids could stand some more research- because of the 10-year-old EPA 503 regulations- & scientific advances in the interim. He acknowledged legitimate concerns for the Class B materials.

News Appearing in Wage.com - Wage Radio AM 1200 – Leesburg, Virginia

The Town Official drew a sharp line between the B sludge & the Leesburg biosolid product. Steve Cawthorn described the local TLC fertilizer possessing exceptional quality.

These statements on the relative merits & safety on biosolids in general & the locally-made Tuscarora Landscaper's Choice follow some sharp criticism we heard in recent weeks over the use of sludge in & around the Town of Leesburg. The application of TLC sustained opposition as part of the billion-dollar biosolids industry- from a representative of NATS- Neighbors Against Toxic Sludge- and a local elected official.

Barbara Rubin of Waterford and Soil & Water Conservation District Director- Anne Robinson- cited personal, communal & national health concerns related to the use of biosolids. Rubin & Robinson's comments included a reported allowance- at the national level- for numerous substances in biosolids- including dioxin, mercury, arsenic & lead. Barbara Rubin claims a relative lack of regulations on permitting for the materials such as the TLC fertilizer made in Leesburg. She listed concerns for common uses on gardens, children's playgrounds & so on. The local resident expanded her argument to list federal sanctions allowing for she sees as a wholesale dumping of dangerous chemicals on farmland across the country. Barbara Rubin cited a recommendation by the National Academy of Sciences- calling for the elimination on an exemption allowing application of the EQ sludge classification. The Town gives away bags of EQ biosolids- as Tuscarora Landscaper's Choice- for free public use. Leesburg Officials describe the TLC product as safe as commercial fertilizers sold at local lawn & garden stores.

Mayor Kristin Umstattd reported the recent criticism failing to provide any proof to the contrary. Mayor Umstattd offered further arguments this week. Mayor Umstattd cited the differences between a product produced in our locality & that of some other, more industrial areas. The Mayor connected this distinction to the absence of industrial waste in the Town's wastewater treatment plant. She indicated that the local product would remain safer than products from the more industrial areas- even without the locality's stringent safety measures.

Citizens brought the matter to the public last Spring at the County level- after approaching the Loudoun Government a year ago. A group of local residents claimed a range of health problems in the community of Waterford- in close proximity to the application of Class B biosolids on the surrounding farmland. Leesburg Councilman David Schmidt described the citizen's findings- recently- as 'junk science.' Councilman Schmidt warned of a possible publicity campaign against the Town of Leesburg's biosolid program. He reminded those at Town Hall of the heavy investments made by the community in the enterprise.

The recent sludge critics admitted the local Tuscarora Landscaper's Choice to be much more diluted than the other grades of biosolids.

Monday Feb 17th 2003

A controversial issue related to health concerns & the environment comes to the County tomorrow in a local Board appointment- after some fiery accusations from the past year came to a head in Leesburg last week. The Loudoun Supervisors act on a recommendation tomorrow morning- to appoint a local opponent of the biosolids industry- Barbara Rubin of Waterford. Rubin stands to serve the Loudoun County Biosolids Technical Committee.

News Appearing in Wage.com - Wage Radio AM 1200 – Leesburg, Virginia

Rubin's last appearance before the County Board heard her accuse the local government of filling the Technical Committee with sludge industry supporters & people without the proper knowledge of the issues. She put the issue into the public eye last Spring- in accusing the application of sludge materials on local farmland for the illnesses of some 50 residents in her community. She pointed the finger last week at the use of more diluted materials- processed at the local solid waste facility in Leesburg. The Town gives away bags of EQ biosolids for free public use. Barbara Rubin cited a recommendation by the National Academy of Sciences- calling for the elimination on an exemption allowing application of this sludge classification. Rubin stressed the importance of a lack of regulations on permitting for the materials such as the fertilizer made in Leesburg. She listed common uses on gardens, children's playgrounds & so on. Sludge opponent Barbara Rubin reported allowance- at the national level- for numerous substances in biosolids- including dioxin, mercury, arsenic & lead.

Barbara Rubin claims that our federal sanctions allow for what amounts to wholesale dumping of dangerous chemicals on farmland across the country. Barbara Rubin represents the group- Loudoun Neighbors Against Toxic Sludge- NATS.

Rubin & her colleagues claim a host of recent illnesses caused by the use of biosolids- human sewage products- in their vicinity. She cited health concerns related to the use of these materials- raised by the National Academy of Sciences & the Federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Barbara Rubin made a plea to our state legislators- for a complete moratorium on the use of sludge in Virginia until the necessary studies can finish. Barbara Rubin called for General Assembly action to gain local control over the sludge issue. She regularly attends the meetings of the recently-formed Loudoun Sludge Technical Committee. Rubin defines the subject matter as a critical issue. Rubin took supportive comments at last week's Leesburg Council Meeting- from another local environmental advocate- Soil & Water Conservation District Director- Anne Robinson. The Conservation District Director accused the Town of indiscriminate spreading of the substances on the fields at Ida Lee Park- in possible contact with children. Ann Robinson charged the local officials with the responsibility for the public trust. She recommended a halt to the spreading of the biosolids materials in the vicinity of children.

These & other comments from Ann Robinson & Barbara Rubin brought some harsh criticism last week from Leesburg Councilman David Schmidt. Councilman Schmidt described the findings shared by Rubin & her colleagues as 'junk science.' The Councilman pointed to this exemplified in both speakers' comments. David Schmidt predicted the launching of a publicity campaign against the Town's biosolid program. He reminded those at Town Hall of the heavy investments made by the community in this enterprise. Councilman Schmidt called for swift response to these accusations by Town Staff. Other Council Members reacted to the sludge issue with concern, reassurance & action.

Fellow Leesburg Councilman Frank BATTERY suggested a briefing on the subject- scheduled for one week from tonight at the Town Hall. Councilman BATTERY called an informational hearing for the next work session- to cover the safeguards & current Town policy on the matter.

Leesburg Mayor Kristin Umstadt addressed the item from a number of fronts. Mayor Umstadt reported the local biosolids product & process already studied by Town Staff. The Mayor listed the findings to reveal a lower level of contaminants in the Leesburg material- than in other- industrial- areas of the country. She looks for a reissue of a staff memo on the issue.

News Appearing in Wage.com - Wage Radio AM 1200 – Leesburg, Virginia

Kristin Umstatted cited all research & findings indicating the material made & offered at the Leesburg facility as safe as a commercial fertilizer you could pick up at Home Depot.

Mayor Umstatted shared statements from an earlier discussion with Barbara Rubin- in which Rubin failed to list any evidence to the contrary.

Loudoun Health Director David Goodfriend cited some fairly recent scientific findings indicating a need for more testing, research & documentation. Doctor Goodfriend shared concerns on the matter- but he also told us there was no evidence that biosolids cause any health problems for residents living near farms. The Health Director attributed the spotlight on biosolids over the past year coming from a report by the National Academy of Sciences. He described the data bringing in new information since the last County Ordinance on sludge use back in 1999.

The current regulations allow Class B Biosolids- containing pathogens- onto the land in close proximity to residents in Loudoun. Much of the State Code favors industry users & manufacturers. Waste fertilizer represents a multi-billion dollar industry- with powerful lobbying interests. The County technical committee takes the task of collecting public data & examining possibly stronger sanctions or stricter enforcement of the current guidelines.

Local citizen concerns include requests for immediate water testing in proximity to land under sludge use. The residents- around the Waterford community in particular- cited a lack of action on the County's part on the issue. The local Health Department describes itself as a watchdog of sorts on the use of biosolids. Citizens brought the matter to the public last June- after approaching the County with the problem a year ago. The health problems in the community of Waterford included pneumonia, respiratory ailments, nausea, bloody noses, flu-like symptoms, rashes & legions. We expect to hear much more on the sludge issue- in tomorrow's appointment decision for the County Technical Committee for Barbara Rubin- and for next week's Council examination in Leesburg.

Monday Jan 6th 2003

Our local legislators head down to Richmond this week- with some heavy responsibilities- after hearing citizen concerns on various issues regarding the upcoming session. Our state representatives listened to public comment last week at an annual Town Hall Meeting in Leesburg.

The major items included adequate funding for human service needs in the locality, support for additional medical services in Loudoun- including positive influence on the pending Broadlands Medical Center- proposed by HCA, restoration of the DMV services in Sterling- cut off by recent state budget reductions, expanded rights to bear arms in local restaurants, maintenance of private property rights, human health concerns regarding the controversial use of agricultural sludge, mass transit issues in weighing the benefits of bus versus rail in the Dulles Corridor and the relative management of our local government budget in Loudoun.

The largest group of speakers last week appeared in support of additional funding- or at least no more reductions- in connection to individuals in our community with special needs.

We heard Community Services Board Member- Linda Bailey- share a list of local cuts due to state and local budget reductions of over a million dollars. Bailey listed reductions planned to the contracts for mental retardation day support, group employment & the medically fragile. She reported no more

News Appearing in Wage.com - Wage Radio AM 1200 – Leesburg, Virginia

services or daytime supervision for additional clients- including mentally retarded students graduating this Spring. The Community Services Board Member described severe hardships stemming from this development- for individuals in two-income families- where both parents need to work.

Linda Bailey listed several other cuts made necessary by the budget reductions. These come in the areas of in-patient psychiatric services to 26 individuals, prevention services, nutritional & physical therapy & contractual services for 50 infants & toddlers in the parent/infant education program, various group homes for individuals with special needs and adolescent day treatment programs for 20 chemically dependent &/or emotionally disturbed adolescents in need of intensive therapy.

Bailey asked the State representatives to strive to ensure no more cuts would come in these areas. Those attending last week's Town Hall Meeting included Loudoun Senator Bill Mims and Delegates Joe May, Dick Black, Bob Marshall, Tom Rust & Gary Reese.

Senator Mims verbally indicated an empathy with citizens calling for consideration regarding the human services areas.

Another popular issue before our legislative body last week came in a demand for more health care opportunities in our locality. Nearly all the speakers on the medical front offered support for both applications before the State Health Commissioner. These include a 32-bed expansion for Loudoun Hospital at Lansdowne- and a Broadlands Regional Medical Center- offered by HCA. The citizen advocates sided with a second hospital coming from HCA rather than relying on the future services at the Cornwall Campus in Leesburg.

Local resident Don Descutner described a great need for more medical care- in his review of a population explosion in Loudoun- doubling over the past 10 years. Descutner cited the addition of numerous schools, Fire & Rescue Stations and other crucial infrastructure- but the number of Hospitals remaining at one.

Don Descutner & many other speakers called for choice in the medical care arena- namely in asking the State representatives to use their influence with the Health Commissioner on the HCA application for a Broadlands Regional Medical Center.

A somewhat smaller- if no less difficult- request- came last week in repeated calls for a reopening for the Department of Motor Vehicles in Sterling.

A large number of speakers- including Loudoun Senator Bill Mims- described recent waiting periods at the Leesburg facility of two, three, four hours & more- compounded by the closure in Sterling. Leesburg Resident Susan Horne would have won the contest- for the story of the longest delay at the Leesburg Office. Horne urged the officials to continue to work with their colleagues at the State Level to try to reinstate services at the Sterling DMV. She reported a recent five-hour wait for her family at the Leesburg facility. The citizen described this as unreasonable for individuals to take this long out of their work day for this type of service.

Senator Bill Mims already shared plans of working on the matter through the General Assembly. Another item taking support from more than one speaker last week came in increased- and/or continuance on Second Amendment issues- the right to bear arms.

News Appearing in Wage.com - Wage Radio AM 1200 – Leesburg, Virginia

Sterling resident Melinda Metter appeared in representation of the Virginia Citizens Defense League. Metter focused on support for a change in the concealed carry law- which currently forbids the possession of a hidden weapon in restaurants that serve alcohol. She told a story of entering a number of local establishments- with her firearm in open view- due to the legal ruling.

Melinda Metter described some people expressing fear at the sight of a handgun- openly carried into a restaurant. Metter reported her identity sometimes mistaken for a police officer when seeing the weapon. The local resident asked for repeal on the law so she can eat in peace.

Another serious issue before the local legislators last week came in a call for continued rights for individual landowners- in light of the proposed changes scheduled for today at the County level. The local political action group- Citizens for Property Rights- took representation from President Jack Shockey & his wife- Patricia. The Shockeys criticized the Loudoun Supervisors for use of millions of public tax dollars on the Purchase of Development Rights Program- instead of freeing up that money for other uses. The CPR representatives indicated some special observances planned as protests to today's planned action on the zoning ordinance amendments.

Patricia Shockey called upon the State Leaders to use their influence among their colleagues to stave off any support for growth control to our locality. Shockey urged the legislators to protect her property rights without flinching or giving in- in the least. Patricia & Jack Shockey received supportive comments from local Delegate Dick Black of the 32nd District.

Another issue related to land use at last week's Town Hall Meeting concerned the use of waste products on farmland.

Waterford Resident Barbara Rubin represented the group- Loudoun Neighbors Against Toxic Sludge- NATS. Rubin & her colleagues claim a host of recent illnesses caused by the use of biosolid- sewage products- in their vicinity. She cited health concerns related to the use of these materials- raised by the National Academy of Sciences & the Federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Barbara Rubin made a plea for a complete moratorium on the use of sludge in Virginia until the necessary studies can finish. Barbara Rubin called for state action to gain local control over the sludge issue. She spoke of some of these critical issues covered by the recently-formed Loudoun Sludge Technical Committee.

We heard an interesting perspective- at last week's Town Hall Meeting- on mass transit- as related to state & national budget issues.

Local businessman- Ken Reid- appeared for his group- the Rapid Transit Action Committee. Reid calls for Bus Rapid Transit- while opposing Rail- in the Dulles Corridor. He cited support for his views- in the criticism of the four billion dollar price tag for a train system- offered by the Federal Transit Administrator.

Ken Reid pointed to the decision in December by the Commonwealth Transportation Board- to spend 60 million dollars on another rail study. Reid offered this item in contrast to the opinion from the Transit Administration describing the proposed 50/50 match funding formula for rail as not feasible.

Local activist- Barbara Muncy of South Riding- offered a unique opinion on potential action the state leaders could take in regards to helping- or hindering- our officials in Loudoun on the management of

News Appearing in Wage.com - Wage Radio AM 1200 – Leesburg, Virginia

rising growth and dwindling finances. Muncey spoke of smart growth as a questionable mechanism- which sounds better than it ultimately serves. She suggested an interesting alternative to lobbying for additional tax dollars returning to our locality.

Barbara Muncey suggested the State leaders burn her money before they work to bring back more to Northern Virginia- at least while Smart Growth holds court in the locality.

We spoke to County Board Chairman Scott York on some of these issues at last week's legislative gathering.

Chairman York repeated the local request for a tax code revision- which could potentially change the structure of the financial relationship between the state & local governments. The Chairman shared hopes for some legislative action on additional growth management tools coming in support from Richmond- stemming from- and related to- budget issues.

Scott York looks for possible passage on an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance- due in part because of the state's financial troubles.

The local legislators left contact points for the upcoming Session. Our Senators & Delegates welcome calls & e-mails at their offices in Richmond. You can access the computerized Bill-Tracking System set up by the Virginia Legislature- with every move of a selected item communicated to constituents via e-mail. You can hit the General Assembly WebSite at www.legis.state.va.us. You can access general Legislative Information by phone at Area Code 804-698-1500.

The 2003 General Assembly convenes the day after tomorrow- on Wednesday. The Virginia Legislature schedules adjournment six & a half weeks later- for February 22nd.

Monday Sept 23rd 2002

Loudoun County takes another step on a public health issue- with some citizens calling for a giant leap. The BioSolids Technical Committee heard last week from residents- with concerns over the use of sludge on local farmland.

The current Ordinance allows the application of Class B Biosolids- containing pathogens- onto the land in close proximity to residents in many areas of Loudoun. Much of the State Code favors the users & manufacturers. Waste fertilizer represents a multi-billion dollar industry.

Environmental Health Chief Larry Yates reported about 50 participants in last week's meeting- including technical committee members. Yates described the health concerns running from informal input- with numerous suggestions for increased ordinance requirements to include monitoring & testing- not currently done- to more concentrated opposition- including one call for a moratorium on the practice until these changes can come into play.

Larry Yates reports the County Attorney currently deliberating the options. Yates tells us that State Code forbids the banning of biosolids applications- based on a case from Amelia County that went to the Supreme Court. He told us that the Court issued a ruling that localities can restrict the application of these substances to certain areas- and administer monitors & testing. The County Health Official reported a request in to the County Attorney to review the current situation & case law- and to provide

News Appearing in Wage.com - Wage Radio AM 1200 – Leesburg, Virginia

the information- with advice- to the technical committee. Yates indicates that the locality maintains the right to restrict the applications- while the County lacks the power to ban the procedure.

Waterford Resident Barbara Rubin renewed her call- last week- for a moratorium on the land application of sludge. Rubin cited the lack of certification from officials on citizen safety from the use of biosolids. She referred to a report from the National Academy of Sciences that concludes the Environmental Protection Agency lacks the necessary power & information to address the matter. Barbara Rubin reminded local officials of the number of citizens living close to biosolid application. Rubin cites complaints of illnesses in many residents caused by the same organisms found in sludge material. Rubin's petition for a moratorium contained four hundred 60 signatures. She reported a lack of urgency on the part of the County's Technical Committee.

We remember these issues coming before the Board of Supervisors this past Spring- after the health concerns arose at least a year ago. Some of these issues brought a decision in July to reconvene the technical committee for last week's input session. The group also undergoes a review of the current ordinance- to make recommendations on stricter measures or- possibly come up with alternate means of dealing with the issue.

Larry Yates expects the technical committee to set a series of meetings to look at possible action on the item. Yates sees possibilities of additional testing & monitoring on-site, during application. He also sees a chance of strengthening the membership on the technical committee. Yates describes the issue of biosolids a complicated affair- requiring some diverse fields of expertise. He looks for the possible addition on the committee for a physician or medical person, an attorney and a citizen member with knowledge of biosolids.

The committee may determine a plan of action over the next couple of months.
Larry Yates expects to hear from the County Attorney's Office on the legal options.

Yates reminded us that the Technical Committee formed in the late 90's- due to fish kills in the area. The Committee recommended an ordinance that set stiffer restrictions on run-off issues. The Board formed the group in order to examine stricter measures concerning the use of Bio-Solids on the land. Citizen complaints in the last year include concerns for what some see as health problems caused by sludge use on nearby farmland. Testimony included a list of ailments to these citizens including pneumonia, respiratory complications, nausea, bloody noses, flu-like symptoms rashes & legions. The residents pointed to studies cited by the Center for Disease Control, the Environmental Protection Agency & the Inspector General.

The County Health Department sees no connection between the illnesses & the application of biosolids. The local health officials support further testing for a more accurate conclusion. The last ordinance came in three years ago.

Friday July 19th 2002

We get some more feedback on a current public health issue that raises concerns for residents living near farmland in Loudoun. The local Health Department told us yesterday that a new panel on agricultural sludge use could bring some tighter regulations. Officials took action this week to reorganize the County's former technical committee for land application of biosolids.

News Appearing in Wage.com - Wage Radio AM 1200 – Leesburg, Virginia

Loudoun Health Director David Goodfriend cites some new findings indicating the need for at least more testing, research & documentation. Doctor Goodfriend told us there was no evidence that biosolids cause any health concerns for residents living near farms- the study said that we need more work to determine that the substances pose no medical hazard.

Doctor Goodfriend attributed the recent spotlight on biosolids coming from a report by the National Academy of Sciences. He described the data bringing in new information since the last County Ordinance on sludge use back in 1999.

The current regulations allow Class B Biosolids- containing pathogens- onto the land in close proximity to residents in Loudoun. Much of the State Code favors industry users & manufacturers. Waste fertilizer represents a multi-billion dollar industry- with powerful lobbying interests. The issue came to the public eye within the past year- with multiple reports of health problems arising for those living close to agricultural land upon which the farmers applied sludge.

The newly-reforming technical committee takes the task of collecting public data & examining possibly stronger sanctions or stricter enforcement of the current guidelines.

Health Director David Goodfriend told us he & his colleagues want to hear more from anyone with concerns on this or other medically-related issues. Doctor Goodfriend stressed that- whether it's due to biosolids or other stuff in the community- if they believe there is anything in the area or environment the Health Department wants to know about it & they should tell their doctors- we already know that Loudoun possesses health threats- such as the highest rate of lime disease in Virginia.

We spoke to one loyal listener yesterday who called for immediate water testing in proximity to land under sludge use. The residents- around the Waterford community in particular- cited a lack of action on the County's part on the issue.

The Health Department- meanwhile- describes itself as a watchdog of sorts on the use of biosolids.

Wednesday June 19th 2002

We hear some concerns for health problems possibly connected to a common farming practice across Loudoun County- and the rest of the Country, for that matter. A group of citizens informed the County Board this week of a host of illnesses in their community- with at least some evidence pointing a finger at the application of biosolids to nearby acreage. Three Waterford residents- Barbara & Steve Rubin and Susan Williams- appeared at Monday's Meeting with an announcement of a disturbing list of ailments affecting their Village- reportedly beginning last Summer & extending into the winter.

Barbara Rubin backed up her testimony with reports of concerns on the use of biosolids- or sludge- cited by the Center for Disease Control, the Environmental Protection Agency & the Inspector General. Rubin listed the health problems in the community of Waterford included pneumonia, respiratory ailments, nausea, bloody noses, flu-like symptoms, rashes & legions.

Barbara Rubin's husband- Steve- clarified that he & his neighbors see the connection between these health problems & the use of biosolids on the land only as a possibility- not a scientifically-authenticated certainty. Steve Rubin also called for an immediate investigation on the matter. Rubin reminded those in attendance that the Ordinance allows the application of Class B Biosolids- containing pathogens- onto

News Appearing in Wage.com - Wage Radio AM 1200 – Leesburg, Virginia

the land in close proximity to residents in many areas- including Waterford. Steve Rubin cited much of the State Code in favor of the biosolids applicators & manufacturers. We heard testimony on the multi-billion dollar industry in waste fertilizer. Steve Rubin told the County they can regulate the issue- with the dwindling number of farms on the landscape in relation to the residential development occurring on much of our agricultural countryside.

The Rubins appeared at Monday's meeting with another Waterford resident- Susan Williams- after the three met earlier this month on the issue with Loudoun County Health Director- David Goodfriend & a couple of our local Supervisors. Doctor Goodfriend reports work on the issue going back to February. He described the matter one of significant concern to the community.

Susan Williams advised the County to forbid the application of sludge onto non-tillable land- citing possible dangers from air-borne particles. Williams also called for geologic surveys prior to permission on biosolid use- to ensure the protection of groundwater.

The former Utah resident compared the issue to the use of underground nuclear testing in her former state back in the 50's. Susan Williams reported a number of her acquaintances dying of cancer- including her best friend- losing her battle with five different cancers at the age of 39. Williams cited testimony from the woman's oncologist- attributing the death to the nuclear testing. She listed that doctor later serving as president for the American Cancer Society.

Susan Williams reminded the Board that Newsletter from the Loudoun Health Department reported arrangements for research to assure biosolids applications in the County pose no environmental hazards to human health. Williams described a gap on this issue between word & deed.

The Health Department describes itself as a watchdog regulator on the use of biosolids in Loudoun County. Health Director David Goodfriend reported action at this time on drafting a submission to the County Board. The item would address current enforcement & possibly additional regulations. Doctor Goodfriend also wants to hear more on the issue from the general populace in Loudoun. The Health Director seeks input on the strength of the Ordinance in order to gauge the need for further sanctions. Goodfriend also wants to hear from local farmers on the issue. Expect word on Public Input Sessions. Doctor Goodfriend shared his concerns on the matter- but the Health Director listed no direct evidence of a connection between the Waterford illnesses & the use of sludge on farmland. Goodfriend also hopes for enough staff to properly monitor & regulate the applications of the substances.