

# Help Stop Human Waste Biosolids Spreading

July 20, 2019



**ACTION  
ALERT**

The following article is from ManaSota-88, Inc. a 501.c3 Public Health and Environmental Organization.

Spreading disease-carrying and toxic human waste on farmland just because it is convenient is an abominable and inexcusable practice. Cities get rid of sewage and farmers get money and fertilizer, but it is now evident that it contaminates both our surface and groundwater and puts our health at risk.

There is no good reason to allow this and we have to opportunity to tell our leaders to stop.

We have posted earlier on this same subject [HERE](#), [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

This situation hits close to home. Human sludge has been spread near OSFR headquarters and the Santa Fe River for years. You can be sure it is in our groundwater and in the Santa Fe.

It can be stopped but won't be unless we protest.

Time is short, just a few days left to make comments. They do not have to be long nor elegant, just briefly say that you oppose biosolids spreading.

Comments by OSFR historian Jim Tatum.

-A river is like a life: once taken, it cannot be brought back-

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## HUMAN SEWAGE SLUDGE RULEMAKING

The Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) is in the process of conducting rulemaking for Chapter 62-640, F.A.C., for the review of management practices and potential nutrient impacts related to the land application of biosolids (human sewage sludge).

The public comment period is open until July 29th. You may submit written comments directly via the PUBLIC COMMENTS Link below, or by emailing them to [Kristin Gousse](#).

<https://floridadep.gov/water/domestic-wastewater/content/dep-chapter-62-640-fac-rulemaking-and-biosolids-technical-advisory>

There is substantial scientific evidence indicating that land spreading of biosolids sewage sludge poses a risk to public health and the environment.

The use of sewer sludge poses a danger to public health because of elevated concentrations of lead and other heavy metals. There is a blatant disregard of regulations coupled with lack of enforcement, that spreading of sludge occurs during rain periods with runoff contaminating rivers, streams, and wetlands, and that excessive sludge spreading occurs at some locations.

The adoption of tough regulatory efforts to reduce the risks of sewage sludge to the public's health and the environment is needed. Due to its potential long-term impact, the use of sewer sludge as a fertilizer and soil conditioner should be prohibited.

Rather than continuing to permit additional contamination of the soil and water from applications of sludge, FDEP should take the lead in adopting safe sludge disposal alternatives.

Anyone applying to rezone or subdivide property or for a special exception should be required to disclose whether the property has been used as a sludge storage site or has had sludge applied to it. Land being used for agriculture will likely be developed in the future.

It is important that interested buyers are forewarned. Deeds should be flagged for the properties where sludge has been applied. If owners of these properties believe sludge is safe, then they should have no objection to having it noted on their deeds that sludge was used.

Additional policy is needed to regulate vehicles that are used for the transportation of biosolids. Such vehicles should meet all applicable Florida codes and regulations for commercial vehicles and clearly identify the transporter in a legible manner.

Currently there is little to essentially no FDEP oversight of sludge applications or assurances that the sludge meets even the very weak Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements. EPA cannot ensure humans are safe from the viruses, bacteria and toxins contained in sludge. The agency has cut money, staff and oversight of their sludge programs.

EPA regulations permit the cumulative loading of 267 pounds of

lead per acre (if regulations are followed) for sludge. The lead levels allowed in sludge can have an adverse effect in the intelligence and neurobehavioral development of children exposed to land contaminated with sludge lead residues. The future uses of the land, ground water quality and air quality is compromised. Once lead is introduced in the environment, it persists and will eventually spread and cause human health problems. Once sludge is applied, the lead can never be recovered. It is extremely unlikely that any feasible monitoring and enforcement program can adequately ensure sludge application regulations are met.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that sewage sludge that has been converted to fertilizer can pose a potential health risk from E. coli, salmonella, hepatitis B and other bacteria and viruses. The harmful substances can include salmonella, typhoid, dysentery, hepatitis, rotaviruses, cryptosporidium and tapeworms.

Until adequate EPA and state standards are in place, permitting sludge use is irresponsible and will, over the long term, be extremely expensive.