

Land Application of Biosolids

Ten Things Virginia Local Government Can Do

1. Local governments are encouraged by the Virginia Department of Health to adopt a local ordinance on the land application of biosolids. This ordinance must be approved by the VDH as advised by the Office of Attorney General. With an ordinance, a local government can appoint a local monitor to test biosolids applied in the county, monitor the application and ensure compliance with Virginia laws and regulations.
2. Understand the economic and environmental benefits of biosolids recycling on the family farms in a community.
3. Review the scientific evidence documenting the safety of biosolids.
4. If a local government enacts a biosolids ordinance, accompany Department of Health staff on the evaluation of a site. Department of Health staff also conducts inspections at the wastewater treatment plant and evaluates the biosolids source for compliance with regulations. Participate in this process.
5. If a local monitor is hired, ensure that the monitor is appropriately trained.
6. Apply for reimbursement from the VDH, allowed by applicable state law, for the expenses associated with testing and monitoring the beneficial land application of biosolids.
7. Before any public meeting is held, request a meeting with Department of Health staff, the applicator and the landowner or leaseholder regarding the permit application or modification. Public meetings are intended to address environmental, regulatory, health, agronomic and logistical application issues.
8. Carefully review land application permits, talk to the farmer and the land applier and proactively comment on an application. The Department of Health must consider land use concerns expressed by a county during the processing of an application.
9. Before land application begins, participate in the development of transportation routes to and from the land application sites with the applicator. Routes should follow primary highways, should avoid residential areas when possible, and should comply with all VDOT requirements.
10. Respond proactively to complaints with support from Department of Health staff and representatives of the land applier.