



The United Sludge-Free Alliance

The Toilet Paper

Newsletter of the United Sludge-Free Alliance
by Darree Sicher

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What's wrong with sewage sludge? It's in your food, water and community! Over 4 million tons of sewage sludge is land applied in the USA to farm fields, parks, golf courses and sold as bagged fertilizer. Everything that goes down the drain of homes, industries, businesses and hospitals condenses in sewage sludge and, with stunning lack of oversight and testing for human safety, can legally be applied to your food source. United Sludge-Free Alliance is a non-profit volunteer group dedicated to educating people about the health and safety risks of sewage sludge to our food, water and communities.

Get Involved!

If you're in the Berks County, Pennsylvania area (sludge capital of PA!), please volunteer with the US-FA group based here to help or help with our online internet work. If you're not, use our ideas as a template to create a sludge-educational organization in your area and pass our information to anyone who eats food & drinks water.

New This Month

United Sludge-Free Alliance is excited to participate at the Pennsylvania Renewable Energy & Sustainable Living Festival (www.paenergyfest.com) Sept. 18th-20th in Kempton, PA. Drawing over 10,000 visitors annually, the festival presents programs, workshops, speakers, films and endless options to educate, enlighten and entertain aboutrenewable energy and sustainable living. We are pleased to present our speakers: Darree Sicher, US-FA founder and member, discussing 'Sewage Sludge In Your Food & Water' will speak at 10:00 am on Saturday and Jeff Moyer, Chairman of the National Organics Standards Board and Rodale Farm Manager, will discuss 'What's New In the National Organics Standards' at 3:30pm on Friday. Why is USDA Organic sludge-free? Who is pushing to change that? Plus, Bullfrog Films will be showing the film 'Crapshoot' during the festival for even more sludge education. Make a day of it and come visit us at booth # 95!

Schedule A Film Night: Time for Fall scheduling of the film 'Sludge Diet!' - an excellent overview of the sewage sludge issue, supported by science and personal experience from around the world. Why not schedule a film presentation in your community or with the groups that you are a member of? Contact us for scheduling – usfa@usludgefree.org or 610-823-8258.

Sign this petition: What can you do about the sewage sludge issue? Here's something – add your name to the growing list of people from around the world who have real concerns about how land applied sewage sludge affects the health and safety of our food, water and communities. Sludge

victim and community organizer, Jim Bynum has done an excellent job maintaining informational websites and pushing the sewage sludge issue forward. Read his attached letter and [article](#) for stunning background on the sewage sludge issue.

"I am a retired Missouri farmer with a cause, two websites and the documentation to scare the shit out of anyone who wants to sue me for talking about contaminated food or the fraudulent studies claiming sludge use is safe. Here is the 1981 federal policy that has got us in trouble."
<http://thewatchers.us/EPA/1981-policy-EPA-USDA-FDA.pdf>

And this excellent article:

<http://hartkeisonline.com/2009/09/11/wild-boar-or-waste-water-who-slimed-the-spinach/>

Please sign this petition and pass it on - for the future of America's food, children and farms!

<http://www.thepetitionsite.com/2/help-ban-sludge>

Next, please take a minute to post a comment to the EPA requesting that they stop land application of sewage sludge.

<http://blog.epa.gov/enforcementnationalpriority/2009/08/suggestions-for-future-environmental-priorities/#respond>

FYI:

The DEP Role

Sludge time is upon us - did you know the DEP has records of where the sludge in your community is coming from? Every state has a Department of Environment that is charged with, among other things, enforcing sludge rules adopted by that state and the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Every state has the option to enact stricter regulations than the federal EPA 503 regulations require. Think of the state level as the 'sludge police' who enforce the rules the way they are written. In Pennsylvania, the state level is the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Each regional state office maintains records, including sludge locations, tonnage, out-of-state imports and site violations. This is an important way to confirm if the 'fertilizer' the farmer is using is sewage sludge or general animal manure, a historic and important way for crops to be fertilized. Records are open to the public if you make an appointment to visit the DEP regional office, but information cannot be mailed to you.

The farmer next to you must 'restrict access' by marking his field with signs. Sometimes, the signs will note the application of Class B sludge (a.k.a. biosolids), permit numbers or hauler ID for the first 30 days after it is spread and other times the signs need only state 'No Trespassing' or something similar. In some states, such as PA, the farm must notify the neighboring properties the first time sewage sludge is being applied, but there are no requirements to notify neighbors beyond the first time application. If you are a rental property or bought your home after the first time application, you will not be informed that toxic waste will be applied next to your home. There is no regulation on wording of signs, so check with your DEP if sludge is being applied or merely manure fertilizer. No signs? Call the DEP. Their job is to enforce the regulations set by the state and the EPA, paid for by YOUR tax dollars. Your tax dollars also support farm preservation programs with like 'Clean and Green' and 'Farmland Trust' but remember: if it can be farmed – it can be sludged! Unfortunately, farmers are given filtered information by the industries that make a huge profit delivering this free 'fertilizer' and it is legal for farms that feed America to pour our modern toxic waste, a.k.a sewage sludge or biosolids, on the land that grows our food, feeds our livestock and is the source of our water. Has the practice of land application of sewage sludge ever been tested for human safety or the impact on the land and environment that sustains us? No.

If you are experiencing negative health side effects from a farm in your community spreading sludge, report this to the DEP (or your state equivalent) AND your state Department of Health and send us an email. In this way, you are helping to create a paper trail of community health concerns, not just individual 'anecdotal evidence'. Unlike the patronizing, sludge industry motto that blames citizens concerned about their health issue as 'emotional', and our elected officials and bureaucratic agencies who co-operate in that dismissive attitude, we recognize that your experience is real and valid. Also, note your pet and farm animal reactions if you are in an area receiving sludge. We have had reports of a family dog that ran through a newly sludged field, later vomiting white foam, only to die within the week. Another report of a family who had two pregnant mares miscarry dead foals after their neighbor sludged. And one family whose horse developed tumors within the nasal passage after grazing near sludged fields. Contact your neighbors and develop a community watch on health and water quality issues – no bureaucracy will do it for you and you are the only one who will make a change in the future of sewage sludge disposal. Join us in making this issue heard!

Design Our Bumper Stickers & Buttons!

Got a great idea or slogan for a bumper sticker or button about sewage sludge? Send us your stuff – if we pick your bright idea, we'll send you a free button or sticker – at usfa@usludgefree.org or 610-823-8258.

Endorse Us & Donate!

Our group starts with 'united' and ends with 'alliance' - this means we need you and the organizations you participate in to learn more and speak out about the sewage sludge issue. Ask your group to endorse our work and become part of the network when you are educating others. And please make a donation and invite your group to make a donation! Every penny helps to cover the expenses. US-FA is a 501c3 non-profit organization and your donations are tax deductible.

Learn More about the Issues!

Use our website to get informed and stay informed about the issues surrounding the use of sewage sludge as a fertilizer. Our website is a clearinghouse of current information on this dangerous and deadly practice as well as ideas about promising alternatives to sewage sludge disposal. Check the September online issue of Common Sense 2 for our new article "You Are What You Eat.....Sewage Sludge?" at www.commonsense2.com .