

Draft Water New Zealand Good Practice Guide for the Beneficial Use of Organic Waste Products on Land

Queenstown Meeting 24th February 2017 – Notes

Nick Walmsley presented slides on behalf of the Steering group summarising the proposed changes to the 2003 biosolids Guidelines. The slides included the formal questions raised within Volume 1. Questions and comments from the floor were encouraged and content noted below. All participants were encouraged to provide written submissions, whether in support or not, by the end of March 2017.

Formal Questions Raised:

- 1. Should the word ‘waste’ be included in the title and descriptive text? Should it just refer to ‘Organic Products’ or ‘Organic Materials’?**
 - Concerned with the word waste, going to a landfill would be waste, if not going there it should be used differently.
 - Prefer organic waste, could use by products, include recycle.
 - Agree with taking out of the title but definitely in the description of product ingredient. You either producing a product or it’s a waste.
 - Councils will do whatever costs the least. How will councils present this to the community? How will they present it. Environmental benefit.
- 2. Should the proposed ‘Type’ 1A, 1B etc be used or revert back to the previous Aa, Ab etc nomenclature used in the 2003 Biosolids Guidelines?**
 - Relatively unimportant
 - Why not make it A,B,C
 - It’s the same product doesn’t matter.
 - Always have to explain what a 1A or Aa means, go away from this to compliant or not compliant. A-D is easier to explain.
 - May be a case for setting up a group, the advocates acceptable uses.
- 3. Should measurement of emerging organic contaminant limits be mandatory for all biosolids applied to land so that a New Zealand database can be established more quickly, giving a greater ability for evidence based review?**
 - Yes, but not as a consent condition, set it up as a MoU for only X period or review annually. Shouldn’t be in a 35 year consent, been stuck with those before and they are hard to remove once data is gathered. – H2ope’s Infrastructure data is a possible mechanism for national data.
 - Frequency of testing is important. Emerging contaminants since when? It’s a moving target.
 - Should be done.
 - Not easily managed for a community of 5000. Minimum size of population / tonnage?
 - From a public health point of view it is a new topic, more data helps build confidence.
 - Its public information. It should be a coordinated public available.
- 4. Volume 1 The Guide is intended to give practical guidance. Is the information clear enough, in the correct format, split adequately between background/supporting information (Technical Manual) and the Guide? How could it be improved?**

- Table 3.1 contamination should be added.
 - Were there discussions with Iwi?
 - Target or measures what the guide is trying to achieve? No.
- 5. Are there any concerns over the proposed changes? What are they?**
- It's great to put it in the table again, re raise awareness.
 - Simplifying grades will make it easier to have the conversation.
 - It's very positive
 - Think we need it.
 - We can apply this product beneficially to land. It provides technical answers, gives the national background support. 20 years ago no one cared, now it's strongly questioned. Govt support adds weight, backing. There are ways to do this safely.
 - Education process with community – Iwi shift in sensitive belief. The biggest barrier with Fonterra being labelled Human waste. Massively constrains council options. Difference with sheep and meat unless you're going to sell or convert the farm.
 - Iwi big body corporates also see the issues.
- 6. What positive or negative impacts will the proposed changes have on your business?**
- See Q5 above
- 7. Are the changes to the guidelines able to be aligned with current regional and district plans?**
- Difficult
- 8. Is using the NES for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health, April 2012 an acceptable means of protecting human health in the urban environment? If not, what do you suggest as an alternative?**
- Definitely a link
 - Concern of private supplies out of district council control not being monitored.

Other Comments:

- New swimming water standards and the risk that limits have been lowered. Devil's advocate. Were the old standards realistic or optimistic. Old central govt advocates have moved on. Are these limits defensible?
- Land use discussion with Fonterra and wineries, did the conversation take place? If many people are saying no, available space to place biosolids will be very limited.
- The table for product standards requires more explanation i.e. A was pathogen compliant, B chemical compliant. What if it is compliant for both protozoa and chemical?
- Southland desludging oxidation ponds, will these standards help to address it? Reply was trying to be enabling without changing the risk, the standards are the same.
- Why is aluminium not included? For that matter what about iron and manganese from reed farms?
- Lab testing – struggling to find labs that test for helminths. May not be commercial viable.
- Sampling; is there a rule or description on where to the sampling from and how much? Is it based around a continuous operation?
- Is there guidance on dilution?
- **How do we role this document out?**

- Educational thing – Local vermi-composting and local regional council lack of knowledge.
- Concern of those with technical knowledge seen as interfering with consent planners during the consenting phase. Supplying consenting officer the information that will stand scrutiny. Having endorsements is good. Their officer is concerned if something goes wrong; if an expert says its fine it provides more security.
- **Where are the regional councils at in this process?**
 - There isn't that level of open dialogue.
 - Waiting on MfE feedback.
 - Being an enabling document should aid Regional Councils.
- **Who owns the objective of turning a waste into a product?**
 - Draft MfE NES reply
 - Would a summary from NPR help.
 - Water NZ leading the charge but why are regional councils holding back. Concern they aren't part of this process.
 - Changing terminology can help. Use words that aren't emotive that are used as hammer. i.e. waste.