

Top Biosolids Stories for February 2026



Regulations

CASA Meets with U.S. EPA Biosolids Team in DC

Following CASA's DC Policy Forum, participants had the opportunity to join our scheduled meeting with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Biosolids Team along with their Branch Chief and Division Director. Also in attendance were national representatives, Emily Remmel (National Association of Clean Water Agencies) and Ashley Voskuhl (Water Environment Federation). CASA shared the current state of renewable resource potential and end-use in the state. California leads the nation in biosolids production with 736,000 dry metric tons, which represents roughly 10% of the nation's biosolids, that is primarily land applied for beneficial use. An overview on some of the drivers and initiatives shaping legislation and regulations were shared, such as CalRecycle's SB1383 mandating

organic waste diversion from landfills and agencies exploring regionalization opportunities to leverage resources for biosolids management.

Much of the meeting was focused on PFAS, discussing options to cooperatively move forward towards unified guidance and eventually regulation. CASA, alongside the national associations, asked the U.S. EPA if interim guidance or a statement that supports biosolids management done in accordance with the existing Part 503 Biosolids Regulation could be issued, while the Draft PFAS Risk Assessment for Biosolids continues to shape biosolids management across the nation. To illustrate the impact of the limited options available for biosolids management, a recent report demonstrating how a biosolids land application ban in New York would create interregional and interstate turmoil. The report found that if a ban was approved, 177,000 tons of biosolids that is currently land applied would face extremely limited options and conflict with the state's climate and solid waste goals that support increased land application. In addition, the recent publication of the University of Arizona led study with the largest U.S. study of soil PFAS in land applied biosolids sites was highlighted, noting that across the 440 soil samples from 21 sites in 16 states, the median surface soil concentrations for all PFAS analyzed were less than 1 ng/g.

U.S. EPA responded that they have completed review of the Draft Risk Assessment comments, are evaluating how U.S. EPA Administrator Zeldin's PFAS plan impacts this process and are working to move forward.

CASA representatives following their meeting with U.S. EPA (from l-r): Jim Dunbar (Lystek), Maile Lono-Batura (CASA), Steve Jepsen (Clean Water SoCal), Jason Dafforn (Valley Sanitary District), and Sarah Deslauriers (CASA).

U.S. EPA ECHO Biosolids Facility Search and Report Webinar

On Tuesday, March 10, the U.S. EPA will host a webinar featuring the Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) from 10:00am – 11:00am PT. This webinar will feature an overview on accessing ECHO for biosolids facility searches and

reports. The webinar will present an overview of electronic biosolids annual reporting and how to use the ECHO database to search for biosolids facilities, biosolids annual reports, and biosolids facility reports. Register here for this webinar.

Clean Water Summit Partners BACEN (Biosolids Air Climate Energy Nutrients) Webinar

On February 11, the Clean Water Summit Partners (CWSP) hosted a free webinar for policymakers and regulators on challenges wastewater agencies face complying with near-term biosolids, air, climate, energy, and nutrient (BACEN) regulations, and opportunities for more coordinated, holistic regulatory approaches. This 2.5-hour webinar offered insights on how agencies are addressing BACEN requirements alongside priorities to support climate goals, maintaining affordability, and strengthening community resilience. Copies of the presentations are posted on CASA's Resources Page and links to the recordings are provided below:

1. Getting the Waste Out of Water: Wastewater Treatment 101 – Sarah Deslauriers, CASA
2. Intersection of Nutrient Removal & Air Emissions at Wastewater Treatment Facilities – Lorien Fono, BACWA and Mike Falk, HDR
3. Intersection of Organic Waste Diversion & Wastewater Treatment – Steve Jepsen, Clean Water SoCal and Rashi Gupta, Carollo Engineers
4. Wastewater Biogas: A Resource to Support the Circular Economy, Sarah Deslauriers, CASA and Ali Chehrehsaz, TerraVerde Energy

CalRecycle Zero Waste Plan Released

On February 13, CalRecycle released their Zero Waste Plan that focuses on strategies that support circular systems for the state. CASA shared comments on the Draft Zero Waste Plan during their listening sessions and through formal comment letters that emphasized how CASA represents a large cross-section of renewables on tap across the state that can help to realize this plan. Plan components and recommendations focus on such things as policy alignment, financing efforts, infrastructure for circularity, research and innovation, communication for behavior change, and partnerships. You can access to final plan that includes comment letters here.

Legislation

Senate PFAS CERCLA Liability Exemption Bill

In early February, Senator Ricketts (R-NE) presented legislation to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works for consideration that focuses on exempting certain entities from liability under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980 with respect to releases of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (containing at least 2 sequential fully fluorinated carbon atoms). Exempt entities include wastewater or water utilities, as well as those that transport and manage biosolids. As written, the bill would prevent any person from recovering costs or damages related to releases of PFAS from those exempt entities. For additional information, visit bill text here.

New York Hearing to Ban Sludge

On February 5, a hearing was held by Senator Harckham and Assemblymember Kelles, alongside Environmental Advocates New York and the Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter, with the objective to make the case for halting biosolids land application due to the risks of PFAS. The Mid-Atlantic Biosolids Association (MABA) is tracking developments related to this hearing and intent to ban biosolids land application.

Agri-Pulse Covers Proposed Fertilizers in Assembly Bill 643

On January 28, Agri-Pulse released an article outlining Assembly Bill 643 that was presented by Asm. Wilson (D-Suisun City), allowing local jurisdictions the ability to account for organic waste diversion when procuring California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) approved agricultural amendments. At the January hearing, Jason Dafforn (Valley Sanitary District) and Steve Jepsen (Clean Water SoCal) both spoke in support of the bill, highlighting how this recognizes nutrient rich fertilizer available to jurisdictions to help achieve waste diversion targets. While Solano County Farm Bureau supports the bill, the California Climate & Agriculture is in opposition alongside Californians Against Waste. Read the full article here.

Research

Solano County Biosolids Stakeholder Meeting to Review Trihydro Study

On February 26, Solano County hosted a Biosolids Stakeholder Meeting to review the Trihydro Study on the Fate of PFAS in Biosolids After Land Application. The report was prepared for the Solano County Department of Resource Management, Environmental Health and Services Division, to evaluate the fate of PFAS following biosolids land application with particular focus on PFAS persistence in shallow soils. The study utilized the publicly available dataset for California, via the Geotracker database, gathered for the statewide order WQ 2020-0015-DWQ alongside additional datasets. Samples were analyzed side-by-side with Methods 537M and 1633 for comparison. Participants at the February meeting queried the research team on pore water sampling methods, historical site applications of fertilizers or pesticides, and whether add-on PFAS exposures were considered like anthropogenic sources. Due to the limited scope for this project, historical or add-on exposures were not considered as part of the study. Attendees included representatives from State and Regional Water Resources

Control Boards, Bay Area Biosolids, BACWA, CASA, CRROPS and Californians Against Waste.

NAS Release PFAS in Agricultural Systems Report

On February 13, the National Academy of Sciences released their PFAS in Agricultural Systems report. The purpose of the study was aimed at offering a proposed framework for conversationists in addressing PFAS on agricultural land as requested by the National Resources Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The committee charged with this task represent diverse backgrounds and specialized expertise. W5170 Chair, Jim Ippolito, The Ohio State University, Chaired this NAS Committee.

The report focuses on the multiple pathways that PFAS can enter agricultural soil systems. Numerous studies and resources were reviewed to help identify information gaps and to shape their framework recommendation (see Figure S-2). Ultimately, more research is needed to understand PFAS fate and transport in agricultural soils from these multiple pathways. You can view the webinar that presents the report findings here.

Featured Innovative Tech Project Update – Side Stream PFAS Treatment

The University of Arizona Water & Energy Sustainable Technology (WEST) Center has released a research story focused on their innovative pilot study to remove and destroy PFAS using a two-stage process that utilizes foam fractionation to separate PFAS from wastewater and electrooxidation to destroy these contaminants by focusing on the wastewater centrate side stream. This study was done in partnership with Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department. This project was featured at CASA's recent Innovative Technology Seminars. Seminar presentations are available for viewing here.

Resources

California Bioresources Alliance Symposium

The California Bioresources Alliance Symposium, "Comprehensive Impacts from the Local to Planetary Scale," will be held on March 11 - 12 at the University of California Davis, Aggie Square Innovation Campus in Sacramento. CASA will join the UC-Davis Grand Challenges team to open the event and will also be presenting on Day 1 of the event. Visit the event page to view the Symposium agenda and register to participate.

Australia PFAS & the Water Sector Fact Sheet

The Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) released an illustrative and informative fact sheet that aims to inform readers on the origins of PFAS, how they travel throughout our environment, and the impacts this presents for water resources. The WSAA has asked the Australian government to take stronger measures to prevent further PFAS pollution through non-essential use bans, mandatory labelling, developing and implementing a National Contaminants Strategy and national source control, monitoring, and remediation of contaminants. The graphics on PFAS and the water cycle and relative concentrations of PFAS in consumer products, biosolids, and compost in relation to the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines offer a pragmatic glimpse at the complexity that PFAS contamination presents in society.

Western Lake Superior Sanitary District PFAS Video

The Western Lake Superior Sanitary District released a video, PFAS: What Are Forever Chemicals, that offers a short overview on everyday products that contain PFAS, how this impacts water resource recovery facilities, and steps you can take to reduce PFAS in our bodies and the environment.

Magazine Article on PFAS Impacts to Treatment Plants

Salish Sea Currents Magazine released an article that spotlights the impacts that PFAS are having on wastewater treatment plants. Washington State Department of Ecology stated that, "The presence of PFAS in biosolids reflects the mass production and use in consumer products that individuals interact with regularly. Once contaminants reach the Wastewater treatment plant, they have already passed through people's bodies, homes, and businesses." The article frames the PFAS issue from historical use and impacts, possible treatment options, sampling efforts, and source control.

Northwest Biosolids Resource Library Updates

The February 2026 library narrows in on how the advent of modern food systems, moved us further from circular systems and produced broken nutrient cycles. Dr. Sally Brown, University of Washington, offers a review of five different research studies that each discuss the role of nutrients in returning to circular systems that nature 'naturally' operates within. Between the graphs illustrating research findings and the cost savings to farmers noted in the final paragraph, this is a must read for those of us with nutrients consistently woven into the work of resource recovery. Please reach out if you would like any of the included research papers.

CASA Calendar

March 19	CASA Regulatory Workgroup Meeting (Virtual)
April 23	CASA Regulatory Workgroup Meeting (Virtual)
May 21	CASA Regulatory Workgroup Meeting (Hybrid)
June 25	CASA Regulatory Workgroup Meeting (Virtual)
August 4–7	71st CASA Annual Conference – Napa, CA

Upcoming Events

March 11-12	California Bioresources Summit; Sacramento, CA
May 11-14	WEF Residuals, Biosolids, & Treatment Technology Conference; Kansas City, MO
July 12-16	USDA W5170 Research Committee + Mid-Atlantic Biosolids Association Summer Symposium; Albany, NY

For more information please reach out to the CASA Regulatory Team:

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