



Metropolitan Wastewater MANAGEMENT COMMISSION



partners in wastewater management

March 02, 2023

MWMC Commission

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Lane County Commissioner

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Springfield Citizen

Christopher Hazen
Eugene Citizen

Peter Ruffier
Eugene Citizen

Administration

Matt Stouder
MWMC Executive Officer
City of Springfield
225 Fifth Street
Springfield, Oregon 97477
(541) 726-3694
FAX (541) 726-2309

Operations

Michelle Miranda
Wastewater Director
City of Eugene
410 River Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97404
(541) 682-8600
FAX (541) 682-8601

Ken Helm, Chair
House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Subject: Support for HB 3123 - Relating to a study concerning PFAS in biosolids applied to land

Dear Honorable Members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

The Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission (MWMC) is writing in full support of HB 3123. This bill is vital to understanding the sources and impacts of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in Oregon municipal wastewater biosolids. PFAS are a class of so-called "forever chemicals" that have been used in many common consumer and industrial products for decades which are of increasing concern due to their potential for negative health impacts and their resistance to breakdown in the environment. Biosolids are an increasingly valuable product of highly managed organic solids recovered from wastewater and processed into a sustainable, carbon-beneficial, soil amendment for agricultural uses. Decades of information on biosolids benefits has been developed by education and research institutions, local and national water quality associations, and regulatory agencies. HB 3123 will add to that important knowledge base by directing the first statewide systematic biosolids PFAS assessment of their presence, fate, transport, and impact on beneficial uses.

The MWMC is the regional wastewater service partnership of the City of Eugene, the City of Springfield, and Lane County serving a population of over 250,000 – as such, we are one of the largest wastewater utilities in Oregon. The MWMC’s mission is to protect our community’s health and the environment by providing high-quality wastewater services to the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area. In order to fulfill these obligations, the MWMC strives to be recognized as a leader in protecting water quality through sustainable and fiscally responsible practices.

The MWMC supports a robust biosolids program through which we consistently exceed EPA standards by at least 50% and annually utilize 100% of our biosolids for beneficial uses via

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our cooperative farm network and on our 400-acre Biocycle Farm. The Biocycle Farm was established in 2003 to grow hybrid poplar trees as a natural treatment facility that produces a sustainable wood product supporting regional energy, pulp, and construction uses.

The MWMC is concerned about the sources of PFAS in our community and how to manage and reduce the impacts that PFAS has on our beneficial products. We therefore strongly support HB 3123. Understanding of the relationship between PFAS and biosolids in Oregon will allow safe treatment and use of biosolids across all Oregon communities. Any future regulation of PFAS in biosolids must be based on sound information and science to ensure we maintain this sustainable, highly beneficial resource for Oregon communities and agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Stouder". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Matt Stouder
MWMC Executive Officer