



CLACKAMAS
WATER
ENVIRONMENT
SERVICES

February 10, 2025

**Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
Policy Position
Relating to a Study of PFAS in Land-Applied Biosolids**

Clackamas County supports HB 2947 to fund Oregon State University to study the effects of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in land-applied biosolids on soil, water, and agricultural crops in select sites in Oregon. Municipalities and farmers have shared a long-standing partnership using treated organic materials collected and processed at municipal wastewater facilities as nutrient-rich fertilizers and soil conditioners. Biosolids contribute proven benefits to soil and crops and reduce the use of synthetic fertilizers. Clackamas Water Environment Services (WES) currently recycles biosolids for use on approximately 8,500 acres of dryland wheat farms in Eastern Oregon. . Year to year, WES applies about 2,050 dry tons of biosolids on fields authorized by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. If not land applied WES would dispose of biosolids in landfills at a greater cost to our ratepayers.

This biosolids PFAS study is needed because there is growing scientific evidence that exposure to PFAS substances may lead to a range of human health problems. This presents a significant challenge for wastewater treatment facilities that receive PFAS pollution from industries, businesses, and households. Wastewater treatment plants are not designed to treat complex chemicals like PFAS, which pass through to water and biosolids. Data collected in Oregon to date reflects that Oregon does not have the types of PFAS generating industries or the highly concerning levels of PFAS that have been found in other parts of the country. It is important, however, that cities, farmers, and regulators develop a better science-based understanding of the presence of PFAS in municipal biosolids and their impacts in the environment and on crops. HB 2947 will provide the funding needed to develop the science to inform future biosolids management practices in Oregon.

We urge a “yes” vote on HB 2947.

Please contact Trent Wilson (twilson2@clackamas.us) for more information.

