

# U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Biosolids Biennial Report: February 2020 Report Issued



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03/09/2021

The United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") published a February 2021 document titled: *Biosolids Biennial Report No. 8 ("Report")*

The *Report* addresses the reporting period 2018-2019.

Section 405(d)(2)(C) of the Clean Water Act requires that EPA conduct a biennial review of 40 C.F.R. Part 503. As part of this review process, EPA collects and reviews publically available information addressing:

1. Pollutants and biosolids that were newly identified during the literature search timeframe 2018-2019
2. Pollutants and biosolids that were previously identified in EPA national sewage sludge surveys conducted in 1988, 2001, and 2019 and/or in previous biennials reviews

The information collected addresses the occurrence, fate and transport of such pollutants in the environment. Also addressed are their effects on human health and ecological receptors.

Biosolids are often described as nutrient-rich organic substances derived from the treatment of domestic sewage in a wastewater treatment plant. They can constitute a beneficial resource because of they contain essential plant nutrients and organic material. As a result, they are often utilized/recycled as a fertilizer and soil amendment.

Section 405 of the Clean Water Act and the regulations (40 C.F.R. Part 503) require that sewage solids be treated to meet regulatory requirements if such biosolids are to be recycled. Some biosolids permits are issued through Clean Water Act National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits.

EPA states that the *Report* identified 18 peer-reviewed articles referencing 116 new chemicals that occur in biosolids which included:

- 50 polychlorinated biphenyls
- 4 pesticides
- 19 flame retardants
- 8 perfluoroalkyl substances
- 3 antibiotics
- 1 Metal
- 2 inorganics
- 29 other organics

New data was also stated to have been identified for 48 chemicals previously indicated to be in biosolids. Concentration data for biosolids were found for 61 of the 116 new chemicals and for 34 chemicals identified in previous biennial reviews.

A copy of the *Report* can be downloaded [here](#).