

Biosolids: Public Perceptions and Community Engagement

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Biosolids management is a recent topic of media interest, particularly within the interior of BC. There is a need to better understand the public's perceptions around the use of biosolids as a fertilizer and how the public would like to see biosolids managed, as well as a need to recognize how to most effectively address pressing topics regarding biosolids management. A mail-out survey will be proportionally distributed to 2000 residents within Kamloops, Merritt, and Princeton to determine the factors that influence public's attitude and risk perception towards the use of biosolids. The survey will encompass factors which may influence public's attitude and risk perception that include, but not limited to, gender, age, education level, income, and whether or not there are children living at home. The survey will explore the role of psychological and sociological variables in order to explain risk perceptions and why many people resist the use of biosolids. Individuals' thoughts and feelings surrounding the use of biosolids as a fertilizer will be investigated, as well as their level of familiarity with biosolids. This will allow us to explore how households' and institutional decisions, on resource allocations, are influenced by psychological, emotional, social, and cognitive factors. The information provided by this survey will aid policy makers, regulators, and biosolids management in developing and implementing biosolids programs that are both socially just and environmentally sound as well as economically feasible.