



BIOSOLIDS

What are biosolids?

Biosolids are treated solids from the sewage treatment process, which are safe and full of nutrients originating from the food we eat.

Biosolids are used on local farms in accordance with requirements that have been developed by the Queensland Department of Environment and Science and other associated management requirements.

Council has reused biosolids as a resource in this way for more than 10 years and is fully committed to continuing to minimise disruption during this activity.

What are biosolids used for?

Biosolids have a high nutrient value and can be used as a soil conditioner on farms. Biosolids can help improve soil quality and crop yields. By reusing biosolids, these nutrients and carbon are returned to local soils reducing the need for additional fertilisation.

The application of biosolids as a soil conditioner is heavily regulated. Buffer distances must be maintained to minimise odours, and biosolids must be incorporated into soils as quickly as possible to prevent nutrient runoff.

Since 2014 Council has beneficially reused 100% of the Fraser Coast's biosolids. The biosolids are used on both Council and privately owned farms.



What crops are grown using biosolids?

Locally, biosolids are applied to large farms that grow sugar cane, hardwood trees, macadamia nuts, canola, wheat, oats, barley and pastures. The biosolids are spread and incorporated into the soil. The harvested components of these crops don't come into contact with the soil/biosolids mixture.

Treated biosolids are treated to a high level and tested to ensure that they are suitable to be used.

How is the use of biosolids regulated?

The use of biosolids in Queensland is regulated by an End of Waste Code (Biosolids ENEW07359617) developed by Department of Environment and Science. The Code stipulates the allowable uses based on the level of treatment. Biosolids treatment processes have been proven to control disease-causing micro-organisms (pathogens), and this forms the basis for the Code. The Code also includes requirements to test biosolids for a range of heavy metals, organic compounds, nutrients, pathogens and odour.

What is the international experience with biosolids?

Biosolids are beneficially used in many countries around the world. In the UK, USA and Canada the majority of the biosolids are applied to farms. Some countries use biosolids as a fuel source and others incinerate.

International studies have shown that biosolids, when treated and managed in accordance with guidelines such as we have in Queensland, are safe.

Further information

If you have any queries regarding biosolids contact Water Reuse Manager on: 1300 79 49 29.