

The Town of
**Leesburg,
Virginia**

RANDOLPH W. SHOEMAKER
Director
Department of Utilities

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January 13, 2011

Ms. Brandi Allen
Alliance for Innovation
Transforming Local Government

RE: 2011 Innovation Award Submission
Town of Leesburg
Innovation in Bio-Solid disposal

Founded in 1758, Town of Leesburg is the seat of Loudoun County, located approximately 45 miles west of the nation's capital, Washington D.C. Today, Leesburg is a vibrant community of nearly 40,000 people and over 1,500 businesses.

For many years, however, Leesburg was a quaint small town with a population of less than 10,000 people. The completion of Washington Dulles International Airport and its proximity to Washington D.C. spurred significant growth in Loudoun County, largely by corporations interested in a location near the federal government in D.C.

In the early 1980's, construction began on a new toll road extension to connect the Washington Dulles International Airport with Leesburg. This road, the Dulles Greenway, would provide a direct connection from the Town all the way to Washington D.C. In 1984, Town's land mass was increased to 12 square miles through annexation in anticipation of the growth expected to result from the completion of the Greenway. At the same time, Town's water and waste water systems were expanded to accommodate the future growth.

Up through the 1980's, the Town of Leesburg's physical environment consisted of a compact town center surrounded by large tracts of farm land for crops and livestock. The growth that the Town experienced in the 1980's and later was, for the most part, low-density suburban-style residential subdivisions. As development took place, the land mass available for disposal of class "B" sludge began to vanish.

Town's wastewater treatment plant was constructed in the 1970's. At that time, the method of disposal of solids was by drying beds and transport to land fill. In the early 1980's, this process was converted to land application of class "B" digested sludge. This disposal program was very successful and in cooperation with local farmers, the Town was able to dispose of all material at area fields.

As growth increased and farm land vanished, the Town was forced to travel further and further to dispose of these solids. In addition, as more people moved in, the opposition to land application increased because some farms were now adjacent to residential development. Faced with this dilemma, Town staff began analyzing other alternatives such as composting, incinerating and pelletizing.

After significant research into alternatives, the Town decided to pursue the pelletizing option and proceeded with a drying system manufactured by Andritz. The process converts liquid sludge to pellets. The final product is stored in silos and either bagged for use by consumers or sold in bulk to golf courses or landscapers. This product is called T.L.C. (Tuscarora Landscapers Choice), after the main creek that runs through the Town.

The T.L.C. product is bagged in 25 lb. or 50 lb. bags and is distributed to utility system customers free of charge with no limit on the number of bags. Town employees can also receive product free of charge, but are limited to 4 bags per week.

The system employed in Leesburg was the first of its kind constructed in the Commonwealth of Virginia and one of only eleven facilities in North America. Since its construction in 2000, the success of the program and it's popularity, a number of other Virginia localities have followed suit.

The facility cost the Town \$11 million in construction. While the operation is not profitable yet, it has resolved an important dilemma of dispensing solid waste. The Town no longer needs to worry about disappearing farm land and the public perception of applying liquid sludge to the land. Use of the T.L.C. product has eliminated significant negative perceptions with regards to class "B" sludge and produces an exceptional quality class "A" biosolids for use by citizens.

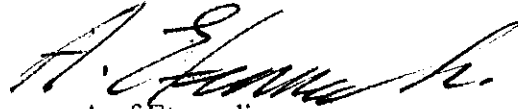
The Town has saved consumers thousands of dollars in expenditures related to purchase of commercial fertilizer. T.L.C. is a "slow release" product, which reduces both run-off and the amount of nitrogen introduced into state waters. It is rich in iron, adds organic matter to soil, and is non-burning. Unlike commercial fertilizer, consumers cannot overfeed their lawns with this product.

The T.L.C. operation has also provided a safer and much improved working condition for the employees at the Town's wastewater treatment facility. The entire system is automated so staff can operate and observe the process from the main control system.

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The success of this program is a direct result of employee's dedication and knowledge at the facility and their full commitment to the operation. The Town Council was supportive of staff's recommendation and was fully committed to achieving this goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Etemadi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

Aref Etemadi
Deputy Director of Utilities