

Dr. Richard Honour reflects on TSS (Toxic Sewer Sludge) after the "Biosolids" Forum in BC

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Land-Disposed Toxic Sewage Sludge: The Great Public Health Hazard Cover-Up



It's a scary world out there, and even scarier now with the current global explosions... of cancer and infectious diseases, two self-imposed global public health hazards that recognize no borders or demographic boundaries.

A quick investigation of the world's view on what may be the greatest public health hazards of our time reveals some ignored or otherwise missing dangers. Health agencies worldwide reveal new information on toxics, but lo and behold, with no mention of Toxic Sewage Sludge as a considerable, universal and inescapable hazard to public health.

The literature is filled with messages of risk, threat and harm (aka, death) associated with anything nuclear or radiological, or about cigarettes, opioid drugs or terrorists, or about industrial, medical or household toxics on a one-by-one basis, but little is presented about the obscure but pervasive killer known as Toxic Sewage Sludge, and even less about the on-going planned and intended route to constant human exposure via Land-Disposed Toxic Sewage Sludge.

More amazing is that government agencies, academic institutions and industry lobbyists (biosolids management associations and sludge disposal firms, as examples) continue to promote broad-scale contamination of our air, soil, food and water with Toxic Sewage Sludge, under a variety of product names, supposedly 'treated' by any of several methods promoted to render such toxics as being 'safe' or 'in compliance.' To them, human life has little value, while the value they ascribe to the sludge disposal industry is based on the value they place on their own selfish and personal interests.

Odd thing is, not one of them has ever performed a safety/toxicology test on a single sample of Toxic Sewage Sludge, so who guides and permits their behavior, and who then will be held personally liable for the resulting harm, injury and death? Their days of hiding are numbered.

Are we missing something, or are we are letting something sinister go by unnoticed, perhaps by plan and intent? Not necessarily so.



At a most excellent conference last week in Kamloops (Interior Scientific Forum on Biosolids, Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, BC, Canada) multiple speakers presented lists and charts of hundreds (illustrative examples of thousands) of chemicals and infectious agents known to be in any and all Toxic Sewage Sludges, and at the same time we were presented with other lists of toxics known to be carcinogens, among their other adverse toxic characteristics. Curiously, when superimposed, the lists are nearly the same; the toxics known to be contained in Land-Disposed Toxic Sewage Sludge are generally the same toxics that cause cancer and so many other chronic diseases, with little exception.

The sources of the toxics are common municipal, medical and industrial sewage sludge, plus the leachates from solid waste landfills and stormwater runoff - the most toxic sources of all. While all of it is subjected to some superficial processing to achieve marginal or questionable compliance, none of it is treated to achieve Safety - none! Matters of Public Health and Safety, and of Human and Environmental Health, garner no appreciation in matters of the disposal of Toxic Sewage Sludge.

It is a criminal act to dispose of Toxic Sewage Sludge in our forests, farms, rangelands, foods, air and waters when the Safety (antonym of Toxicity) of the thousands of chemicals and pathogens in Toxic Sewage Sludge has never been tested or assured. No one has shown that individually or in combination (or through the near-infinite permutations of the combinations of toxics) that Toxic Sewage Sludge-borne toxics do not present risk or threat of harm to human or environmental health, meaning that such toxics must therefore be safe, a bold contradiction in terms, for sure.

Simply by invoking the Null Hypothesis, i.e., that Sewage Sludge is Toxic, it would be revealed (by validated toxicological testing methods) that if all possible tests are performed to show that Sewage Sludge is Toxic, but if said toxicity were not observed, then the Null Hypothesis would be rejected, and Sewage Sludge would be determined to be non-toxic (or Safe). Absent such testing, it must be concluded that Toxic Sewage Sludge is Toxic, and it must be asserted well that any person who produces, transports, spreads, promotes, authorizes or allows the Land Disposal of Toxic Sewage Sludge must be held criminally liable and personally responsible for any resulting injury or harm, near- or long-term, no matter the reason or cause for such toxic waste disposal.

Toxic Sewage Sludge is Toxic Waste.

There are alternatives for the proper treatment of Toxic Sewage Sludge, which are not only clear, but could represent a profit to the Toxic Sewage Sludge disposers. Thermal Conversion by any of several advanced technologies and methods, such as by gasification, as one example, easily converts Toxic Sewage Sludge into heat energy, yielding syngas for fuel, plus valuable ash and biochar for beneficial reuse, and then an absence of Toxic Sewage Sludge that inevitably kills us all. There are available alternatives, yet we watch the death rate climb, while such alternatives are being contemplated.

We cherish our forests, rangelands, wetlands, air, food and waters, which give us sustenance and peace, and now they are violated, for no good cause or reason. It is time to abolish all land disposal of Toxic Sewage Sludge.

Richard Honour, February, 2017