



Environment
Office of the Minister

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our file number:

NOV 19 2009



Mr. Fred Whalen
Warden
Municipality of the County of Kings
PO Box 100
Kentville NS B4N 3W3

Dear Mr. Whalen:

Thank you for your November 2, 2009, letter regarding the application of biosolids on farmland in Kings County.

The revised "Guidelines for Land Application and Storage of Municipal Biosolids in Nova Scotia" contain limits on maximum allowable metal concentrations in biosolids intended for land application. These limits were established by: conducting a thorough review of current guidelines from jurisdictions around the world; evaluating scientific literature related to heavy metals; and consulting with experts on compounds found in biosolids. The metal limits established for farmland application are based on maximum loading and the possibility of repeated applications. The metal limits are similar to those used in national compost quality and commercial fertilizer quality standards. In many cases, Nova Scotia's biosolids guidelines limits are lower.

In response to the motion put forward by your Committee of the Whole, Nova Scotia Environment's focus is to continue to minimize the risk of biosolid use to public health and the environment. The department does not have a mandate to restrict the use of approved products or to prevent land use activities in specific counties of the province. It is a business decision of individual farmers whether they choose to apply biosolids on farmland – they must consider the potential impact on "buy local" initiatives as part of that decision. If you wish to discuss this issue further, I encourage you to contact Mr. Michael Langman at (902) 424-8891.

Sincerely,

Sterling Belliveau
Minister

c: Michael Langman