

Document 00.4 – Definitions

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Biosolids – solid organic matter recovered from a wastewater treatment process and used especially as fertilizer – usually used in plural.

Biosolids Management Activities - a wide range of activities that impact the quality of wastewater solids and biosolids, including pretreatment activities, wastewater treatment processes, solids stabilization processes, conditioning and dewatering processes, transportation, storage, and final use or disposal.

Biosolids Management Policy - statement by an organization committing it to the principles set forth in the NBP Code of Good Practice with respect to biosolids management and any other overall environmental goals voluntarily adopted by the organization.

Biosolids Management Program – a comprehensive program covering all aspects of the organization’s biosolids activities throughout the biosolids value chain, including management processes for all critical control points in order to mitigate environmental impacts, meet legal and other requirements, and execute action plans to achieve biosolids program goals and objectives.

Biosolids Program Goal(s)– environmental performance improvement goals that are consistent with an organization’s biosolids management policy to assure biosolids activities comply with applicable laws and regulations, meet quality and public acceptance requirements, and prevent other unregulated adverse environmental and public health impacts by effectively managing all critical control points. Biosolids program goals may include but are not limited to compliance with specific regulatory requirements, expanding beneficial use, improving biosolids quality, improving public acceptance and reducing or eliminating direct/indirect negative environmental impacts.

Biosolids Program Objective(s) – a detailed environmental performance improvement requirement, quantified wherever possible, based on a biosolids program goal. One or more objectives must usually be met in order for the underlying goal to be achieved.

Biosolids Public Acceptance Requirements - biosolids physical, chemical, biological, and aesthetic characteristics and management methods that must be met consistently and reliably in order to achieve public acceptance of the organization’s selected biosolids management method(s).

Biosolids Quality Requirements - biosolids physical, chemical, biological, and aesthetic characteristics that must be met consistently and reliably in order to apply the organization’s selection biosolids management method(s).

Biosolids Value Chain – sequence of activities from wastewater pretreatment, discharge and collection through wastewater treatment, solids treatment and handling, storage, transportation, and final use or disposal of biosolids that impact the quality and stability of biosolids and their suitability for the selected management method.

Continual Improvement – EMS process for systematically improving the overall management of biosolids to achieve the organization’s biosolids program goals and objectives set forth in the organization’s biosolids management policy and the National Biosolids Partnership Code of Good Practice.

Corrective Actions – specific actions and steps taken to correct an organization’s nonconformance(s) to policies, procedures, and other legal, quality, and public acceptance requirements, and to mitigate any resulting negative impacts on the environment.

Critical Control Points – those locations, unit processes, events, and activities throughout the biosolids value chain under the organization’s direct control or influence that require effective policies, programs, procedures, practices, monitoring, and measurements to assure the biosolids activities meet legal, quality and public acceptance requirements and do not have undesirable environmental impacts. Critical control points include all biosolids management activities that are covered under applicable legal and other requirements.

Emergency Preparedness - a structured emergency planning process to ensure that plausible emergency situations that can affect appropriate biosolids management have been identified, response plans and procedures developed, and trained emergency response personnel and equipment are available and in a state of readiness.

Emergency Response - specific emergency plans and activities that are initiated to contain an emergency situation and bring it under control so as to minimize environmental impacts.

EMS Audit (Internal) – a systematic internal audit process for objectively evaluating whether an organization’s environmental management system for biosolids conforms with the requirements of the Code of Good Practice, its Biosolids Policy, and the EMS Elements.

EMS Audit (Third Party Verification) – a systematic, structured audit of the organization’s biosolids EMS performed by a qualified independent third party auditor using a standardized protocol to verify conformance with the requirements of the Code of Good Practice, its Biosolids Policy, and the EMS Elements.

EMS Documents – various documents that collectively comprise the biosolids environmental management system documentation, including the biosolids management policy, procedures, practices, operating instructions, and other supporting documents required by the environmental management system and applicable biosolids laws and regulations.

EMS Records - various records/reports of biosolids management activities required by the EMS and applicable biosolids laws and regulations, including but not limited to records/reports of monitoring, measurement, laboratory testing, inspections, operating logs, emergency response incident, outside party inquiries, public participation meetings, audits, corrective actions, management reviews, and periodic performance reports. Records describe the results of specific biosolids management activities for a prescribed event, activity, and/or period of time.

Environmental Impacts – any change to the environment (positive or negative) including public health, public nuisance, and odor problems, that wholly or partially result directly or indirectly from the organization’s activities, products or services, including those activities associated with

biosolids management, and those activities that alter (positively or negatively) the acceptable disposal/use method or create public nuisance and public health risks.

Environmental Management System for Biosolids (EMS) – an organized management system that meets the requirements of the EMS Elements for achieving the biosolids management policy requirements and for developing, implementing, reviewing, and maintaining effective biosolids management programs, procedures and practices. The EMS needs to manage all critical control points associated with biosolids activities where there is a potential to create significant negative environmental impacts.

Interested Parties – individuals, groups, or other public/private organizations interested in, involved with, or otherwise affected by the organization's biosolids management activities, including customers, farmers, regulators, and other local/state governmental officials, community residents, the media, environmental and public interest groups, university professors, and the general public.

Legal Requirements – the environmental federal, state, and local laws and regulations that are applicable to an organization's biosolids management program activities.

Minor Nonconformance – is one that, when taken by itself, does not indicate a systemic problem with the EMS. It is typically a random or isolated incident. Minor nonconformances involve discrepancies within an element of the EMS Elements or the organization's environmental management system that do not significantly affect the implementation of the environmental management system and commitment to conform with the Code of Good Practice – a systemic problem is not indicated.

Major Nonconformance – occurs when one of the elements in the EMS Elements has not been addressed or has not been addressed adequately. Major nonconformances can occur when an organization has documented a process or procedure, but has not implemented it or cannot demonstrate effective implementation. A major nonconformance can also occur if a number of minor nonconformances in a given activity or against a given element point to a systemic failure. Major nonconformances also exist if an element is being disregarded sufficiently during organization operations that it is having a noticeable effect on the organization's environmental compliance, environmental impacts, or the quality of the material being produced – there is a gap or problem that could lead to a systemic failure.

Measurement - a systematic method for estimating, testing, or otherwise evaluating key parameters and characteristics of an organization's biosolids management activities to determine compliance with a specific standard, regulatory or other performance requirement, or to measure progress toward its biosolids program goals and objectives.

Monitoring - a systematic process of watching, checking, observing, inspecting, keeping track of, regulating, or otherwise controlling key parameters and characteristics of an organization's biosolids management activities to determine compliance with a specific standard, regulatory or other performance requirement, or to measure progress toward its biosolids program goals and objectives.

Nonconformance – a deviation in an organization's established Biosolids Management Policy and Environmental Management System from the Code of Good Practice principles and/or the

requirements of the EMS Elements. Nonconformances include circumstances that have the potential to create a noncompliance situation or significant environmental impact.

Noncompliance – a deviation from federal, state and local laws, regulations, and other compliance requirements applicable to the organization's biosolids management activities.

Objective Evidence – policies, ordinances, procedures, manuals, inspection checklists, operating logs, annual reports, various other documents, and various records – monitoring, inspection, enforcement, training, etc., that objectively document conformance with the EMS Elements requirements.

Operational Controls – ordinances, regulations, standard operating procedures, practices, technology, instrumentation and process controls, monitoring, and other criteria developed, implemented, and maintained by an organization to ensure effective management of all critical control points associated with its biosolids management activities; including conformance with biosolids management policy requirements; and achievement of biosolids program goals and objectives.

Opportunity for Improvement – a program element that conforms to the minimum requirements outlined in the EMS Elements, but which may be improved by following suggestions, examples or benchmarks city by the auditor.

Organization – enterprise, authority, or institution, or part thereof, responsible for individual or a combination of, biosolids management activities.

Other Requirements - other binding biosolids management practices and environmental requirements to which an organization voluntarily subscribes as part of its environmental management system. Examples include binding agreements with customers, suppliers, and public organizations and commitments to “beyond compliance” performance.

Practices - environmental management actions or techniques that are consistent with, or go beyond, regulatory requirements.

Performance - objective measures of practice/procedure outcomes on environmental endpoints and compliance.

Preventive Actions – specific actions and steps taken to identify, analyze, and eliminate the root causes of noncompliance(s) and nonconformance(s) and to put in place permanent solutions that will prevent a recurrence.

Procedures - replicable management system activities that support the consistent maintenance of practices and achievement of objectives.

Public Participation - specific approach(es) and action(s) taken by an organization to involve interested parties and the general public in its biosolids management program, including establishing improvement goals and objectives.

Requirement Verification -looks at specific EMS elements to determine if the organization's EMS satisfies the associated requirements, as defined in the EMS Elements.

Role(s) – The purpose(s) of the activities a group or individual performs with respect to the biosolids value chain, the biosolids management program, and the EMS.

Responsibility (ies) – The specific task(s) a group or individual carries out in a lead or supporting role that accomplish and/or support operational and strategic goals and objectives.

Service Agreements - contractual or other legally binding agreements that define the roles and responsibilities of contractors and other groups supporting the organization’s EMS for biosolids.

S.M.A.R.T. Criteria - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bounded criteria used to develop biosolids program goals and objectives.

Transaction Testing - enables auditors to assess how well various components of an organization’s EMS function in practice - and how well they work together - from a broader systems perspective.

Revision History

Version Number	Version Date	Description of Revision
0	7/28/05	Original issue.
1	10/14/05	Added definitions for Major and Minor Non-Conformances.
2	1/11/08	Added definition for Opportunity for Improvement.
3	7/6/11	Grammar Corrections
4	10/13/11	Edited Footer with Official Document Location