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DEP Issues Request for Proposals to Reuse Sludge

Seeks Cost-Effective, Sustainable Program to Use Treated Sewage in a Beneficial Way

The Department of Environmental Protection today issued a Request for Proposals seeking a vendor to process and market sludge for beneficial re-use. Sludge is a residual solid that is a byproduct of the wastewater treatment process. DEP's 14 treatment plants handle an average of 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater every day, which generate up to 1,200 tons of sludge. Since sludge is organic material, it can be reused as fertilizer or soil conditioner for parks, farms, lawns, and golf courses; to produce clean energy; and other potential applications, such as asphalt-paving mixes. The Request for Proposals seeks technologies that are cost-effective and conserve natural resources, and is designed to allow for the widest possible range of options that meet those criteria. A new contract is expected to start by 2013 and a term of up to 20 years will be considered.

"When we ended the NYOFCO contract last June because it was too costly to continue, we committed to seek new sustainable, cost effective ways to handle the 1,200 tons of sludge that New Yorkers generate every day," said Commissioner Holloway. "The Request for Proposals we are releasing today fulfills that promise, and will give the marketplace the opportunity to put forward the widest possible range of ideas to process sludge in cost-effective ways that can benefit the public. From fertilizer, to energy, to building materials and more, we know that sludge has many demonstrated beneficial uses; converting our sludge from waste to a valuable resource will move us closer to achieving Mayor Bloomberg's vision for a greener, greater New York."

DEP currently uses a mix of beneficial land application and landfilling to dispose of 1,200 wet tons of biosolids produced each day from New York City's wastewater treatment process. Earlier this year, to save \$18 million annually, DEP terminated its biosolids handling contract with the New York Organic Fertilizer Company (NYOFCO) in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx and began sending that material to landfills. At that time, DEP committed to issuing a Request for Proposals to search for a sustainable alternative

MORE INFORMATION

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to landfilling. Less costly technology for innovative alternatives in the reuse sludge now exists. In addition to land application options, which are allowed under other DEP contracts, biosolids can be used as fuel for heat and for power production. The new contract will have the option of either collecting the 1.5 million gallons of sludge each day before it is dewatered, or 400 tons of sludge after it has been dewatered, otherwise known as biosolids. The Request for Proposals will be available online via The City Record. Any contractor interested in receiving more information should visit The City Record website at www.nyc.gov.

Sewage sludge is the bulk of the residual material removed during the wastewater treatment process. Wastewater treatment plants use physical, chemical and biological processes to remove on average more than 90% of the organic material in sewage. Raw sludge is first "digested" in oxygen-free tanks where it is heated and mixed for several days. This digestion process stabilizes the sludge by converting much of the organic material into water, carbon dioxide and methane gas. The "digested" sludge is what is then transported by pipeline or sludge vessel to a dewatering facility where centrifuges remove much of the water.

DEP manages the city's water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8 million in New York City, and residents of Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties. New York City's water is delivered from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the City, and comprises 19 reservoirs, and three controlled lakes. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/dep or follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/nycwater.

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