



## City of Los Angeles LA Sanitation

### Biosolids Management Program

# 2016 Interim Audit Summary



The City of Los Angeles' (City) wastewater system serves more than four million people in Los Angeles and 29 contracted cities/agencies. The system is comprised of more than 6,700 miles of sewer pipelines and four wastewater treatment and water reclamation plants that process more than 313 million gallons of flow each day citywide. The City processes, recycles and renews 13% of the wastewater annually into recycled water for beneficial water conservation purposes and 247,000 tons of biosolids, a treated commodity. Biosolids are nutrient-rich organic material resulting from the treatment of domestic sewage at wastewater treatment facilities and are recycled as a soil amendment and fertilizer.

The City's Biosolids Management Program (BMP), in operation for over 20 years, is nationally recognized and has received the highest achievement (Platinum level) for biosolids management and environmental stewardship from the National Biosolids Partnership (NBP). For more than 25 years, the City has beneficially reused 100% of all biosolids produced.

The City requested through the NBP and was approved by the independent audit firm, DEKRA Certification Inc., to conduct its own audit as a substitution for an external third party audit. A team of trained City staff conducted the Interim Audit and used their independent judgment to analyze the City's current biosolids practices. The audit results were reported to LA Sanitation management, the NBP, and DEKRA Certification Inc. The City conducted its Environmental Management System (EMS) interim audit from June 6 to August 19, 2016. The audit results are reported to the LA Sanitation (LASAN) management, the NBP, interested parties, and public.

**WHAT:** The "Year 3" interim audit of the City of Los Angeles' BMP EMS. The scope of the interim audit is consistent with NBP requirements for the BMP interim audit and the overall audit program agreed to by the independent auditor, DEKRA Certification Inc., and the City.

**WHERE:** The audit took place at the Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant., Terminal Island Water Reclamation Plant, Griffith Parking Composting Facility and Nursery Products Composting Facility.

**WHY:** The goal of the audit is to ensure the City's BMP conforms to the requirements of the NBP BMP and the City's EMS procedures.

**SCOPE:** The audit covered the following topics, consistent with NBP requirements for interim audits and the audit program previously agreed to by DEKRA and LASAN. The scope of work for this interim audit:

1. Management System Dynamics (+Effectiveness Review): Significant changes, Biosolids Policy, EMS Changes (including documentation), Internal Audits and Review of Effectiveness – (Communications Program, Corrective & Preventive Action Process, Goals & Objectives Process, Management Reviews)
2. Process Audits: Competency Awareness and Training, Critical Control Points & Operational Controls, Management Review, Biosolids transportation, Maintenance, Process Engineering
3. Biosolids Use – Griffith Park Composting and Nursery Products
4. Verification of effective corrective action for open nonconformances from previous DEKRA audits (2015).
5. Examination of EMS Outcomes



Auditor Team at Nursery Products Composting Facility



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### AUDIT FINDINGS:

**Results:** The audit determined that the LASAN Biosolids EMS is functioning effectively, generating positive outcomes and meets NBP expectations and requirements, with minor exceptions. Based on results of this audit, the audit team recommended continued certification of LA Sanitation's BMP within the NBP's BMP

#### EMS Strengths

- The communication program allows for several opportunities for interested parties to be involved in the Biosolids Management Program and the outreach tools used, such as Environmental Learning Center and the Annual Performance Report are effective in keeping the public informed.
- Griffith Park Composting Facility maintains good housekeeping practices.
- The quarterly Biosolids Action Team meetings designate a time for important and critical biosolids related topics to be discussed and evaluated. The team dynamic is an efficient way to make decisions for the program.
- Records are maintained by ISCD in such a way that training history is clear and effectively communicated. This helps divisions ensure training compliance.
- Nursery Products Composting Facility maintains an excellent outreach program.

#### EMS Nonconformances

The 2016 interim audit found no major nonconformance and three (3) minor nonconformances listed below:

- According to records and interviews it is evident that an employee was assigned to work within the biosolids handling area (truck loading facility) had not received the required Biosolids EMS Overview and Awareness Training.
- The SOPs provided during the Griffith Park audit were either out of date or presented without following the approved document control procedures.
- Griffith Park staff stated that they had completed required training but there is no record of training provided to new employees.

#### EMS Outcomes

##### Environmental Performance

- Use of LA Sanitation's biosolids for production of compost products is an environmental friendly option and accepted by the public as evident by citizen's requests for the compost produced at Griffith Park.

##### Regulatory Compliance

- The contractor's that manage LA Sanitation's biosolids through composting are performing well and meeting regulatory requirements.

##### Relations with Interested Parties

- The public outreach and communication program including the Environmental Learning Center has increased awareness of LA Sanitation's Biosolids Management Program.

##### Quality Practices

- LASAN's control of its contractors has resulted in the production of quality compost products, help meet public acceptance requirements, and maintain cost-effective management options.



Auditor Team at Nursery Products  
Composting Facility

#### Contact Us:

If you would like to review the audit report, assist in addressing the findings, or have any questions please contact us:

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