

YCUA ... Environmental Leaders

Providing top quality, cost-effective, environmentally safe water and wastewater services to our customers

CUSTOMERS COME FIRST

How does YCUA put its customers first?

- **Odor Controls:** Implementation began in 1999 to eliminate the most significant odors and enhance the quality of outdoor life for those living and working near the plant. Additional odor controls will be in place by 2006 as part of plant expansion.
- **Public Input:** YCUA has surveyed its customers in the past to obtain feedback on its overall performance, and has taken action on a number of suggested improvements, such as switching to a sealed billing system to ensure privacy, and autopayment.
- **Discounts:** Customers receive a discount (gross vs. net) for promptly paying their bill.

AIR QUALITY

What is YCUA doing to improve air quality?

- **New Equipment:** YCUA is replacing its aging incinerator with technologically advanced equipment that includes four levels of air cleaning.
- **Reducing Emissions:** By installing new equipment, YCUA will reduce its total potential emissions by 78%, including substantial reductions in particulates.
- **Research:** YCUA extensively researched each method of biosolids disposal before making its recommendation. The research team included over 20 trained and experienced individuals from YCUA and WTUA, along with several outside experts.

RESPONSIBILITY

How does YCUA uphold its responsibility?

- **To Customers:** To remain in compliance, and provide safe water and wastewater service, staff at YCUA must hold a number of State certifications and receive extensive training annually.
- **To its Employees:** At YCUA, employees at all levels contribute to key decisions, especially relating to their personal protection. After staff reported health and safety concerns based on operating the pilot composting facilities, YCUA substantiated their claim and factored it into their 10-part criteria for evaluating biosolids disposal options.
- **To the Community:** Each year, YCUA employees give back to the Ypsilanti community they serve, and in most cases, live. A few examples include participation in the "Eyes and Ears" emergency reporting program, United Way, Community Partners for Clean Streams, and spreading cheer among the pediatric patients at St. Joes Hospital.

ENVIRONMENT

What actions does YCUA take to protect the environment?

- **Industrial Pretreatment Program (IPP) Enforcement:** YCUA maintains a stringent IPP to make sure harmful industrial pollutants do not pass through the treatment plant to the environment. Highly trained staff regularly monitor local industries to ensure compliance with local pollutant limits and sewer use ordinances.
- **Improve Rouge Water Quality:** The clean water released from YCUA's plant has dramatically improved the water quality and fish population of the Lower Rouge River in the last nine years. This branch of the river is now safe for recreational use, and water quality experts predict that this may be the only branch in the watershed that can meet State water quality standards.

SAFETY

How safe are YCUA's operations?

- **Award-Winning Safety:** In 2001, YCUA received the George W. Burke award for its well-developed health and safety program. This is a national award given by the Water Environment Federation. YCUA's program is noteworthy for its active employee participation, procedural and equipment training, coordination with local public safety agencies, and enforcement.
- **Eliminating Chlorine Gas:** During Summer 2002, YCUA began construction of new ultra-violet disinfection facilities. This ultra-safe process eliminates the need for YCUA to import and store hazardous chlorine gas on-site.



YCUA CARES

The Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority (YCUA) was formed in 1974 by Ypsilanti Charter Township and the City of Ypsilanti to provide cost-effective water and sewer service and environmental protection. YCUA has been an industry leader, winning awards for its operations from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, among others. YCUA is a not-for-profit, municipal government agency, committed to public service and environmental leadership.

CONTINUED BIOSOLIDS INCINERATION - MYTHS VS. FACTS

MYTH: YCUA's incinerator will burn garbage, solid waste, or hazardous waste.

FACT: The replacement incinerator will ONLY burn biosolids (sewage sludge).

MYTH: The incinerator will be "a significant generator of highly toxic dioxin and mercury pollution, and particulates."

FACT: Compared to the existing system, the replacement incinerator's four-step air cleaning system WILL VIRTUALLY ELIMINATE DIOXINS and will meet the most stringent standard (in the world) for the removal of mercury.

MYTH: The incinerator will output more emissions.

FACT: The replacement incinerator will reduce overall potential emissions by 78%, IMPROVING AIR QUALITY.

MYTH: The incinerator will increase the incidence of asthma.

FACT: The replacement incinerator improves air quality, and DOES NOT contribute to the high incidence of asthma in Washtenaw County.

MYTH: The incinerator will cause more ozone action days.

FACT: By eliminating volatile organic compounds, a necessary element in ozone generation, the replacement incinerator will not cause, but WILL HELP PREVENT an increase in ozone action days.

MYTH: Composting is less hazardous than incineration.

FACT: Each and every biosolids disposal method has its own set of risks. Composting is no less hazardous than incineration. In fact, the amount of truck traffic required to support composting (or landfilling) will produce particulate emissions equal to or greater than incineration and truck traffic will also greatly increase carbon monoxide emissions, which are virtually eliminated by the replacement incinerator.

MYTH: YCUA's engineer, Tetra Tech, builds incinerators and will benefit financially.

FACT: Tetra Tech MPS is a registered professional engineering consultant in the State of Michigan that has been continuously in business in Washtenaw County since 1914. They do not build incinerators.

MORE FACTS IN SUPPORT OF THE VIABILITY OF SAFE BIOSOLIDS INCINERATION:

FACT: Replacement of the existing multiple hearth incinerator with a state-of-the-art fluidized bed combustion technology will drastically reduce carbon monoxide emissions.

FACT: Based on extensive risk analysis, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has decided not to regulate municipal biosolids incinerators for any toxic organic chemicals, including dioxins.

FACT: The EPA has specifically exempted sewage sludge incinerator ash from consideration as a hazardous waste, indicating that the metal content of the ash is acceptable for placement in standard landfills.

YCUA will be the first municipal entity in the U.S. to use a carbon filter on its replacement incinerator to capture pollutants. The entire air cleaning system provides air quality improvements in every category, reducing total potential emissions by 78% and virtually eliminating dioxin.

source: Tetra Tech MPS, Engineering Consultants

After extensive data collection and testing, the EPA deleted sewage sludge incineration from the Clean Air Act, section 112(c), because data indicate they are not major sources of hazardous air pollutants.

source: 2-12-02 Federal Register

There is no completely safe way to dispose of sewage waste, each method carries a certain risk.

source: Cornell Waste Management Institute

Landfilling and composting options both require heavy truck traffic. As a result, landfilling would generate 55% more emissions than the replacement incinerator, and composting even more. When compared to local truck traffic, YCUA's replacement incinerator will produce less than 2% of the emissions generated each day along local I-94.

source: Tetra Tech MPS, Engineering Consultants

Sludge is an organic by-product of wastewater treatment. YCUA's sludge meets EPA standards, which include very low limits for heavy metals. YCUA achieves such low levels of pollutants by maintaining a strictly regulated industrial pretreatment program.

source: Ypsilanti Twp. Sewer Use Ordinance No. 2001-280; City of Ypsilanti Sewer Use Ordinance