

Diane Emerson

Having worked in the specialty chemical industry for 17 years, many of those years in production and research, I know what industrial companies put down the drain. I see how it is less costly to pay the fines than dispose of these toxic chemicals correctly. The mix of toxic chemicals found in sewage sludge changes daily, depending on who is dumping what that day. It cannot be adequately tested, nor can the companies doing the dumping be adequately policed or enforced in our current system.

The idea of putting this sewage sludge on our farms, vegetable gardens and lawns scares me, because I know what could be in it. The thought of children playing and rolling around on grass fertilized with sewage sludge is abhorrent. How is it possible that the Department of Ecology, of all organizations, promotes this?

Recommendations:

1. I would like to see Ecology replace "best management practice" with "independent current science" as a guideline.
2. WA state needs to seriously research alternative methods of disposal such as pyrolysis, gasification or extraction of useful materials.
3. Finally, the state need to work on separating the human waste and food waste from the industrial waste. I don't put drain cleaner on my breakfast cereal. What goes into my body is far far safer than what industry dumps down the drain.