

Understanding the Limitations on Hauled Sewage Disposal Sites in Ontario



Summary of Discussion



Definition of Municipal Waste as per Ontario Regulation 347 of the Environmental Protection Act (EPA)



Zoning Issues and Concerns



Challenges Faced by Homeowners in Municipalities during Plant Upgrades and Maintenance



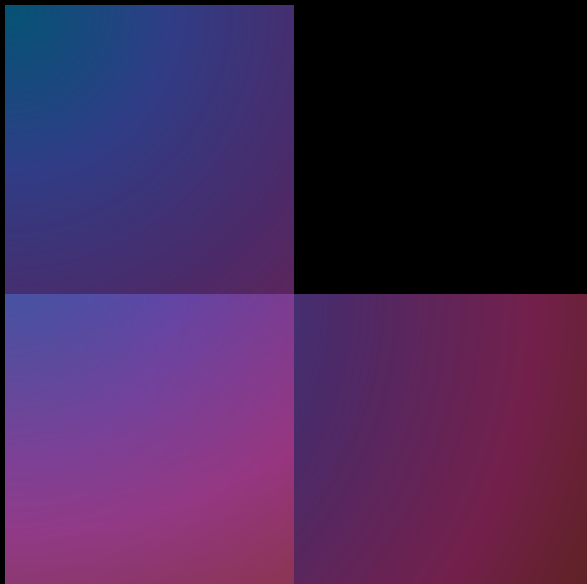
OASIS's Efforts to Promote Awareness and Proper Waste Disposal



Providing Solutions and Recommendations to Municipalities



Final Thoughts



About OASIS

OASIS was established in 1991 to support and represent businesses in the septic, portable toilet and biosolid land application industry. We are dedicated to working with various levels of government, associations and those in related fields to improve and conform to regulations and guidelines pertaining to the sustainability of the environment in the Province of Ontario.



OASIS Strives



To maintain and promote the highest standards of safety, environmental responsibility, regulatory compliance and environmental due diligence.



To institute open forum discussions regarding operational challenges, implementation of maintenance protocols, employee development, administrative practices, and operator safety programs.



To act as a liaison between several tiers of government and Ministries while representing the interests of the industry with legislative recommendations.



To promote uniformity and consistency throughout the industry.

What is Hauled Sewage ?

- hauled sewage” means,
 - (a) domestic waste that is human body waste, toilet or other bathroom waste, waste from other showers or tubs, liquid or water borne culinary or sink waste or laundry waste, and
 - (b) other waste that is suitable for storage, treatment or disposal in a sewage system regulated under Part 8 of Division B of Ontario Regulation 332/12 (Building Code) made under the Building Code Act, 1992, if the waste is not fully disposed of at the site where it is produced, other than,
 - (i) waste that is,
 - (A) from a sewage works that is subject to an environmental compliance approval, and
 - (B) conveyed, by a sewer that is subject to an environmental compliance approval, away from the site where it is produced,
 - (ii) waste in a vehicle sewage holding tank, or
 - (iii) GNF;

Overall Concern

In Ontario, the lack of proper disposal of sewage and septic waste to approved municipal wastewater plants poses significant challenges and concerns. This issue encompasses a range of environmental, public health, and regulatory factors that need to be addressed for the well-being of communities across the province.



Lack of Hauled Sewage Disposal Sites in Ontario

Proper disposal of sewage and septic waste is essential to ensure public health and protect the environment. When sewage is not disposed of correctly, it can contaminate water sources, posing risks to human health and ecosystems. Approved municipal wastewater plants play a crucial role in treating and managing sewage to mitigate these risks.

- One of the primary challenges arising from the lack of proper disposal is the contamination of water sources. Improperly disposed sewage and septic waste can seep into groundwater, lakes, rivers, and other water bodies, polluting them with harmful bacteria, viruses, and other pathogens. This contamination not only endangers the health of those who rely on these water sources for drinking, swimming, or recreational purposes but also harms aquatic life and ecosystems.

Municipal Concern: The call to escalate residential construction has raised significant concerns, particularly regarding waste management. It is impossible to intensify home construction without considering how the resulting waste will be effectively handled. This includes not only domestic garbage waste, which may be directed to landfills, but also septic waste, whether through sewers or hauled sewage.

Misconception and Concerns

Ministry of Environment driven studies in partnership with OASIS have shown that application of hauled sewage (partially treated waste) on agricultural properties is a safe and beneficial when completed in accordance with Ministry guidelines. This practice provides effective use of important nutrients. This practise has been utilized for centuries with the application of manure as a common agricultural practise.

Lack of disposal sites for septic systems poses concerns for the Environment causing homeowners to “take matters into their own hands” if proper disposal facilities are not available.

Public Perception & Education

- OASIS is striving to educate the public on the importance of septic handling and management for areas with lack or insufficient disposal capabilities.
- There has been on-going concerns with residents of municipalities in opposing the application of hauled sewage on Agricultural land. However, the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) have implemented strict guidelines on the management and spreading of hauled sewage on approved properties. Several variables are reviewed prior to any application being approved and continuous monitoring of the practice is conducted periodically to ensure compliance.
- OASIS has worked directly with MECP to help facilitate its' members to act and manage their operation under the guidelines of the regulations.
- Lack of disposal poses significant economic concerns for municipalities for their growth and development.

Septic System Biosolids and Benefits – EPA USA

- Biosolids are a product of the wastewater treatment process. During wastewater treatment the liquids are separated from the solids. Those solids are then treated physically and/or chemically to produce a semisolid, nutrient-rich product known as biosolids. The terms 'biosolids' and 'sewage sludge' are often used interchangeably.
- Biosolids that are to be beneficially used must meet federal and state requirements. Examples of beneficial use include application to agricultural land and reclamation sites (e.g. mining sites). When applied to land at the appropriate agronomic rate, biosolids provide a number of benefits including nutrient addition, improved soil structure, and water reuse. Land application of biosolids also can have economic and waste management benefits (e.g., conservation of landfill space; reduced demand on non-renewable resources like phosphorus; and a reduced demand for synthetic fertilizers). Biosolids also may be disposed of by incineration, landfilling, or other forms of surface disposal.

Link: <https://www.epa.gov/biosolids/basic-information-about-biosolids>

Neighbour Notification & Access to Information

- The release of information contained in application forms or submitted in support of an application is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Ontario Regulation 677/87 and the Municipal freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1989. These Acts define what may and what may not be disclosed to the public and will be used to assess all requests for information contained in approvals.
- The information submitted with the application for approval may also be subject to the Act Respecting Environmental Rights in Ontario Act, which requires public notification of applications for approval of certain works. During the time that the notice of the proposal is on the Environmental Registry, the public will be able to submit written comments on the proposal to the approving office. In addition, the public will be able to view parts of the application submission at the approving office as well as at the District Office in the vicinity of the proposal. Comments that are submitted will be considered during the detailed review stage of the application.
- The applicant should therefore clearly identify all documents which are to be considered confidential or proprietary and must provide detailed evidence in support of this claim. The evidence in support of this claim will be one of the factors the Ministry considers when making a decision regarding disclosure of the records.

Definition of “Municipal Waste”

Under Ontario Regulation 347 of the Environmental Protection Act:

Municipal Waste: Refers to waste generated by households, commercial establishments, and institutions within a municipality. It includes both solid and liquid waste, such as sewage, septic waste, and other forms of non-hazardous waste.

- **Point of Consideration:** Household garbage generated in the municipality is the responsibility of the municipality to dispose and manage.

Volume of Hauled Sewage Managed

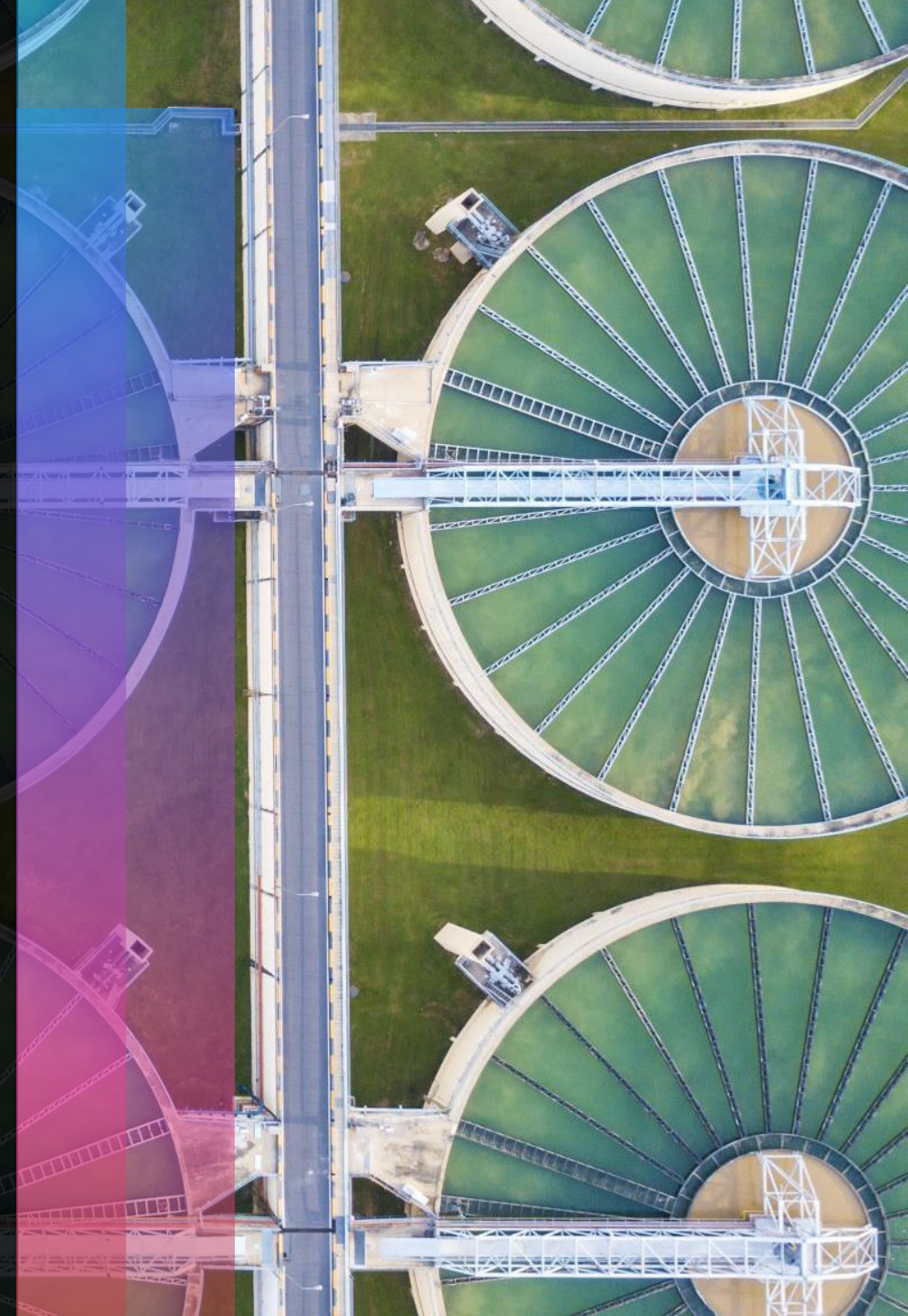
OASIS Members service a wide range of areas and manage a total estimated volume of over 210 million gallons on a yearly basis servicing only Ontario residents.

Northern Ontario: 25-45 million gallons

Central Ontario: 45-75 million gallons

Eastern Ontario: 35-55 million gallons

Western Ontario: 30-35 million gallons



Municipal Zoning

- Existing agricultural zoning designation already takes into account the specific characteristics and requirements of farming activities. These designations are typically established based on extensive research, land suitability assessments, and community development plans. Agricultural land also requires and uses many of the much needed nutrients provided by the septage being spread.
- MECP monitors these sites very closely with quarterly and annual reports from the operators of these sites. By recognizing the multifunctionality of agriculturally zoned land and its ability to accommodate spreading activities, municipalities can ensure that land-use regulations align with the intended purposes while minimizing the need for rezoning.
- Municipalities must comprehend the fact that operators within their townships who possess or acquire property do not always require rezoning. Agriculturally zoned properties can serve as effective spaces for spreading activities, enhancing soil fertility and resource utilization. Rezoning such properties to a "Commercial/Industrial" zoning category needlessly decreases the land's value and is often unwarranted.

Municipal Challenges

- Many rural housing, community centers, municipal buildings are on septic systems and do not have a common municipal wastewater treatment plants to manage the sewage produced in the respective municipality
- When municipalities decide to upgrade or perform maintenance on their wastewater treatment plants, the limited availability of disposal sites poses significant challenges for homeowners.
- Proper disposal becomes even more critical during these periods, as the capacity of approved facilities may be temporarily reduced or eliminated
- Septic Haulers are providing a service to homeowners to help effectively and safely manage the sewage produced in their residence or facility
- **Misconception**: When a homeowner requires a septic to be emptied the responsibility does NOT fall entirely on the septic operator to dispose the waste. Municipalities need to provide the infrastructure/resources to dispose of the waste produced in their municipality properly and safely.

Raising Awareness

As a proactive organization, OASIS is committed to creating awareness and encouraging proper waste disposal practices. The association aims to foster an open and transparent dialogue among various stakeholders, including homeowners, municipalities, regulatory bodies, and industry professionals, to address the challenges associated with sewage and septic waste disposal.

Offering Solutions and Resources

OASIS actively engages with municipalities, conducting workshops, seminars, and public awareness campaigns to educate policy makers about the importance of proper waste disposal. By fostering open communication channels, OASIS encourages dialogue between all stakeholders, facilitating the sharing of knowledge, best practices, and innovative solutions.

To address the limitations in disposal sites and support municipalities in managing sewage and septic waste effectively, OASIS offers solutions and recommendations. These may include advocating for the development of additional approved disposal sites, promoting advanced treatment technologies, and collaborating with relevant authorities to streamline waste management processes. OASIS strives to provide municipalities with the necessary tools and guidance to ensure responsible sewage management within their jurisdictions.



Final Thoughts

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