

NEWS RELEASE

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Sanitation Districts and the Inland Empire Utilities Agency Partner to achieve a Regional, Cost-Effective Approach to Sustainable Biosolids Management

Rancho Cucamonga, California... One of the most challenging aspects of wastewater treatment is biosolids management. Biosolids are the nutrient rich natural by-product of wastewater treatment. Operators of wastewater treatment facilities are faced with reduced landfill capacity, local bans on land application, and stringent regulatory rules making it difficult to dry or compost biosolids. To overcome these obstacles, the Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA) and the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (SDLAC) formed the Inland Empire Regional Composting Authority (IERCA) in 2002 to develop a regional state-of-the-art solution to address this challenge.

“IERCA has decided that composting is the most environmentally-sound and economical method to beneficially reuse the biosolids generated from our wastewater treatment facilities,” stated Jon Blickenstaff, IERCA Chairman.

IERCA identified a vacant 413,000 square foot former-IKEA Furnishings warehouse in Rancho Cucamonga as an ideal location for a composting facility called the Inland Empire Regional Composting Facility (IERCF). It is the largest completely enclosed, aerated static pile composting facility in the United States.

Construction began in 2003 and was completed in 2007. Compost is produced by mixing biosolids with other organic materials. The facility can process 150,000 tons of biosolids and

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60,000 tons of wood and green waste per year. All waste materials are received, mixed and composted inside the building. The composting process takes approximately 60 days. After curing, the compost is ready for distribution and sale. The finished product, called SoilPro Compost, is sold for a variety of direct and retail uses. Kellogg Garden Products bags the product for sale to large retailers such as Home Depot and Lowes.

“We are extremely satisfied with the high-quality end product we produce. This high-end compost has exceeded our expectations both in sales and in quality,” stated Richard Atwater, General Manager of IEUA.

This innovative local program reduces water needs and protects groundwater. Project proximity to both the wastewater plants and the end users reduce truck traffic and all related negative environmental impacts.

“This program demonstrates how innovative thought and partnerships can transform biosolids management into something beneficial,” stated Steve Maguin, SDLAC Chief Engineer and General Manager. “It is an approach that can be replicated anywhere.”

The Sanitation Districts’ protect public health and the environment through innovative and cost-effective wastewater and solid waste management, and in doing so convert waste into resources such as reclaimed water, energy, and recycled materials. The Sanitation Districts serve about 5.7 million people in 78 cities and unincorporated portions of Los Angeles County.

The Inland Empire Utilities Agency supply imported and recycled water, wastewater management and provides other utility-related (renewable electrical energy, compost) services to over 850,000 people in the Inland Empire.

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