

SOUND|GRO™ and Biosolids

Biosolids are nutrient-rich solid by-products of the wastewater treatment process. The use of Exceptional Quality Class A biosolids as fertilizer for both residential and commercial use is endorsed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA also promotes biosolids based fertilizers as environmentally safe and beneficial for plant growth.

When water flows down a sink or toilet drain, it is directed to the wastewater treatment plant to be treated and safely returned to the environment. With the adoption of the Clean Water Act of 1972, municipalities have been able to initiate pretreatment programs that control the amount of hazardous materials a business can dispose of in its wastewater. These pretreatment programs ensure that sewage discharges meet approved standards for discharge into the County's sanitary sewer system.

Once the sewage reaches the wastewater treatment plant, organic solids are extracted and sent through a treatment process separate from the wastewater. The solids are treated first in anaerobic digesters. In the digesters, microorganisms break down the compounds that make up the biosolids and destroy most of the disease-causing bacteria. The organic solids are then dewatered in centrifuges, at which point they are classified as Class B biosolids. Class B biosolids are acceptable for land application and distribution on sites with the appropriate state permits.



To ensure maximum acceptability and safety, Pierce County treats the Class B biosolids further to meet stringent standards imposed by the EPA for Class A 'Exceptional Quality' biosolids. The EPA classified Class A 'Exceptional Quality' biosolids can be sold for commercial and residential use without any special permitting. In order to achieve this 'Exceptional Quality' standard Pierce County uses the latest fertilizer manufacturing technology to heat treat the biosolids and rid them of all disease causing bacteria. Pierce County's Class A 'Exceptional Quality' biosolids are also registered with the Department of Agriculture as a commercial fertilizer. SoundGRO is a registered fertilizer in Washington and Oregon.



Pierce County

Public Works and Utilities
Sewer & Water Utilities