

# **During Source Water Protection Week, Illinois American Water Announces Results Of Partnership With Illinois Farmers**

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BELLEVILLE – Over the last four years, Illinois American Water has partnered with Illinois farmers to apply over 96,000 dry tons of residuals and biosolids, rather than

sending them to a landfill. The water treatment residuals and wastewater treatment biosolids from several Illinois American Water service areas were applied to agricultural fields across the state.

Over the years Illinois American Water operations in Champaign County, Chicago Metro, Granite City, Peoria, and Streator have participated in the program. After Illinois American Water acquired the water system in the City of Jerseyville, it was added to the statewide program to increase environmental efforts.

Biosolids are primarily organic materials produced during wastewater treatment. Residuals are produced during the water treatment process and are typically alum or lime-based. These materials are beneficial for agricultural land application.

According to Ryan Schuler, Water Quality & Environmental Compliance Manager for Illinois American Water, the partnership is a best practice for environmental sustainability. He said, “We work with water, our most precious resource, daily. We know how important it is to protect our resources and to reuse what we can. This is one of the reasons we are participating in the first-ever Source Water Protection Week along with the American Water Works Association this week, and why we partner with farmers and other environmental stewards.”

He continued, “We hope by sharing our efforts and innovative approach we may inspire others to do their part to protect our precious resources.”

As a part of the land application program, strict application guidelines are followed to prevent material from entering landfills and decrease farming-related chemical use and adjust pH to further protect natural resources. Solids generated from the water or wastewater treatment process are held in basins or drying lagoons. In the fall, after crops have been harvested, the alum residuals, lime residuals, or biosolids are land applied. Farmers then plow the field after the application or in the spring to incorporate the residuals into the soil. Alum residuals benefit the farmland by helping with the retention of soil moisture, whereas lime residuals benefit the fields by adjusting pH to optimal levels. Biosolids add nitrogen and phosphorus to the agricultural fields.

Illinois American Water works with land application contractors so the residuals are applied to farmland that has undergone required sampling. Also, application isn't made to sites that are wet, frozen, or near a potable water supply. According to Schuler, there are several technical requirements, but the effort is worth it.

“Reusing these natural conditioners on farmland is just one of the ways we implement green technology into our operations. It's the right thing to do and we are thankful to the farmers who partner with us,” said Schuler.

Illinois American Water implements green technology whenever possible. Examples include:

- Using solar to help decrease energy use.
- Recycling to reduce waste.
- Supporting pharmaceutical disposal programs to prevent the flushing of unwanted medications.
- Offering environmental grants to support local, community initiatives to protect watersheds.
- Partnering with educators on our annual art contest to educate our young customers.
- Educating customers about wise water use.

To learn more about Illinois American Water's environmental efforts, please visit [www.illinoisamwater.com](http://www.illinoisamwater.com).

*About Illinois American Water – Illinois American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest investor-owned water utility in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water and/or wastewater services to approximately 1.3 million people. American Water also operates a customer service center in Alton and a quality control and research laboratory in Belleville.*

*With a history dating back to 1886, American Water is the largest and most geographically diverse U.S. publicly traded water and wastewater utility company. The company employs more than 7,000 dedicated professionals who provide regulated and market-based drinking water, wastewater, and other related services to 15 million people in 46 states. American Water provides safe, clean, affordable, and reliable water services to our customers to help make sure we keep their lives flowing. For more information, visit [amwater.com](http://amwater.com) and follow American Water on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.*