Stakeholder Concerns
managing organics, nuisances, risk perception

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Methuen, MA
Concerned about proposed organics management changes in MA:

- MHOA, MEHA, and Don’t Waste MA comments:
  - Edit technical details of proposed reg. language
  - Need an application process for ‘permit by rule’
  - Boards of Health should be notified of all facilities
  - Facilities can’t be exempt from site assignment
  - Define ‘best management practices’
  - Risk of explosion
  - Need estimate of traffic
  - Some contamination of feedstock seems allowed
  - Need to define what an ‘appropriate site’ is
  - Requesting independent 3rd-party audits of compliance
  - Board of Health should be able to ask for hearing and adjudicatory hearing
  - Board of health should have right to enter sites
  - Require training and certification of AD operators
More input from CWA…

- Supportive of goals of organics diversion
- Scale of each individual facility is an issue
  - Large should be site assigned
  - Avoid siting too close to people (explosion risk)
- Must be good neighbors
  - Odor & noise & dust control
  - Reasonable hours of operations
More input from CWA (2)…

- Key issue: sludge
  - Don’t let people mix it with “clean” organics – proposed regulations seem unclear on this (“completely opposed to having SSO digesters take in sludge’)
  - Toxicity concerns (“as long as sludge is so toxic…”)
  - Could work toward clean sludge
  - Worry about increasing biosolids use
  - Don’t label sludge as “compost” (“trying to hide it”)
  - Restrict uses of sludge
CAUTION
HUMAN BIOLOGY AT WORK
“Our perceptions of risk are rooted in the biology of the brain…. The brain condemns us to being irrational.”

-David Ropeik, co-author of *Risk*, at NEIWPCC workshop, Dec 15, 2004
Outrage Factors…

(Perceived) RISK = HAZARD + OUTRAGE

After P. Sandman, D. Powell
“People think it’s dangerous because they’re upset, not the opposite.”

--Peter Sandman, 2/27/2000, Boston
#1 factor is TRUST

- More trust = less afraid; less trust = more afraid
- Don’t over reassure, hedge: “we will reduce the risk as much as we can.”
- Trust builds from communicator (more senior person is more trusted), organization, past history, and the process.
- Trust is built on demonstrations of honesty, shared control, competence, openness, fairness, and all your actions (and how they jive with what you say)
- You have to earn trust.
What Makes a Source Credible?

- Dedication & Commitment: 15-20%
- Honesty & Openness: 15-20%
- Technical Expertise: 15-20%

50% Empathy

Courtesy of Mary McDaniel, McDaniel Lambert
Outrage Factors*

**HIGH OUTRAGE**
- Involuntary
- Artificial/Industrial
- Exotic
- Hard to understand
- Memorable
- Dreaded
- Potentially catastrophic in time & space
- Not reversible
- Unknowable / Uncertainty
- Delayed effects

**LOW OUTRAGE**
- Voluntary
- Natural
- Familiar
- Self-explanatory
- Not memorable
- Not dreaded
- Diffuse in time & space
- Reversible
- Knowable / Well-known
- Immediate effects

* From Peter Sandman and Vincent Covello, with interpretation by Mary McDaniel and Barry Connell.
### HIGH OUTRAGE
- Affecting children (and mothers)
- Affecting future generations
- Identifiable victim(s)
- Personal stake
- Controlled by “system” or others
- Unfair
- Morally / ethically objectionable
- Associated with untrustworthy
- History of major accidents
- Closed process
- More media attention
- No visible (or only diffuse) benefits

### LOW OUTRAGE
- Not affecting children (and mothers)
- Not affecting future generations
- Statistical victim(s)
- No personal stake
- Controlled by individual
- Fair
- Morally / ethically neutral
- Associated with trustworthy people
- Little or no such history
- Open process
- Less media attention
- Visible benefits

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Who is manipulating outrage factors to increase perceived risk? And who is manipulating outrage factors to decrease perceived risk?
Thanks for… your invitation, your attention, & your comments.

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