

# Farmers get guidelines on sludge use

Comprehensive guidelines to control the use of sewage sludge as a fertilizer on agricultural land have been developed jointly by Environment Ontario and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Environment Minister Harry Parrott announced last week.

He said the guidelines are based on a \$2 million research program conducted since 1971 mostly at the University of Guelph by agricultural and environmental scientists.

"They will allow Ontario farmers maximum use of this valuable fertilizer and soil conditioner and at the same time prevent excessive levels of metals, nutrients and potentially noxious substances from endangering food producing land, watercourses and the health of humans and animals," Mr. Parrott explained.

"By allowing a more efficient and safer use of sewage sludge, which is a valuable economic agricultural commodity, the guidelines will benefit both the Ontario farmer and Ontario municipalities," Ontario Minister of

Agriculture and Food Lorne Henderson said.

About 34 per cent of the sludge now produced in Ontario's sewage treatment plants is used on agricultural land. Forty per cent is incinerated and 26 per cent is disposed in landfill or composted.

The administration of the new guidelines will rest jointly with Environment Ontario and with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Both ministries will inform farmers about sludge use and encourage them to use it on their fields.

Replacing 1973 interim recommendations, the new guidelines will:

- control sludge quality by establishing minimum ratios of nitrogen to 11 metals,
- control nutrient build-up in soil,
- set maximum sludge applica-

tion rates depending on cropping practice.

- permit the use of stabilized sludge only,
- require waiting periods, after sludge application, prior to cropping and pasturing,
- establish minimum distances between sites of sludge application, residences and water-courses.

"Guideline implementation will be phased in over three years," Dr. Parrott said. "No changes in sludge spreading practices are required for the first year. This will allow municipalities to adjust their sewage treatment operations and to review disposal alternatives. It will also allow my Ministry to fully monitor the effects of sludge use. During the second year some sludges may be spread at reduced rates. During the third year,

they may be spread only when municipalities are committed either to upgrade sludges or to secure alternative disposal facilities."

Experience has shown that

stabilized sewage sludge is an excellent fertilizer, rich in phosphorus, nitrogen and soil conditioners.

Sludge is recommended for use as a fertilizer on corn

fields, on grasslands used for hay and in commercial sod operations. Its use on legumes, soy beans and pasture is subject to some limitations.

## Chamber will honor business person of year

The Georgetown Chamber of Commerce, realizing the need for community recognition of the business sector, has announced the creation of an award for Business Person of the Year.

This award will be an annual event, presented to the recipient who has displayed good business ethics,

made a significant impact on the economic and social well-being of the community and has a business that operates in the Georgetown Area. The award can be presented to either an individual or a company.

A Committee of knowledgeable business people has been selected for this task and they would appreciate

any input from local residents. Please call 877-7119 and leave your message.

The award will be presented February 6 at a special dinner in the winner's honor, to be held at the North Halton Golf and Country Club. The Chamber urges all concerned to show their appreciation to the Business Community by attending.

## Firm is negotiating to buy the Disston Saw property

An as-yet unidentified Acton firm is negotiating with Sanvik for the purchase of the Disston Saw property on McDonald Boulevard.

Sanvik spokesman J. Sorenson told The Herald this week that papers were signed last week between the two companies, giving the Acton firm possession of the building in May. The building's present

occupant, Do-Tan will be moving its operation to a Dundas plant in April, he said.

A spokesman for the Acton company, however, indicated that problems have been encountered with the sale and said that it would be the end of the month before further details can be released.

Sanvik, a Swedish firm which purchased Disston Saw in 1976, closed the doors on the

Acton plant in September and moved parts of its operation to plants in Montreal and Vancouver. The portion of the plant which manufactured woodcutting tools and equipment was sold to Do-Tan Manufacturing Ltd. of Dundas in November with the understanding that it would only operate in Acton for six months.

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