

Home, Garden & Playground Risks – Simply Put

8 million tons of America's sewage sludge - is applied to parks, playgrounds, farmlands, golf courses and sold to home gardeners as a bagged "fertilizer."

Sewage sludge looks like any manure, fertilizer or pellets - but contains the hazardous waste that is washed down the drain of homes, businesses, industries and hospitals - toxic chemicals, pathogens, bacteria and pharmaceuticals.

From fertilizer to soil to your family - heavy metals and toxic waste are absorbed from the false "fertilizer" into your soils and landscapes where you and your children are exposed. Pathogens survive the treatment process. No pharmaceuticals or hormones require testing.

Sewage sludge exposure - can cause headaches, nausea, vomiting, induce breathing and asthma problems, create skin infections, muscle and joint pain, diarrhea and death.

Labeling is a "crap shoot" - if the bag says topsoil, it is usually topsoil. If the bag says it is humus from a location, it is probably all humus. If the bag says compost and nothing else, it is a "crap shoot" at best.

No labeling requirements - bagged fertilizer often names compost somewhere on the label but there are no requirements to list sewage sludge or biosolids as an ingredient in the material. Sludge can legally be blended into other bagged fertilizers with no labeling requirement.

The nose knows - in a savvy move to disguise sewage sludge/biosolids, dried fertilizer pellets can avoid the smell. But the nose knows - the smell is just the indicator that something is not right.

Deceptively labeling of sludge, biosolids and composts - cozy words like "organic", "sterilized", "pasteurized" or "sanitized" have little meaning since there are no federal rules regulating marketing terms.

Cheap municipalities compost - often sewage sludge is mixed with green waste and called "compost". Composting sludge may reduce some disease causing pathogens, but studies shows that the pathogens that survive are now stronger and more drug-resistant, a.k.a anti-biotic resistant.

Marketing is key - municipalities can market their product, such as Milorganite made in Milwaukee, WI, or Dillo Dirt out of Austin, TX. "Compost" given away or sold at municipalities will contain the hazardous wastes from that location.

Bulk Composts are bulk sludge - most garden centers have no idea that the bulk “compost” sold to homeowners often contains sewage sludge - UNLESS the owner can give you the originating site of the compost and where it came from.

Protect your family, home garden and pets - use sludge-free fertilizer. Tell your local officials you do not want sludge/biosolids on your parks, playgrounds, schools and athletic fields. Tell your state and federal elected officials a change to the laws - sewage sludge doesn't belong in our food, water and communities.