

**REPORT TO CORE AREA LIQUID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2025**

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**SUBJECT     Biosolids Advanced Thermal Facility – Engagement Plan**

**ISSUE SUMMARY**

To provide an overview of the public engagement process planned for the proposed Biosolids Advanced Thermal Facility.

**BACKGROUND**

On June 12, 2024, the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board approved the Long-Term Biosolids Management Strategy which was endorsed by the Ministry of Environment and Parks (ENV) in March 2025. This strategy identifies advanced thermal processing (gasification or pyrolysis) as the preferred option for the long-term beneficial use of CRD biosolids, recognizing its potential to destroy contaminants of emerging concern such as polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The development of the long-term strategy was informed by an extensive public and stakeholder engagement process that gathered input from residents, First Nations and municipalities to help shape the CRD's approach to biosolids management.

At the April 12, 2023 CRD Board meeting, staff were directed to initiate a process to procure a Biosolids Beneficial Use Demonstration Facility. The process was designed to determine whether the market could provide suitable technology options capable of meeting the CRD's biosolids management needs. A Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) resulted in 10 submissions followed by an invitational Request for Proposals (RFP) to six of the 10 RFEI proponents that culminated in three submitted proposals. Through this robust and competitive procurement process, staff and independent consultants confirmed that the leading technologies proposed were capable of processing all CRD biosolids at full scale with a 20-year service life. Because financing a short-term demonstration plant was not feasible and the infrastructure met the criteria for a long-term asset, the Board then directed staff to treat the project as a permanent facility. In June 2025, the CRD announced the selection of Australian company Pyrocal PTY Ltd. as the preferred proponent. The Board subsequently referred the matter back to staff with instructions to explore local and provincial permitting requirements and to develop a proposed community engagement plan, as required for provincial authorization of the project. Staff have submitted a preliminary application and ENV has confirmed the information requirements to submit the final application for authorization.

CRD staff have developed an engagement plan with the support of an independent consultant to guide the next phase of outreach on the project that will meet or exceed requirements for public notification under the *Environmental Management Act*. A summary of the engagement plan is included as Appendix A to this report. The engagement plan has been designed to inform residents about:

- what biosolids are, how they are created and how they are managed for beneficial use in alignment with the CRD's Long-Term Biosolids Management Strategy
- current biosolids management practices and their limitations, as well as previous engagement results about top-of-mind interests and concerns

- an overview of the selected technology benefits including environmental and climate change benefits, and the potential for the technology to destroy contaminants of emerging concern found in CRD-produced biosolids
- project details including facility location, proponent, regulatory requirements and funding requirements
- environmental monitoring and reporting
- operational considerations and neighbourhood integration
- potential uses of biochar

In addition to public engagement, the CRD will undertake a referral process with municipalities and other agencies to seek comments and recommendations on the project. In early 2026, referral packages will be sent to the following municipalities: Victoria, Esquimalt, Saanich, Oak Bay, View Royal, Langford, Colwood, North Saanich, Central Saanich, Sidney and the Highlands, as well as Island Health. In support of the referral process, staff will be available to present to municipalities and other agencies upon request. This process will ensure early awareness among key governments and agencies, and provide elected officials, staff and stakeholders an opportunity to comment before the final application to ENV is submitted.

Engagement with First Nations will occur through a separate but parallel process with support from an independent consultant. Early outreach is planned for Fall 2025, with timelines and approaches tailored to the interests and decision-making processes of each Nation. CRD staff will ensure coordination between public and First Nations engagement while maintaining distinct processes.

### **Engagement Timeline: Advanced Thermal Processing Facility**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Phase</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>2023-2024</b>	Public Consultation, First Nations Engagement and Technical Advisory Committee review of Long-Term Biosolids Management Plan	Complete
<b>June 2024</b>	CRD Board approval of Long-Term Biosolids Management Plan	Complete
<b>March 2025</b>	ENV endorsement of Long-Term Biosolids Management Plan	Complete
<b>June 2025</b>	Announcement of Pyrocal PTY Ltd. as the Preferred Proponent for development of Advanced Thermal Biosolids Processing Facility	Complete
<b>Fall 2025</b>	Preparation of consultation materials, early outreach to neighbours and interest groups	In Development
<b>January-February 2026</b>	Active engagement (open houses, tours, survey, media and advertising campaign)	In Development
<b>March 2026</b>	<i>What We Heard</i> summary report presented publicly and to the Board	In Development
<b>Fall 2026</b>	Engagement on Funding Sources and Debt Financing Strategy	Future Phase

### **RECOMMENDATION**

There is no recommendation. This report is for information only.

Submitted by:	Rory Tooke, PhD, Senior Manager, Environmental Innovation
Concurrence:	Andy Orr, Senior Manager, Corporate Communications & Engagement
Concurrence:	Luisa Jones, MBA, General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Alicia Fraser, P. Eng., General Manager, Integrated Water Services
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A: Engagement Highlights: Implementation of Advanced Thermal Technology –  
Biosolids to Biochar (October 2025)  
Presentation: Prepared by Katie Hamilton, Tavola Strategy Group (October 2025)