

2.16 The Connétable of St. Helier of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding consultation with the Health Protection Department about the transportation of sewage sludge:

Would the Minister explain whether there is any requirement for the Health Protection Department to be consulted over potential pollution risks created by the transport of sewage sludge within St. Helier, the storage of this material at La Collette 2 or the application of material containing sewage sludge on agricultural fields and amenity land; and if not, why not?

Senator S. Syvret (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

There is no legal requirement for the Health Protection team to be notified of the transport, storage or application of treated sewage sludge within the Island. However, through regular officer contact between Health Protection and the Transport and Technical Services Department in forums such as the Waste Strategy Steering Group, the former remains apprised of the changing methods for the disposal of the different categories of waste on the Island. As treated sewage sludge in this form is not considered a hazardous waste product, my officers have been advised by colleagues in the Environment and Planning Department that it is not intended for carriers of this material to be registered when the Waste Management Law has been ratified by the States. As to the disposal of this material, the producer would need to ensure that the transport and final destination of the material does not give rise to a statutory nuisance under the Statutory Nuisance (Jersey) Law 1999, and in addition will not result in the pollution of controlled waters in contravention of the Water Pollution Law 2000. Sewage sludge material from Bellozanne takes 2 forms: enhanced thermally treated sludge - this is material which has been passed through the drying plant at Bellozanne and consists of 97 per cent dried digested solids, is pathogen free and as a result of having lowered volatile content is benign with respect to odours; and advanced chemically treated sludge - this is material consisting of 27 per cent dried digested solids, is again pathogen free and, as a result of having lowered volatile content, is benign with respect to odours, although less so than the enhanced thermally treated product. In both cases, the final material is tested to ensure conformity with the pathogen-free status. Both materials are transported as dry cake, which means there is no risk of spillage of liquid materials. The disposal of liquid sludge to land ceased 18 months ago following pressure on farmers and growers for compliance with supermarket protocols on the treatment of cropping land.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

I thank the Minister for his very comprehensive answer.

The Bailiff:

That completes oral questions with notice. We come now to questions to Ministers without notice, and the first question period is of the Minister for Housing, and I invite questions.