

**Cary, NC** - The Town of Cary made environmental history today when Rep. David Price, Cary Mayor Ernie McAlister and other officials "pulled the lever" to start the Triangle's first biosolids dryer at the South Wastewater Reclamation Facility in Cary. The \$12.4 million modern facility will handle up to 250,000 gallons of sludge a day, which could yield about 50,000 pounds of environmentally safe, high-quality fertilizer per day.

Sludge, known in the treatment industry as biosolids, is the remains of organisms that digest the solid matter left over after the water in sewage has been removed, treated, and released into creeks or reused. In North Carolina, wastewater system operators must dispose of the sludge according to strict guidelines, which often results in contracting to have the sludge land applied or having it placed in landfills.

"The disposal of sludge has become a major challenge in rapidly-developing communities across North Carolina," said Price. "The solution Cary is employing is a terrific one, and I hope others will follow this community's lead in finding innovative means of supporting growth and development in an environmentally-friendly way." Price was instrumental in securing \$1.35 million in federal funds towards the total costs of the dryer.

"Thanks to the combined efforts of our state and federal representatives, along with the hard work of Town staff and contractors, Cary is once again demonstrating how environmental protection is right for North Carolina and how it continues to be one of the hallmarks of Cary's great quality-of-life," said McAlister. "The new facility offers an innovative, economical and efficient alternative in the treatment of solid waste."

The dryer will create tiny, round fertilizer pellets that the Town will sell as raw materials to wholesale fertilizer manufacturers.

The Town of Cary currently operates two water reclamation facilities that generate about 65,000 gallons of sludge per day. Previously, Cary contracted to have the sludge removed and recycled through land application on farmland in nearby counties. The opening of the biosolids dryer is expected to reduce environmental impacts as well as costs associated with such land application.

## **Cary Opens Region's First Biosolids Dryer - Price Secured \$1.35M To Make Project Happen**

November 29, 2005

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The Town broke ground on the facility on March 22, 2004. Similar projects have been completed in Boone and Forest City, NC.

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