

# MaximsNewsWATER



## **FROM SEWER SLUDGE TO POWER - A BOLD NEW INITIATIVE, by KATHY SHANDLING: 23/10/2008**

**(MaximsNews Network)**

**UNITED NATIONS - / [MaximsNews Network](#) / 23 October 2008** -The city of Stamford, Connecticut is seeking to install new technology that essentially turns dried wastewater sludge from toilets and drains into energy without creating pollutants.

The dried wastewater sludge would be converted into energy using gasification.

Right now the concept is still being tested in a controlled setting. The ultimate goal – to build a 10-megawatt power plant that would use gasified organic waste to help meet the city’s energy needs.

The proposed project is unique in the world because it is the first to gasify dried waste sludge for use as power.

According to Jeanette Brown who is the executive director of the Water Pollution Control Authority that is overseeing the development of this proposed project, gasification is not new. It is a clean and effective alternative to fossil fuels. It is the technique underlying “clean coal” technology.

The potential of converting wastewater sludge into energy has become more of a reality with the increased costs associated with other forms of energy not just in the U.S. but in other parts of the world as well.

Notes Brown, if all the wastewater treatment plants in the U.S. made the proactive decision to gasify their waste, the output could provide power to at least two million households per day.

As a result, this kind of new technology involving the gasification of dried waste sludge could change how cities around the world view wastewater disposal. Traditionally, cities have paid to have wastewater organics hauled away and burned. Now gasified organic waste will have a new life, a new role.

If the project can secure funding, the team of engineers at the Water Pollution Control Authority that serves the Stamford metropolitan region would be ready to design a full-scale power plant that could be fully functioning by 2010.

Currently the Authority is operating with a US\$1.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy that is matched by the city of Stamford.

Potential sources of financing for a full-fledged operational plant include bonding, federal grants or private investment that could be re-paid with revenue accrued from the power generated. It is anticipated that the Water Pollution Control Authority would use just 10% of the energy generated to power the wastewater treatment facility. This would allow the other 90% to be sold to the local power grid.

If this proposed project moves forward, it is likely that the concept could be replicated not only in other U.S. cities but also in other urban regions across the globe. After all, every city in the world is generating sewage and wastewater sludge. Now the sewage can be put to a new productive use.