



# The Ocean County Utilities Authority

Helping to Preserve the Water Resources of Ocean and Southern Monmouth Counties in the State of New Jersey

## ***OCUA WINS NATIONAL AWARD BIOSOLIDS PROGRAM CITED***



*Pictured from left to right: Peter Kusion, FMD Operations Superintendent; Patricia Matarazzo, Receptionist/Office Assistant-Central Services, Richard M. Warren, Executive Director, John C. Parker, Chairman; Scott Rosen, Fertilizer Shipping Coordinator; David Ertle, Director, Central Services*

**October 31, 2007** - The production and marketing of organic fertilizer by the Ocean County Utilities Authority received national recognition, being selected a first place winner in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 2007 National Clean Water Recognition Award Program.

“The Ocean County Utilities Authority has made it a practice to provide services to the residents of the county that hold environmental benefits as well,” said Freeholder Director John P. Kelly. “Because of the OCUA, our waterways are cleaner now than they have ever been.”

OCUA Chairman John C. Parker, OCUA Executive Director Richard M. Warren and David J. Ertle, Director of Fertilizer Manufacturing at the OCUA, attended the October 2007 preboard meeting of the Board of Freeholders to talk about the recognition.



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**“We are very proud of these efforts,” said Freeholder James F. Lacey, who is liaison to the county’s award winning recycling programs. “The OCUA has raised the bar when it comes to treating wastewater and recycling it into a useful fertilizer.”**

**According to Warren “This award is the culmination of over fifteen years of hard work and reflects the commitment and determination of the Freeholders and the Authority’s Commissioners and staff to implement an exemplary project for the environmentally sound beneficial reuse of its biosolids.”**

**According to the USEPA, the OCUA was selected for the award based on “demonstrated creative and outstanding practices” in the area of biosolids management.**

**Since 1997, the OCUA has successfully manufactured the organic fertilizer called OCEANGRO. A decade later, more than 90,000 tons has been produced and beneficially reused.**

**OCEANGRO is non-burning, slow release, runoff resistant and is rich in iron and calcium. It is an economic and environmentally sound alternative for golf courses, athletic fields and parks as a maintenance application. Registered with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, it is manufactured to fertilizer industry standard specifications and exceeds the Environmental Protection Agency’s “Exceptional Quality” Class A standards. OCEANGRO is used by over 60 golf courses in New Jersey and is available in many retail locations throughout the county and state.**

**Ertle noted that the OCUA is the only agency in the state that produces and markets a commercial fertilizer product from its sludge or biosolids. “We do it all,” Ertle said. “From wastewater treatment to the development of a sales and marketing network for the distribution of 9,000 tons per year of product.”**

**The EPA’s National Clean Water Act Recognition Awards Program recognizes select wastewater treatment plants, programs or projects that have achieved outstanding compliance results and have demonstrated an exceptional technological achievement, method, or device in their waste treatment and pollution abatement programs.**

**The OCUA’s program was first recognized by the EPA’s regional office in June 2007 and the program underwent additional screenings and evaluations on the national level by a select panel of expert judges in the wastewater treatment industry to be awarded first place.**

**“For years, many municipalities, individuals and groups have worked to make significant contributions to the study and practice of environmentally safe use and disposal of municipal biosolids,” the EPA stated. “This awards program recognizes their professional efforts.”**