



# COUNTY OF YOLO

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## **Yolo Bioreactor Recognized by U.S. EPA**

(Woodland, CA) – Yolo County recently received recognition, and a certificate of congratulations, from the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s (U.S. EPA) National Center for Environmental Innovation for the successful completion of Project eXcellence and Leadership (Project XL) – the Yolo County Accelerated Anaerobic and Aerobic Composting (Bioreactor) Project. Project XL, which was initiated in September 2000, was a partnership between the U.S. EPA, the State of California and the Yolo County Department of Planning & Public Works in an effort to achieve a higher level of environmental protection through the use of new bioreactor landfill technology.

The bio-reactor process is a form of composting solid waste which accelerates the decomposition process by adding groundwater and re-circulating the liquid that has passed through the material. This enhances the growth of bacteria and fungi which help break down solid waste. As a byproduct, methane gas is produced. The gas is then converted to energy and sold to the power grid.

In a letter to Yolo County, Elizabeth A. Shaw, U.S. EPA Director of the National Center of Environmental Innovation stated, “We are grateful for Yolo County’s early leadership and interest in innovative practices.”

Yolo County’s project was commended by the U.S. EPA for success in:

- Managing landfilled solid waste for rapid waste decomposition;
- Maximizing landfill gas generation and capture; and
- Minimizing long-term environmental consequences of landfilled waste management

“The Yolo County Board of Supervisors has consistently supported landfill staff in their pursuit to move forward the county’s bioreactor project,” said John Bencomo, Yolo County Planning & Public Works Director. “There has been a recognized need for pushing the envelope in landfill technology and finding more effective and environmentally sound methods.”

Some of the benefits of using bioreactor composting in landfill management are:

- Energy is generated in a shortened timeframe
- Pollution is reduced
- Greenhouse gas emissions are reduced by capturing methane, which is about 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide
- The life of the landfill is extended

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