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## Press Release

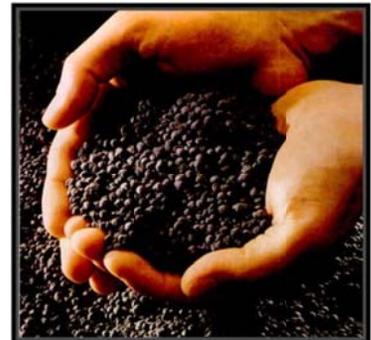
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### Vallecitos Water District's use of environmentally friendly treated wastewater solids offers sustainable alternative to chemical fertilizers

San Marcos, CA – If a garden featuring rainwater harvesting, low-water-use plants, synthetic turf and solar power represents the demonstration building blocks for a more sustainable future, then consider the environmentally friendly fertilizer soon to be applied to it the next phase in achieving that goal.

Instead of using chemical fertilizers, Vallecitos Water District (Vallecitos) will show its support of sustainable practices by applying organic biosolid pellets, composed of treated wastewater solids, on its Sustainable Demonstration Garden located in front of its San Marcos Administrative offices. Besides the environmental benefits, the safe-to-use pellets rich in nutrients are more beneficial to plants and allow Vallecitos to use a cutting-edge technology from a local provider before it goes mainstream.



The plant-nourishing pellets are created at the Encina Wastewater Authority's (Encina) treatment facility in Carlsbad. Solids that are removed during the wastewater treatment process are heat dried to about 200°F to kill pathogens and remove excess water to create the dry, biosolid pellets. Vallecitos is one of six public agencies that own the Encina facility.

Being rich in nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorus, makes them ideal as a valuable fertilizer. They also offer a less-harmful alternative to the typical chemical fertilizer that can pollute the ocean after being washed off during rain or over-irrigation. Instead, the pellets are made of organic material, requiring infrequent application because they break down slowly to nurture the garden and provide nutrients to plants as needed.

The dispersing of the pellets is just another sustainable aspect to the garden that already features decorative water features that run on collected rain water and solar power, synthetic turf, micro-irrigation, mulch, rockscapes, California native plants and weather-based irrigation controller displays to promote the value of preserving natural resources today for availability tomorrow.

To date the majority of the biosolid pellets have been purchased in large quantities by a cement manufacturer that incinerates the pellets in place of coal. In the energy-intensive cement manufacturing process, biosolid pellets provide an alternative renewable energy source to fossil fuels. Encina is also selling the product in bulk to local golf courses, nurseries, and fertilizer blending companies. The pellets are currently not available to the public, although it is a long-term goal to distribute them in smaller quantities so that they can be used in the local service area.

A sample of the biosolid pellets is available to view at the Vallecitos Water District Administration building located at 201 Vallecitos de Oro in San Marcos. Visitors are welcome to the garden anytime during business hours – from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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*Vallecitos Water District is an independent, special district dedicated to providing water, wastewater and reclamation services to approximately 94,000 people in a 45-square-mile area that includes San Marcos; the community of Lake San Marcos; portions of Carlsbad, Escondido and Vista; and other surrounding unincorporated areas. The public is invited to Board meetings, taking place at 4 p.m. the first and third Wednesday of each month at Vallecitos' Administration, Maintenance, and Operations Facility - 201 Vallecitos de Oro, San Marcos.*