

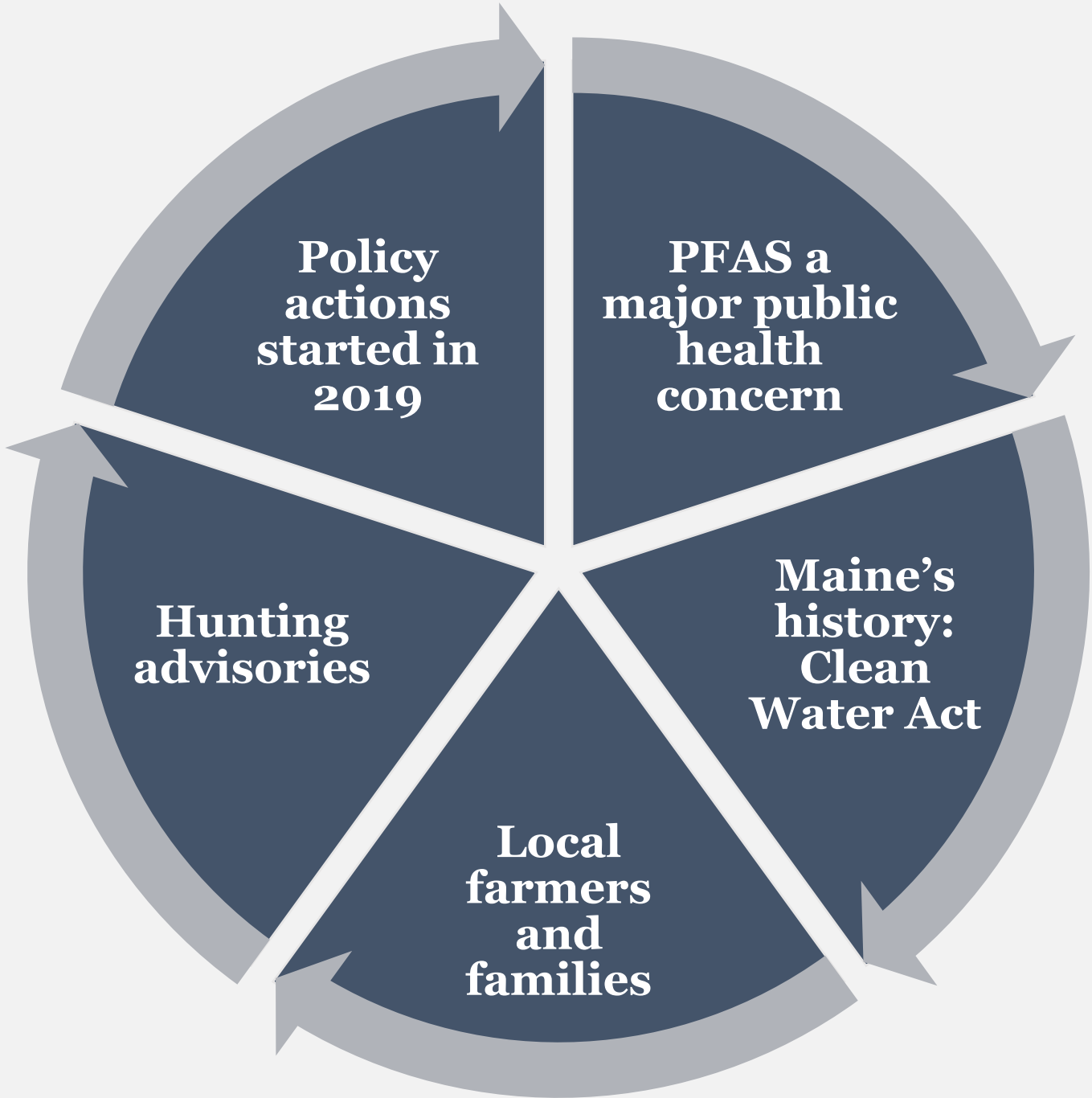
PFAS in Maine: Current Situation & Policy Implications

Emily Cole-Prescott & Scott Firmin

City of Saco (Maine) & Portland (Maine) Water District

June 13, 2023

Landscape of Public Health Concern



Maine's LD 1911 Provisions

- Passed in 2022
- Bans land application of biosolids & composting sales from biosolids in Maine*
- Requires wastewater treatment facilities to sample effluent for PFAS
- Prohibits new licenses to land-apply septage
- Requires DEP to report to Legislature on how to handle septage

**Certain exemptions to composting from food wastes and specific liquor making processes*

Maine's LD 1639 Provisions

- Passed in 2022
- Limited out-of-state bulky waste and Construction Demolition Debris into Maine
- Unintended Consequence: Landfill Operators did not have enough material to bulk the wet waste coming into the landfills
- Resulted in Landfills telling wastewater treatment facilities they may not have capacity to take biosolids, causing statewide concern

Many Unintended Consequences for Wastewater Treatment

No Outlet for Biosolids

- Crisis situation where wastewater treatment facilities cannot get their biosolids into landfills

Ever-increasing Costs

- Wastewater treatment facilities in Maine notified this week of cost increases greater than \$60 per ton overnight, even if under contract

2023 Update

LD 718 – Two-year pause on implementation of LD 1639

LOCAL & STATE · Posted March 8 · Updated March 8

Landfill operator tells lawmakers it has temporary fix to Maine's sludge disposal crisis

Casella, the operator of the state-owned landfill that had stopped accepting biosolids from wastewater treatment, says it has found a temporary home for Maine's sludge in New Brunswick, buying time to find a long-term solution.

March 8, 2023

Crisis emerges in Maine over safe disposal of biosolids from wastewater treatment plants

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Politics

Maine lawmakers told that 'catastrophe' is averted, but sludge disposal challenges remain

Maine Public | By Kevin Miller
Published March 8, 2023 at 6:42 PM EST

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[▶ LISTEN · 3:16](#)

MAINE · Posted February 28 · Updated March 1

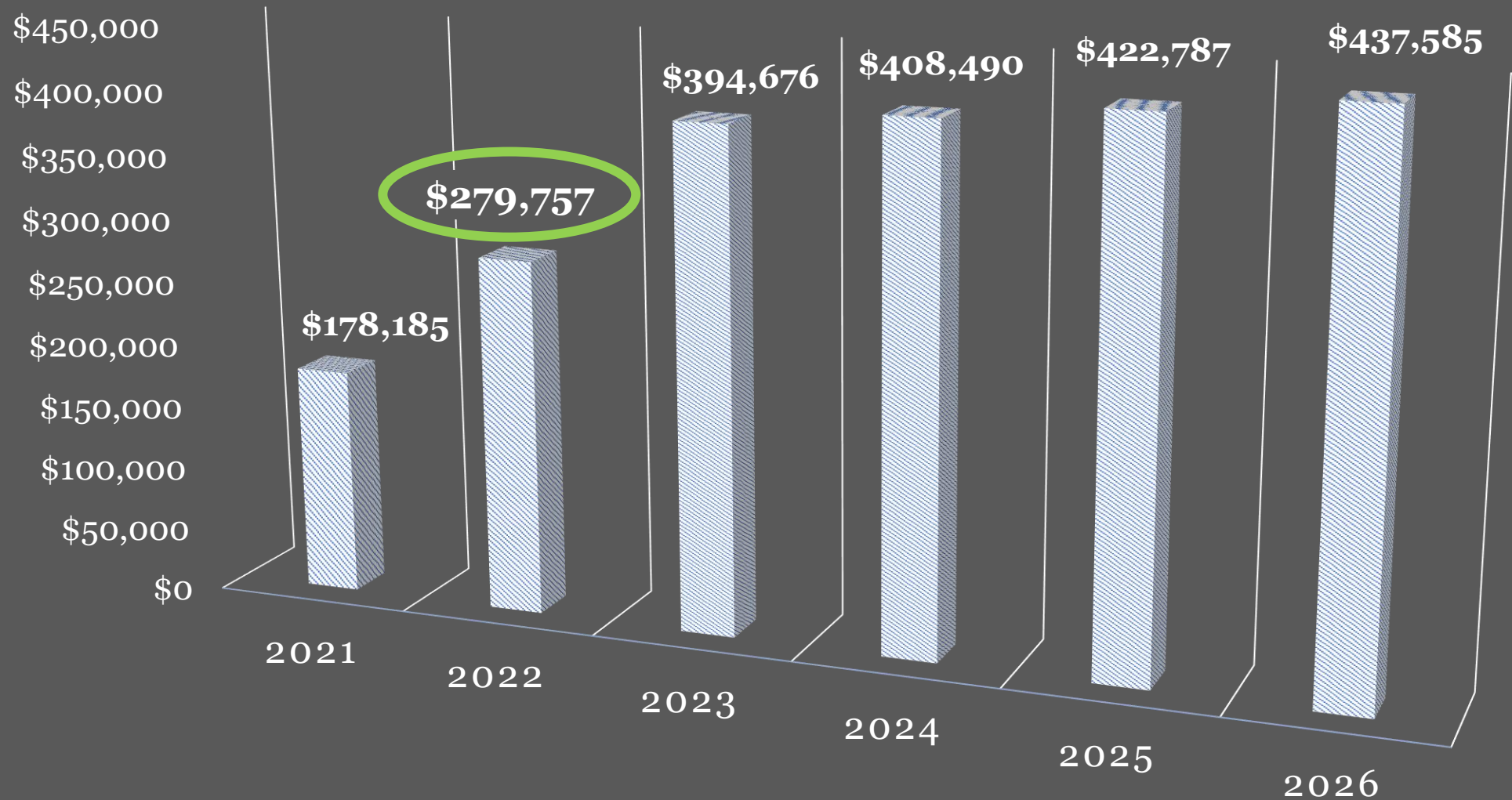
Crisis building at Maine wastewater treatment plants

Wastewater treatment plant operators across Maine face paying higher fees to truck sludge to New Brunswick after two state laws curtailed how biosolid disposal is handled.

Example: Projected Cost Increases

BASED ON 2,311.09 WET TONS (2021)

■ Cost



Loss throughout Maine



**Farming families' health, welfare,
and economic losses**



**Millions in taxpayer-funded efforts
around PFAS in last year's budget**

This article outlines challenges from a water perspective:

<https://www.bangordailynews.com/2022/08/17/mainefocus/path-of-forever-chemicals-into-public-drinking-water/>

Increased Costs for Biosolids Management Contracts

(Recent update: These percentages have increased significantly over the last three months)

**Greater
Augusta
64%**

**Sanford
455%**

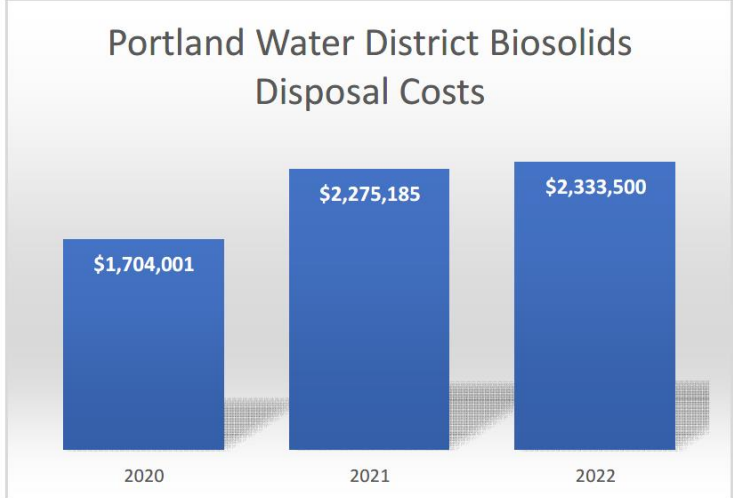
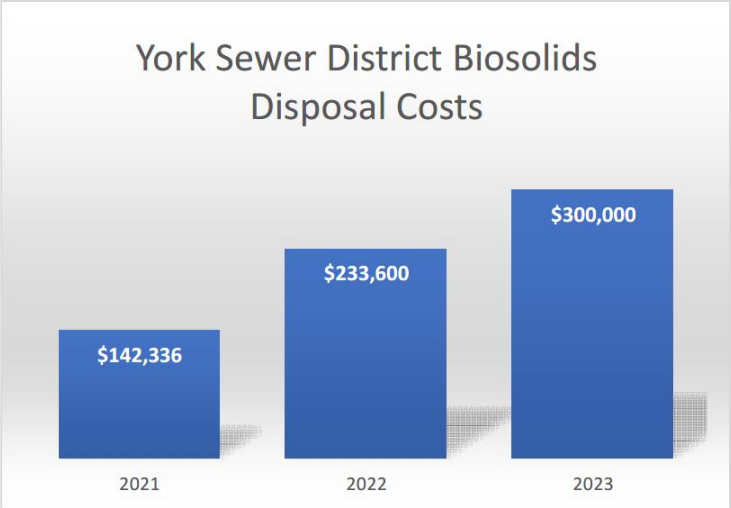
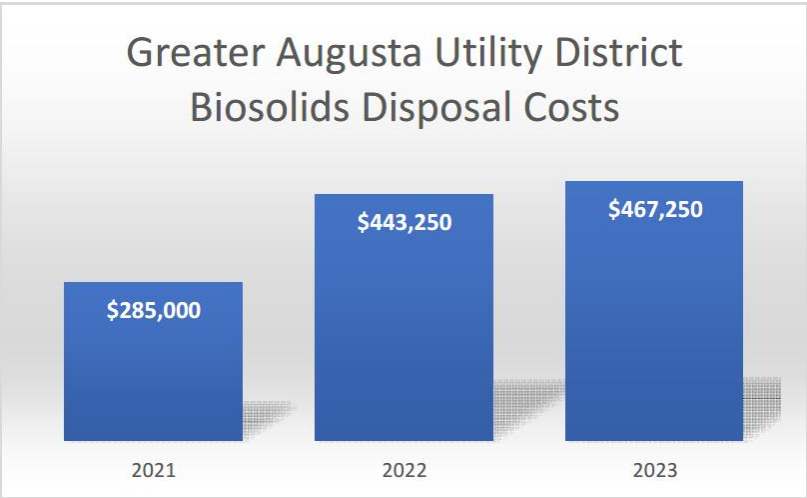
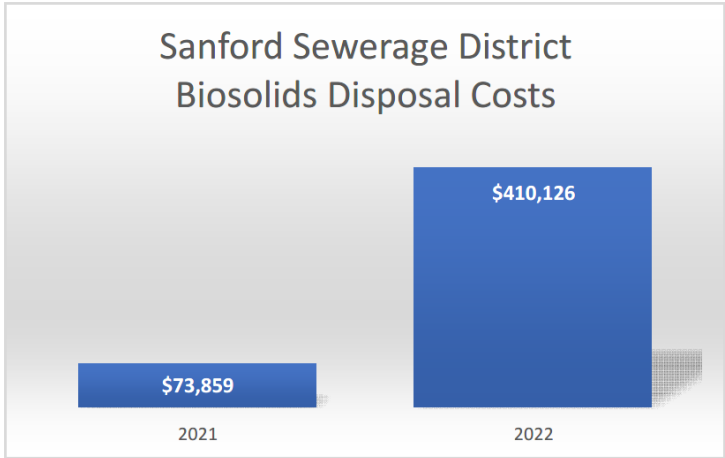
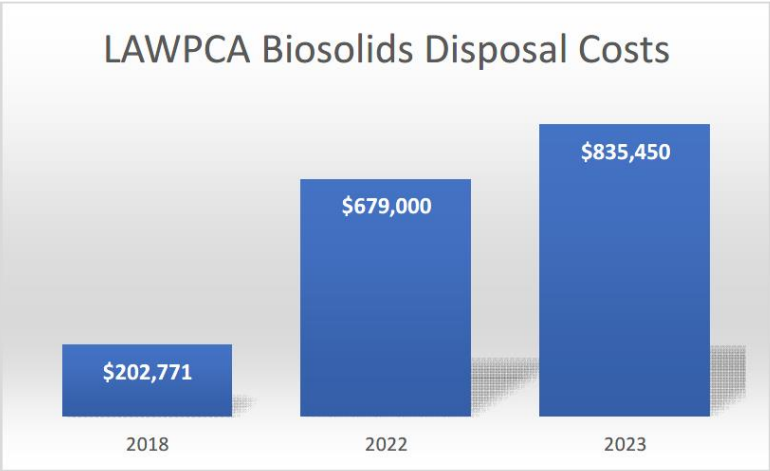
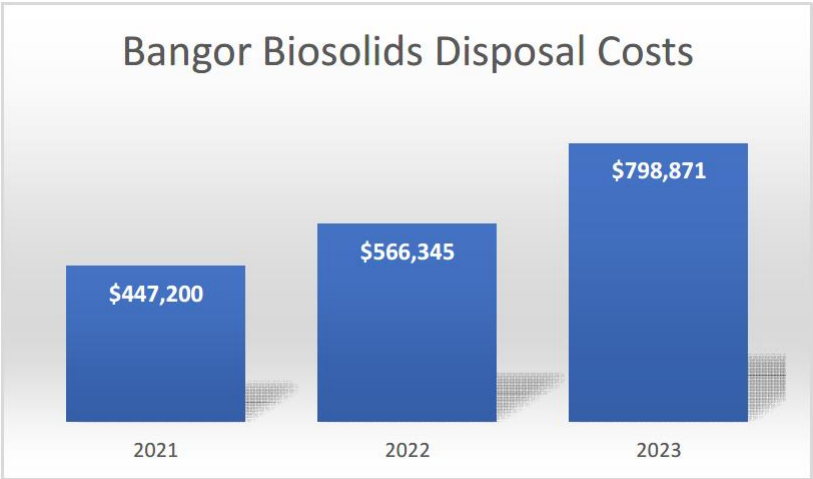
**Portland
37%**

**Lewiston-
Auburn
312%**

**Bangor
79%**

**York
111%**

Tracking Disposal Costs . . .



The background of the slide features a dense field of question marks. Most are dark grey or black, but one in the center-left is bright white, standing out prominently. The question marks are of various sizes and are slightly blurred, creating a sense of depth and focus on the central white one.

Septage Management

The Question:

- Where Will Septage Go?

The Issues:

- Increasing PFAS concentrations at facilities
- Not equipped to treat PFAS
- Capacity concerns

DEP shared report with Maine Legislature in January 2023.

Overview: Right Now in Maine

Last Week – Kicked off Maine's First Biosolids Management Study



**Ratepayers &
Taxpayers
covering costs**



**Significant
climate impacts
to truck material**



**Landfill capacity
of about 5 years**



**Need enhanced
collaboration &
coordination**

Looking Ahead . . .



**Biosolids
Management Studies**



**Collaborative
partnerships**



**Engagement beyond
water industry**

Questions & Comments

If you think of questions later, feel free to contact us:

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References & Resources

- Utility information reported here collected from the utility directors through June 2022.
- LD 1911 details can be found here:
https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/bills/display_ps.asp?PID=1456&snum=130&paper=&paperld=1&ld=1911.
- Rhoda, E. (2022, August 17). “The path of ‘forever chemicals’ into public drinking water used by thousands in central Maine.” *Bangor Daily News*.
<https://www.bangordailynews.com/2022/08/17/mainefocus/path-of-forever-chemicals-into-public-drinking-water/>