

## Lou Mansolillo

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**From:** Karl Aspelund <koaspelund@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 28, 2026 3:23 PM  
**To:** Rep. Solomon, Joseph J. Jr.; Rep. O'Brien, William W.; Rep. Caldwell, Justine A.; Rep. Casey, Stephen M.; Rep. DeSimone, Anthony J.; Rep. Finkelman, Alex S.; Rep. Kennedy, Brian Patrick; Rep. Newberry, Brian C.; Rep. Paplauskas, Christopher G.; Rep. Phillips, Robert D.; Rep. Potter, Brandon C.; Rep. Sanchez, Enrique George; Rep. Serpa, Patricia A.; Rep. Spears, Tina L.; Rep. Voas, Brandon T.; House Corporations Committee; Rep. Shekarchi, K Joseph; Rep. Blazejewski, Christopher R.; Rep. Chippendale, Michael W.  
**Cc:** Rep. Casimiro, Julie A.; Rep. Craven, Robert E.  
**Subject:** In support of Anti-Pyrolysis Legislative Package (H8400, S3224, H8431, S3225)- Impact of potential mercury distribution from sewage sludge plant (and a map)  
**Attachments:** QSS Biosolids Emissions Impact Zone V04-28-26.png

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Dear Committee Members and House Leadership.

(Please see the attached map as well.)

I want to address a single figure on the QSS Biosolids Air Quality Permit: 83.43 pounds. That is the amount of mercury this facility is legally permitted to release into our air every year.

Mercury is a potent neurotoxin. Children and fetuses are up to ten times more sensitive to its effects than adults, facing risks of irreversible brain damage. Once released, mercury is redeposited by rain into our soil and water, transforming into methylmercury. It then bioaccumulates in our vegetables, grains, and fish at high concentrations. It never leaves.

Rhode Island bans the sale of mercury thermometers for a reason. If you break just one at home, the Department of Health requires an extensive hazardous waste protocol—neoprene gloves, tape, and sealed plastic bags—all for a single drop. That drop is enough to contaminate a 20-acre lake, like the Jamestown Reservoir, making its fish unsafe to eat.

Yet, this facility is permitted to release the equivalent of 40,000 broken thermometers annually—enough to poison a body of water the size of the entire state of Rhode Island every single year.

Approval documents show that effective filtration technology was considered but rejected solely for financial reasons. At a cost of \$830,000 per year, \$20 million over 24 years, protecting our environment was deemed not "cost-effective."

Furthermore, measuring "Acceptable Ambient Levels" is misleading. It only calculates the risk of breathing mercury at the property line. It sidesteps the primary way mercury harms us: by settling into our food chain. Within two miles of the stack—a zone encompassing 10 schools—mercury can collect in soil at concentrations ten times higher than background levels. This creates a permanent "toxic legacy" that cycles through the community for decades, in dust, groundwater, seafood, and plantlife.

We must ask why a "cost-effectiveness" metric is a valid excuse to allow a steady drip of neurotoxins into our community. Who decided our health wasn't worth the price?

This must never be allowed to happen.

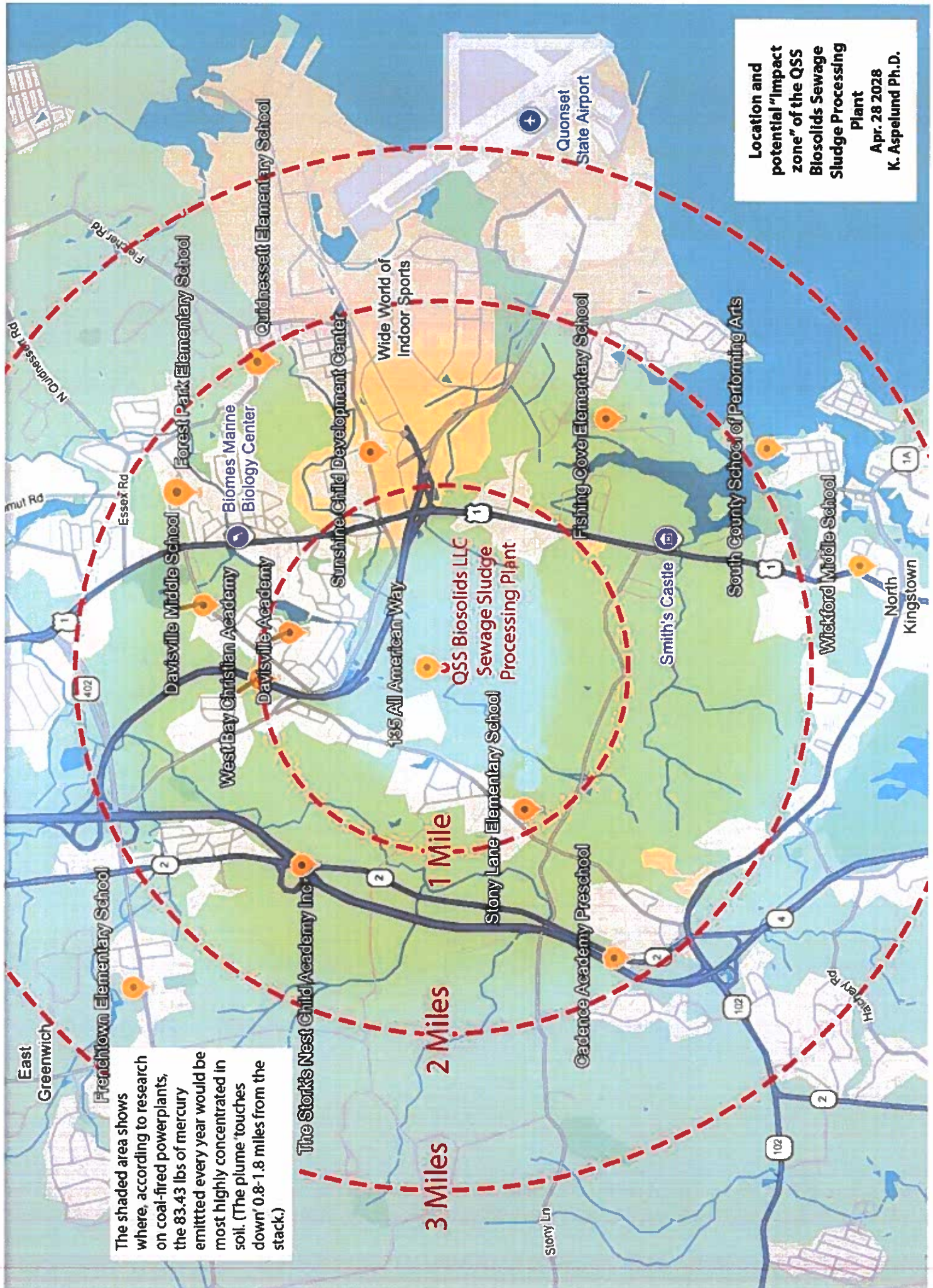
With all good thoughts.

Karl Aspelund  
110 Lincoln Street, North Kingstown RI 02852

### **Bibliography**

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**Location and potential "impact zone" of the QSS Biosolids Sewage Sludge Processing Plant**  
 Apr. 28 2028  
 K. Aspelund Ph.D.



The shaded area shows where, according to research on coal-fired powerplants, the 83.43 lbs of mercury emitted every year would be most highly concentrated in soil. (The plume 'touches down' 0.8-1.8 miles from the stack.)

**3 Miles**  
**2 Miles**  
**1 Mile**