



## Clean Water and Renewable Energy Request for Proposal Now Available

**Release Date:** January 3, 2017

**Media Contacts:** [Bill Cosh](#), Communications Director, 608-224-5020

MADISON – A Request for Proposals targeted to business consortiums and farmers interested in utilizing anaerobic digester technology to build, operate, and maintain a system to treat manure from dairy farms is now available from the [Public Service Commission](http://psc.wi.gov/biogas/rfp.htm) ([psc.wi.gov/biogas/rfp.htm](http://psc.wi.gov/biogas/rfp.htm)). Anaerobic digesters work to produce renewable energy in the form of biogas and incorporate a system for treating wastewater that will capture nutrients and reduce pathogens.

Late last year, Governor Walker, in an effort to address water quality, asked the Public Service Commission (PSC), the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to step up, think big, and draft a Request for Proposal.

“Water quality is a top priority for us,” Governor Walker said. “This joint effort is important progress, and we will continue working toward a sustainable solution to ensure our natural resources remain viable for generations to come.”

“The proposals will be evaluated on the financial viability of treatment technologies including capital, long-term operation, and maintenance. We want to make sure that they are in it for the long haul,” said DATCP Secretary Ben Brancel. “A successful proposal will be evaluated on their ability to produce energy efficiently, remove nutrients from the manure and reduce pathogens.”

“Clean, safe drinking water is a priority for us at DNR and so is finding effective, science-based solutions to water quality challenges. A digester system that can also treat water and reduce pathogens is yet another tool that can be used to improve water quality in Kewaunee County and elsewhere,” said DNR Secretary Cathy Stepp. “While we and DATCP are already working on rule changes to address water quality in the state, we are thrilled the Governor asked us to join the PSC and DATCP in this effort to obtain a sustainable solution to this issue.”

“Pulling together creative solutions from the private sector industries involved in an integrated biodigester with a water treatment system will be crucial to the success of any potential proposals,” said PSC Chairperson Ellen Nowak. “We can add value to the renewable energy benefits of digesters by ensuring they are part of a holistic response that helps address groundwater, surface water, and drinking water issues. I thank Governor Walker for challenging his cabinet to collaborate in order to multipurpose our efforts and ensure versatility of state dollars.”

“The treatment of the wastewater benefits us all when extremely clean water can be returned to the land or provided to dairy cows,” said Brancel. “This biodigester project is unlike anything done in the past in Wisconsin and aligns with Governor Walker’s goal of supporting the agriculture economy in the State while ensuring our natural resources are safe and healthy. It is my hope that farmers and businesses will seriously consider participating in this opportunity.”

To make this public/private project possible, PSC authorized Focus on Energy to spend up to \$20 million for Integrated Anaerobic Digester projects that meet Focus on Energy eligibility requirements.

###