

3 March 2017

To whom it may concern,

Please let this letter serve as a statement of support for the UW Oshkosh dry anaerobic digestions facility's partnership project with the city of Madison to investigate curbside organic waste diversion.

My name is Brad Spanbauer and I am currently serving as the Sustainability Coordinator at UW Oshkosh. I have worked for the university's Office of Sustainability since 2009, originally as a student intern, then as a grad student intern, and now as a part time coordinator. Over the course of my time working for the Office, I have been involved with numerous projects implementing sustainable strategies for the UW Oshkosh campus. One of the first projects I was involved with on campus was the establishment of our dry fermentation anaerobic digestion facility, BD1.

I have worked on various aspects of projects related to BD1 over the course of my time working at UW Oshkosh, including tours, promotion, seminars, and the Titan Gold compost program. The UW Oshkosh dry digestion facility is unique in that it was the first facility of it's kind in the Americas at the time it went online. The facility provides the campus with heat and electrical energy, while also diverting much of our organic waste.

One project that stands out is the city of Madison pilot project. This project was initiated by the City of Madison as well as the staff of the biogas programs on campus to form a collaboration and investigate municipal curbside organic waste collection. This helped both parties achieve parts of their mission, as the city of Madison strives to be a zero waste city, and UW Oshkosh serves to provide partnership opportunities for research and innovation, as well as building relationships with communities beyond Oshkosh. This project did just that. On a trial basis to determine if the city of Madison could implement a commercially viable municipal organic waste digestion facility, 500 homes and a few businesses participated in the study which brought 12 full truckloads of organic material to BD1 at UW Oshkosh, culminating in May 2014. The results of this study indicated that curbside organics could be feasible for the city of Madison. The waste produced a good amount of biogas and methane content was greater than 60% between days 5 and 28, which is desired. This project provided a great opportunity for the university to partner with a municipality and highlight the importance of effectively managing organic waste through diversion while producing energy. In addition this project, further highlighted the role institutions of higher education can play in helping municipalities with problem solving through research and innovation. Since the results of this study have been presented, Madison has continued research with plans to begin the first phases of the constructing a city digestion facility in 2017.

Kindest regards,
Brad Spanbauer, M.Sc.
Associate Lecturer of Biology
Sustainability Coordinator
spanbauerb@uwosh.edu