Jan 29th, 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Plastics, Degradability, and the Environment

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MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

The Doctoral Program in Environmental Management and MSU Sustainability Seminar Series Present:

Plastics, Degradability, and the Environment

WHEN: January 29, 2019; 4:00 pm

WHERE: CELS 120 lecture hall

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Professor Strom has been a faculty member at Rutgers since 1980. His research has focused on the microbial ecology of the biological treatment of wastes including activated sludge, rotating biological contactors, nutrient removal, composting, bioremediation, plastic biodegradability, and contaminated air biofiltration (including some applications for building a base on Mars). He also has worked on surface water pollution, especially relating to nutrients. He is a member of the Water Environment Fed. (WEF), American Soc. for Microbiology, NJ Water Environment Assoc. (NJWEA), and Assoc. of Environmental Engineering & Science Professors. He has co-authored a textbook and over 50 peer-reviewed and 200 other scientific papers and presentations. He is co-recipient of 2 patents and several awards: the WEF Harrison Prescott Eddy Medal for research, National Recycling Congress (Leaf Composting), Team Excellence in Research at Cook College, NJWEA Operator Educator, Cook College Teaching Excellence, Dennis M. Fenton Distinguished Graduate Alumni, NJ Select Soc. of Sanitary Sludge Shovelers , NJWEA Wastewater Hall of Fame, and WEF Fellow.

Abstract: Harmful environmental effects of plastics have long been condemned by activists, and some of these problems are well documented. However, in seeking to substitute other materials or make changes in the properties of the plastics themselves, it is important that the policies implemented do not worsen existing or create new environmental problems. This seminar will discuss some of the general concerns associated with this issue, such as the environmental impacts of using other materials instead of plastics, and then focus on degradable plastics. What is degradability, when might it be valuable, and will these products in fact degrade? Results of a study on biodegradable plastics under anaerobic conditions (such as in most sludge digestion and landfills) will be presented.

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