

now have similar or even more significant "right-to-know" laws, and more are expected shortly.

H.H. FAWCETT

The Investigation and Control of Gas Explosions in Buildings and Heating Plant, by R.J. Harris, British Gas, Chapman and Hall, Methuen (attention Valerie Berk), 29 West 35th St., New York, NY 10001, 1983, cloth, 194 pages, \$41.00.

This book is a practical, yet technically advanced, treatment of the gas explosions which occasionally occur and are frequently misdiagnosed. The author is principal scientist with the British Gas Midlands Research Station, and has assembled the accumulated wisdom and data from a variety of sources. Most of the data are for natural gas (essentially methane), although other gases and vapors are considered in the introductory section.

Beginning with an introduction to combustion and explosions, subsequent chapters deal with gas accumulation, mixing, and ventilation, with the generation of pressure in confined gas explosions, with the prediction of pressures generated in vented confined gas explosions, with the design of explosion relief panels and their practical application, and with investigation of gas explosion incidents. (This reviewer investigated a very similar explosion to the one detailed some years ago, where a broken gas pipe outside the house had allowed gas to accumulate in a house which did not have gas service.) In the appendices, the author has included calculation of gas flow rates from a broken pipe, derivation of the pressure-time relationship at the onset of a confined gas explosion, a mathematical model of a vented gas explosion, worked examples in the application of empirical equations to the design of explosion relief panels, and investigation of an accidental gas explosion. Excellent color photographs, and 104 references enhance the appeal of the book to a serious reader. Every building engineer who supervises gas furnaces or dryers, and every technical gas utility manager would find the book of real value. It is highly recommended.

H.H. FAWCETT

Superacids, by G.A. Olah, G.K.S. Prakash and J. Sommer, Wiley/Interscience, New York, 1985, 371 pages, \$57.95.

Superacids are acid systems stronger than conventional strong Brønsted acids (such as sulfuric acid) or Lewis acids (such as aluminum chloride). The discovery of "Magic Acid", fluoroantimonic acid in the 1960s led to development of a series of mixtures whose strength, when measured by the