

Book Reviews

Lowry's Handbook of Right-to-Know Emergency Planning, by G.G. Lowry and R.C. Lowry, Lewis Publishers, Chelsea, MI, 1988, ISBN 0-87371-112-2, 421 pp., \$ 85.00.

On November 25, 1983, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) promulgated a new Hazard Communication Standard whose purpose they stated as thus: 'ensure that the hazards of all chemicals produced or imported by chemical manufacturers or importers are evaluated and the information concerning these hazards is transmitted to affected employees and employees within the manufacturing sector'.

So much for those inside the plant. To protect those people living or working nearby a chemical plant the U.S. Congress enacted the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act, Title III, a part, but really a distinct part, of the Superfund Amendments Reauthorization Act (SARA). President Reagan signed the bill into law on October 17, 1986. Its purpose in part is to:

'encourage and support emergency planning efforts at the state and local levels and provide the public and local governments with information concerning potential chemical hazards presented in their community.'

Many regulated firms are understandably uneasy about how to comply with these laws: they are new; they are complex; some parts are ambiguous; and they involve workers (and the union) and the public in addition to the government. To assist these companies, the authors, one chemist the other an attorney, wrote this book.

In Part A, of the book (the first three chapters) the authors provide an overview of the basics of the major elements of the law. The chapter titles are:

- The need to know
- Hazard communication standard
- The Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act

In Part B (the next five chapters), the authors provide specific information for those affected directly by the laws – chemical manufacturers and distributors – and other firms using hazardous materials, and also contain advice on local emergency planning. Chapter titles are:

- Identification and characterization of hazardous chemicals
- Written forms of hazard information
- Keeping records and filing reports
- Preventive measures in the work place

- Emergency planning and preparedness

In Part C (the next four chapters), the authors deal with the legal relationship between the various affected parties and the Right-to-Know laws and other federal and state laws and several related matters whose outcome is yet to be decided. The chapters are entitled:

- Trade secrets
- Related laws
- Making the 'Right-to-Know' a reality
- Experiences and consequences

The remainder of the book (actually more than half of it) is devoted to the following appendices:

- Glossary
- Sources of Information
- Legal authorities (texts of standards and law)
- Regulated material (list)
- Pertinent federal forms
- Lethal dose equivalencies
- Generic written hazard communication program

It is rare, as I have said in previous reviews, that I read a book totally from cover to cover; but on occasion because of my personal interest and/or the quality of the book I do. This book is a case in point. As Vice-Chairman of our county emergency planning committee, I am totally involved in the topic covered by the book, and reasonably well versed in the policies, procedures and problems of emergency planning. Consequently I read the material with a critical perspective – but found little if anything to criticize. The book is well written and full of excellent practical information (including a clear recognition of the problems for local planning committees, industry workers and the public). I recommend the book enthusiastically to industry environmental engineers and safety officers involved in hazardous materials planning.

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Metal-Bearing Waste Streams: Minimizing, Recycling and Treatment, by M. Meltzer, M. Callahan, T. Jenson. State of California Department of Health Services and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, published by Noyes Data Corp., Park Ridge, NJ, 1990, ISBN 0-8155-1260-0, 406 pp., \$ 58.00

This book is the combination of two State of California reports:

- Reducing California's Metal Bearing Waste Stream
- Metal Waste Management Alternatives – Minimizing, Recycling, and Treating Metal Wastes

The first report discussed management of metal-bearing wastes, first under