

*Environmental Law Handbook*, by J.G. Arbuckle, M.E. Bosco, D.R. Case, E.P. Laws, J.C. Martin, M.L. Miller, R.D. Moran, R.V. Randle, D.M. Steinway, R.G. Stoll, T.F.P. Sullivan, T.A. Vanderver and P.A.J. Wilson, Government Institutes, Rockville, MD, 1991, 11th edn., ISBN 0-86587-250-3, 670 pp., \$ 65.00.

The author list for the book reads like the letterhead of a major law firm and deservedly so given the broad scope of the topic. First published in 1971, this excellent book has become the standard reference for engineers, scientists and environmentalists, and probably attorneys also, although I cannot speak for them. Because environmental laws have multiplied and changed so rapidly in the United States, Government Institutes has produced a new version of this Handbook approximately every two years.

Although written by lawyers, I found the language understandable as a layman, and to introduce the non-attorney to the book, Sullivan and Arbuckle (names I recognize from prior editions) discuss the fundamentals of the law in general in Chapter 1. This was the chapter I enjoyed and learned the most from in the first edition of the book I reviewed, and the one chapter I always read in subsequent editions to refresh myself on these fundamentals.

The second chapter is on Enforcement and Liabilities. These are increasingly important topics as it is common today to read about criminal prosecution and assignment of jail terms to environmental lawbreakers. The chapter begins thus: 'Enforcement, and to an increasing degree criminal prosecution of responsible corporate officials, is the environmental issue cutting across almost all environmental programs' and later, 'Environmental Enforcement is also popular politically. The public perception of companies violating hazardous waste or toxic pollution rules is only slightly more favorable than the public perception of cocaine dealers and child molesters'. Give that state of the nation, those industrial managers dealing with environmental issues cannot afford, for their own welfare, to violate the law or even to be ignorant of it. On top of jail terms for transgressing officials, the corporation faces fines that could well exceed \$ 1 million. This amount does not have an inconsequential impact on corporate profits.

As I said in the beginning of the review, the *Environmental Law Handbook* has many authors—and they are needed because the US environmental laws are numerous and complex. Fortunately, or maybe unfortunately, only federal laws were covered in this book; the companion law from each state would take another book (one for each state). The remaining chapters cover the following topics (really each chapter deals with one really major environmental law):

- Water pollution control
- Safe Drinking Water Act
- Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act
- National Environmental Policy Act

- Toxic Substances Control Act
- Federal regulation of pesticides
- Occupational Safety and Health Act
- Asbestos
- Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
- Underground storage tanks
- Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act
- Air pollution control

The flyer accompanying the book notes that the pace of changes in environmental law has not lessened in the recent past. Major overhauls in the Clean Air Act new and stiffer OSHA regulations, the new Oil Pollution Act and Increased Enforcement of the Right-to-Know laws are testament to that statement. And this book helps considerably in keeping up with changes in those laws—or checking details of older ones.

I strongly recommend the book's purchase (and at least every other new edition) by those engineers in industrial environmental control or governmental regulatory agencies. Nowhere else are all the laws covered so clearly and so well.

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