

Book Reviews

Siting Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Facilities, by Mary R. English, Auburn House, Greenwood Publishing Group Inc., Westport, CT, 1992, ISBN No. 0-89930-560-1, pp. 304, US \$49.95.

Siting dilemmas, like other public policy dilemmas, are permeated with questions of values. Drawing upon a large body of material collected over several years of formal and informal research, Mary R. English explores how values on issues concerning authority, trust, risk, and justice have affected implementation of the 1980 Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Act (LLWPA). According to the LLWPA and the 1985 Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendment Act (LLWPAA) in January 1993, Nevada, Washington, and South Carolina will no longer be the primary waste disposal sites for the U.S. The acts encourage states to unite regionally, to form compacts, and to select states to host new, permanent disposal facilities. Mary R. English discusses conflicts and questions surrounding three commonly used siting approaches: (1) the "best site" approach; (2) the "fair play" approach; and (3) the "volunteerism/incentives" approach.

By examining the central issues underlying the dilemma of siting low-level radioactive waste (LLW) disposal facilities, reviewing current decision-making methodologies, and citing examples of recent siting efforts, Mary R. English vividly illustrates the problems and possibilities individual states face in choosing disposal sites for their LLW. Her questions range from very broad philosophical, political, and sociological issues related to *fairness*, and the *quest for legitimacy*, to specific community concerns, including responsibility, health risks, and socioeconomic and environmental impacts of LLW disposal. In fact, the most crucial challenge in the siting dilemma (the primary focus of this volume), is establishing community confidence in authority to secure appropriate sites for permanent facilities. Ultimately, risk management is the focus of this challenge. Community inquiry may become public opposition unless qualitative measures are taken in the initial stages of the siting process to (1) promote effective *risk communication*; (2) to minimize the *need* for trust; and (3) to determine and strengthen authority. If these measures fail, justice, as a viable route to the durable legitimacy of a public policy, becomes the obvious recourse for achieving long-term mission success. While Mary R. English cannot specifically define *justice*, she suggests that regardless of the siting approach used, the claims of society as a whole are often incompatible, and one interest [authority/individual] may be satisfied at the expense of another.

Mary R. English's intent is not to offer a solution to the siting dilemma, but rather to provide background information; to determine when siting *becomes* a dilemma; to arouse awareness of the siting issues; and to suggest conflict resolution tools. She magnanimously advocates scientific literacy in the public sector, and more effective communication efforts from the scientific community as priority goals in the LLW disposal facility siting dilemma. In addition, appendices include the complete LLWPA and the LLWPAA, and actual state siting programs.

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Hazardous Waste: Identification and Classification Manual, by T.P. Wagner, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York, NY, 1990, ISBN: 0-442-00399-4, 239 pp., \$39.95.

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and its amendments, have spawned the largest and most comprehensive (and sometimes incomprehensible) set of regulations of any U.S. environmental law. The book was written to assist environmental specialists in identifying and classifying hazardous materials in accordance with the stringent provisions of RCRA and the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act (HMTA). Indeed, a useful book it is for clearly waste classification is the first step in the disposal process. To err is dangerous, for if the waste escapes the hazardous materials stream, one risks U.S. EPA prosecution; alternately, if one disposes nonhazardous waste, as a hazardous waste, one is wasting money — much money.

Chapter 1 (Introduction), discusses the historical background of waste generation. It includes a brief discussion of RCRA, HMTA and the emerging area of medical wastes.

The book's agenda really begins with a short (actually all chapters are quite short) Chapter 2 (Hazardous Waste Identification/Classification Process). Next comes a discussion of the definition of solid waste (Chapter 3), which may be a liquid under RCRA's provisions.

However, there are exceptions that allow waste to escape from the system. Chapter 4 discusses exemptions or exclusions including domestic sewage, industrial point source discharges, irrigation return flows, radioactive wastes, in-situ mining wastes, pulping liquors, spent sulfuric acid, secondary material returned to original process, household waste, agricultural waste, mining overburden, discarded wood products, chromium waste, underground storage tanks cleanup waste (petroleum-contaminates), etc. Also discussed are special categories of waste the Congress told the U.S. EPA to study, i.e. cement kiln dust and utility waste. Finally eight special categories of hazardous waste (such as treatability samples) are discussed.

Chapter 5 discusses those wastes the U.S. EPA has specifically listed as hazardous. If "listed", a waste is designated as "hazardous" regardless