

Book Reviews

Site Selection for New Hazardous Waste Management Facilities, by William M. Sloan, Finland: WHO Regional Publications, 1993, 118 pp., \$18.90.

This book describes the process of selecting sites for new hazardous waste management facilities. It considers site selection from the scientific, engineering, and social perspectives. The purpose of the guide is two-fold: to outline essential considerations in facility siting and to describe model processes to promote understanding of site selection in the public and the political sector. The guide outlines essential planning and management strategies geared for use in governments, industries, environmental and public interest groups, as well as the general public.

The book begins by stating its purpose and general approach in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 discusses the need for hazardous waste facilities and preferred measures for waste management. Sloan outlines the top three priorities of dealing with hazardous waste: (1) limit uncontrolled discharges, (2) the use of a four-tier system of waste management procedures; reduce the amount of waste produced, recycle waste, treat it or secure it, (3) use of new technologies to treat and contain waste.

Chapter 3 is an overview of the siting process. The author describes two general frameworks for site-selection: the voluntary and the technical model. In selection of a site for hazardous waste management, the book strongly advocates a voluntary process on the part of the community. This process seeks public backing and approval for the site in question. The voluntary process involves three points: (1) equity — people should participate in matters that will affect them, (2) economic efficiency, (3) success — with effective public participation compromise can be reached. The public must understand the need for the facility, as well as how it will operate. The technical model uses screening and exclusionary criteria to select a site. Successive investigations of sites in increasing detail are then used to narrow the choices.

Chapters 4 and 5 discuss matters which directly relate to community life. Chapter 4 offers a health and environmental risk assessment, discussing pathways through which emissions from a facility can affect the environment and the health of the people in the environment. Chapter 5 discusses the social and economic assessment. After explaining the theories proposed, the book reviews examples of how the processes discussed have been used to successfully select new hazardous waste management sites.

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