



Book reviews

Handbook of Pollution and Hazardous Materials Compliance: A Sourcebook for Environmental Managers, Nicholas P. Cheremisinoff and Madelyn Graffia, Marcel Dekker, New York, NY, 1996, 506 pp., ISBN: 0-8247-9704-3

The importance of the information in this text is best illustrated by the introductory paragraph in the very last chapter of the book which reads as follows: “Today’s environmental manager must maneuver through 12 major arenas of environmental compliance. Without comprehension of each of these arenas, one can never hope to achieve compliance. Much of the available information about compliance is unfortunately written in either legal or highly technical terminology, making it difficult for straight business managers to comprehend. For this reason, corporations and their facilities require specialists who can read, understand, and relate their company’s operations to the legal boundary conditions established by the federal programs.”

To assist in this complex task, the book was written as a guide for the environmental health and safety manager—an increasingly common person who undertakes both tasks as companies combine, in one job, these two important tasks—a relevant combination because “...of direct as well as subtle interrelations between the environmental statutes and OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Act) regulations. This is particularly true when implementing RCRA, CERCLA/SARA, or even TSCA, since specific OSHA safety standards are applicable.”

The book is (generally) well-written: it is understandable and descriptive of the major USA environmental laws—written from a non-lawyer perspective. Combined with the more legalistically written *Environmental Law Handbook*, it would be a powerful tool for the industrial manager.

The book has ten chapters, the first eight of which cover impact of environmental (USA) laws:

1. The Hazard Communication Act
2. The Occupational Safety and Health Act [OSHA]: Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response
3. The Clean Air Act
4. The Clean Water Act
5. The Safe Drinking water Act
6. The Comprehensive Environmental Responsibility, Compensation, and Liability Act [CERCLA]

7. The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act [SARA]

8. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act [RCRA].

What I liked about his book was the non-legal description of each law—especially the descriptive preamble to each chapter that contained (historical) background information. What I did not like was the lack of substantial references (and some overlap between chapters as though they were written by the two different authors but not cross-checked). For example, in Chapter 7, as SARA (The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act) the writer discusses CERCLA in his/her introduction material that really belonged in the previous chapter. And the author did not verify (by literature reference) the following statement regarding the Love Canal, ‘‘Extremely high birth defect and miscarriage rates developed along with liver cancer and nervous disorder diseases.’’ That is a new claim to me, especially the use of the word ‘extremely.’ I have not seen other ‘scientific’ articles discussing that ‘extreme’ view. Indeed, the lack of scientific (literature) references would be my main criticism of the book.

The last two chapters provide (1) an overview of technical requirements for managing facilities and issues associated with facility and property transfers and (2) overall management skills and concepts for multimedia facilities.

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Water Wells: Implementation, Maintenance and Restoration, Michel Detay, John Wiley and Sons, New York, NY, US\$64.95, 1997, 379 pp., ISBN: 0-471-96695-9

In the USA, approximately one-half of all water supplies are withdrawn from the ground. Clearly, water wells are the topic of this book and inspection, maintenance and restoration are very important in this country as well as in others.

The book was written to provide water well operators with the necessary basic information for managing groundwater reservoirs while also facilitating the understanding of hydrogeological mechanisms in time and space.

The approach taken by the author was ‘deliberately oriented towards data acquisition methods as well as the processing and synthesis of hydraulic data. It is applied to the solving of real problems encountered in the operation of water wells’.

The author had the following objectives when writing the book:

- To present the basic concepts of water well management;
- To help provide the technical knowledge indispensable; for understanding the phenomena involved
- To equip the reader with the vocabulary used by groundwater operators;
- To bring about an awareness and prediction of potential difficulties, identifying and ranking problems so as to be able to react purposefully;
- To contribute to an appreciation of the magnitude of the problem;
- To promote the use of tools for managing water resources.