

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In the USA, approximately one-half of all water supplies are withdrawn from the ground.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.

The above goals are, in my opinion, met very well by the book's nine chapters (titles follow):

1. Basic Concepts of Hydrogeology
2. Well Design and Construction
3. Well Hydraulics
4. Supervision and Final Acceptance Tests
5. Water Well Protection
6. Water Well Management
7. Restoration of Water Wells
8. Management Tools
9. Conclusion

The book ends with (1) an extensive bibliography, (2) short appendices (conversion tables) and (3) a glossary.

What was missing, however, from my perspective was a discussion for the potential for man-made chemical contamination, especially organics, but, given the emphasis on supply, that is not surprising.

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*Chemical Exposures: Low Levels and High Stakes, 2nd Edition*, Nicholas A. Ashford and Claudia S. Miller, Van Nostrand Reinhold/Wiley, New York, NY, \$39.95, 1998, 440 pp., ISBN: 0-471-292400.

Readers of the Journal, I am sure, are aware of the consequences of exposure to moderate (workplace) and high (excursion events) concentrations of toxic (hazardous) chemicals. But few of us (especially myself) have read much about the impact (real or imagined) of low levels of chemicals. To correct the lack of knowledge (concern), the authors wrote the book, the first edition of which was a 1990 report from the New Jersey Department of Health, which received the prestigious Macedo Award of the American Association for World Health (representing the World Health Organization) for the most outstanding contribution to public health funded by a state health department.

The controversy is—are the effects of low level chemicals on human beings real or imagined? Based on interviews of individuals in various medical disciplines, including allergy, clinical ecology and occupational medicine, the authors concluded that there was “scientific and clinical evidence to support plausible hypotheses concerning the disorders.”

The authors later state: “Much, but by no means all, anecdotal evidence for chemical sensitivities has been reported by clinical ecologists—physician practitioners whose clinical practices have come under intense criticism. However, chemical sensitivity is by no means the exclusive property of clinical ecology. The fields of occupational and environmental medicine contain sufficient examples to suggest a real medical problem. Our focus was on the problem of chemical sensitivity, not on the history of interprofessional conflicts surrounding clinical ecology.”