

Geoff Taylor, Kellie Easter, Roy Hegney, Enhancing Occupational Safety and Health, Elsevier Butterworth/Heinemann, Oxford, UK, 2004, US\$ 49.95, 617 pp., ISBN 0-7506-6197-6.

This book is advertised as a “comprehensive guide to occupational safety and health” and one that covers both technical and human factors in all areas of health and safety management. The authors state that their goal in writing this book was to develop a practical guide that would be useful both to students and practitioners. Indeed, they have.

This well-written, easy to read book contains the following 14 chapters:

- current concepts in work safety and health;
- safety management;
- common and statute law;
- hazard and risk management;
- workplace inspections;
- accident prevention;
- risk engineering;
- health at work;
- hazardous substance management;
- work environment;
- ergonomics;
- workers’ compensation and rehabilitation;
- health and safety training;
- health and safety management, systems.

Each chapter begins with a workplace example, which is an interesting way of leading the reader into the topic that follows. Next comes the “text” of the chapter, which is resplendent with appropriate headings that are used to highlight the topic and break the chapter into readable sections. At the end of each chapter is the customary reference section followed by an activity section, i.e., suggested student assignments.

Not surprisingly, Chapter 9 entitled “Hazardous substance management” caught my interest. The authors focus on the “human impact” of hazardous chemicals/hazardous wastes as opposed to environmental impact. The chapter begins with a short review of the chemistry of hazardous chemicals including the inclusion of the periodic table. It continues with a short discussion of hazardous chemical classes (i.e., flammable, reactive, corrosive, etc.), labeling (UN I.D. numbers), storage, transport, and UK hazardous chemical codes (these codes transmit information on how to handle spills and fires). As much as I would like a longer discussion of this topic, the authors have written a chapter that, while not exhaustive, does satisfactorily cover the topic.

While the authors have written from the Australian perspective, they do discuss safety legislation in other countries such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in the United States and the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety. The focus of the book is really not on legislation. It is more on procedures for preventing accidents.

As I noted before, the book is well-written, easy to read and appears to have comprehensive though not exhaustive coverage of the topic.

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