

## Book reviews

**Essential BAT Value Documentations from the MAK-Collection for Occupational Health and Safety, H. Drexler, H. Greim (Eds.). Wiley-VCH Verlag GmbH & Co. KgaA, Weinheim, Germany (2006). 365 pp., US\$ 125.00, ISBN: 3-527-31477-6**

The purpose of the MAK-Collection is to provide "...comprehensive and authoritative information for occupational health and safety professionals and researchers." This volume contains relevant data on the following substances: acetone, alkali chromates, analine, arsenic and inorganic arsenic compounds, arsenic trioxide, benzene, 2-butanone, 2-butoxyethanol, cobalt, cresols, cyclohexane, 4,4-diaminodiphenylmethane, dimethyl sulfate, ethylene oxide, hydrogen fluoride and inorganic fluorine compounds, lead and its compounds, methanol, nickel and sparingly soluble nickel compounds, 2-propanol, styrene, tetrachloroethene, vinyl chloride and xylenes.

To illustrate the coverage provided, I have listed below the section titles for the Benzene chapter: (1) Metabolism and Kinetics, (2) Critical Toxicity, (3) Exposure and Effects, (4) Selection of the Indicators, (5) Methodology, (6) Background Exposures, (7) Evaluation of EKA Values, (8) Interpretation of the Data and (9) References.

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**Essential MAK Value Documentations from the MAK-collection for Occupational Health and Safety, H. Greim (Ed.). Wiley-VCH Verlag GmbH & Co. KgaA, Weinheim, Germany (2006). 497 pp., US\$ 125.00, ISBN: 3-527-31394-x**

The MAK-collection of books is published to provide "... comprehensive and authoritative information for occupational health and safety professionals and researchers". For this edition, the editor chose 17 of the "... most important occupational

toxicants". The book provides "... an authoritative review of the available toxicological studies and data. For every substance, toxic effects, mechanisms and modes of action, toxicogenetics and metabolism, effects in man and animals are described. The carcinogenic, germ-cell mutagenic, sensitizing or skin-resorptive effects as well as their toxicity to the reproductive system are evaluated. Basic physico-chemical data are provided as well".

Data are provided for the following substances: alpha-amylase, arsenic and its inorganic compounds, 2-butoxyethanol, carbon disulfide, cereal flour dust, chloroform, 1,4-dioxane, dust, ethanol, ethylene oxide, formaldehyde, germ-cell mutagens, hexachlorobenzene, ozone, passive smoking, styrene and tetrachloroethylene.

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**Emergency Response Planning for Corporate and Municipal Managers, P.A. Erickson, 2nd ed., Elsevier/Butterworth-Heinemann, Burlington, MA (2006). (428 pp., US\$ 69.95, ISBN: 0-12-370503-7)**

As I reviewed this book, Canadian security officials announced the arrests of numerous potential terrorists who acquired ammonium nitrate with the intention (the charges say) to explode it at some major site. Not that this topic needs more emphasis than is stated in the accompanying flyer that notes: "Natural and man-made disasters and emergencies affect millions of people each year." Notably discussed are the attack on the World Trade Center as well as major natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The author clearly outlines the need for this book in his preface:

"Effective emergency response planning, whether for incidents that derive from natural causes or for those that derive

from human actions, demands both persistent and consistent liaison and coordination among a large diversity of governmental agencies, response services, and community support resources.”

Having been involved in emergency planning for chemical incidents, I can fully appreciate the need for a comprehensive preplan for chemical and natural emergencies, as well as for other incidents such as terrorist plots, etc.

Erickson begins the text with the following statement:

“Emergency response is an integral component of routine corporate and municipal management that, while directly influenced by diverse and long standing regulations at all levels of government, is also influenced by nonregulatory considerations that predate the infamous terrorist attacks of more recent history, including (a) obligations imposed by corporate insurance policies, (b) corporate and municipal stakeholder concerns over tort liability, and (c) the demands of both *ad hoc* and formal in-plant safety committees engendered by both regulatory and societal concerns over workplace health and safety. Overt and spectacular terrorists acts throughout the world over the past several decades, of course, have given particular public impetus to the importance of both emergency planning and emergency management practices.”

Erickson goes on to note:

“At the municipal level, emergency response planning and management, accordingly, have become increasingly complex tasks that, despite a long and distinguished historical development, are continually compounded by social, technical, and political developments including (a) jurisdictional confusion among federal, regional, state, county, and municipal authorities; (b) the economic burden of maintaining adequately staffed, trained, and provisioned emergency response teams; (c) the sheer structural and operational complexity of modern municipalities; (d) the proliferation of sources and agents of potential public hazard; and most recently; (e) the widespread anxiety regarding the terrorist acts of politically (or otherwise) motivated groups and individuals.”

A well-conceived response plan is absolutely necessary to protect public health and the environment. This book is a good guide to that planning process; no, it is more than that. It is an excellent guide to planners. To this end, the author has written the following chapters:

1. Scope of emergency response.
2. Essential of holistic planning and management.
3. The emergency response plan.
4. Physical and chemical hazards.
5. Biohazards.
6. Medical surveillance.
7. Personal protective clothing and equipment.
8. Hazard and risk reduction strategies.
9. Decontamination.
10. Data information management.
11. Monitoring strategies and devices.
12. Terrorism.
13. Personnel training.

I was impressed by Erickson’s guides to US federal regulations. Even though I have a fairly good knowledge of the US law related to this topic, I have never seen it so comprehensively covered in one publication. Federal guidelines and regulations of the following agencies were discussed: FEMA, NIOSH, USCG, USEPA, OSHA, US Fire Administration, and the National Response Team. The author includes numerous tables and charts making the presentation informative and easy to follow.

However, aside from referring to the US government agencies noted above, there are no other literature references to companion material.

An excellent feature of the book, in my opinion, was the chapter ending segments. Each chapter was followed by: (1) true or false questions; (2) multiple choice questions; (3) essay topics; (4) case study assignments.

A minor criticism is that there were no references to the published literature outside of the government. I am sure that the inclusion of some of this literature would be useful.

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