

EDITORIAL

Materials processors, often referred to as the “smokestack” industries, and the electrical power industry, are key elements in commercial and industrial development. Combined with the ubiquitous automobile, they have driven the evolution of modern civilization. All along, it’s appeared to be a free ride. Now, we realize the price we’re paying for decades of unregulated industrialization—closed foundries, cold smokestacks casting prophetic shadows over “soup” ponds congealing beside empty employee parking lots, long unemployment lines...

Having been in Finland for several months now, I’ve been enlightened. Throughout Scandinavia, industry is demonstrating that materials processing plants can be compatible with a clean environment, that clean steel/clean air is not a paradox. Still however, in contrast, I’ve also seen the effects of unregulated policies and unenforced controls continuing, particularly in Eastern Europe.

We know what’s needed to take corrective and preventive action: Data...*lots of it*—ample specific chemical information to facilitate the design of materials processing plants with realistic operating lives. Data translates to regulations that support plant design, construction, and operation harmonious with the environment. Regulatory bureaus, such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, are now taking an active role in collecting, analyzing, and evaluating reliable chemical data. The data are critical to your work as a materials scientist/engineer. Where can you find it?

It is a primary responsibility of technical publications, such as the *Journal of Materials Engineering and Performance*, to report this data, along with its effective application in materials/process design, through refereed technical papers. *JMEP* does this, specifically, every issue. In addition, the feature “Materials and the Environment” is included to raise awareness that this topic cannot be ignored by the materials community.

“Materials and the Environment” has presented a look at materials, processes, and equipment of companies who have met the environmental challenge with products that do not affect the delicate balance of our ecosystems. In this issue, however, it makes a stronger statement by giving you the opportunity to acquire some hard data. On page 450 you’ll find it has a new look—literature citations from other publications that report significant information specific to environmental issues: data, standards, regulations, legislation, case studies of citations and litigation, notice of meetings/hearings, and who is—and is not—doing what and how, among other things.

The environment-related items reported in *JMEP* reflect ASM International’s commitment to the worldwide cleanup effort through gathering and publishing data that can result in the development of standards and regulations to ensure a clean, safe environment. What appears in this issue is only about two cents worth of your subscription price, but it just could be worth a fortune to you, in your effort to design for a healthier planet.



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John R. Ogren". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.

John R. Ogren
Editor