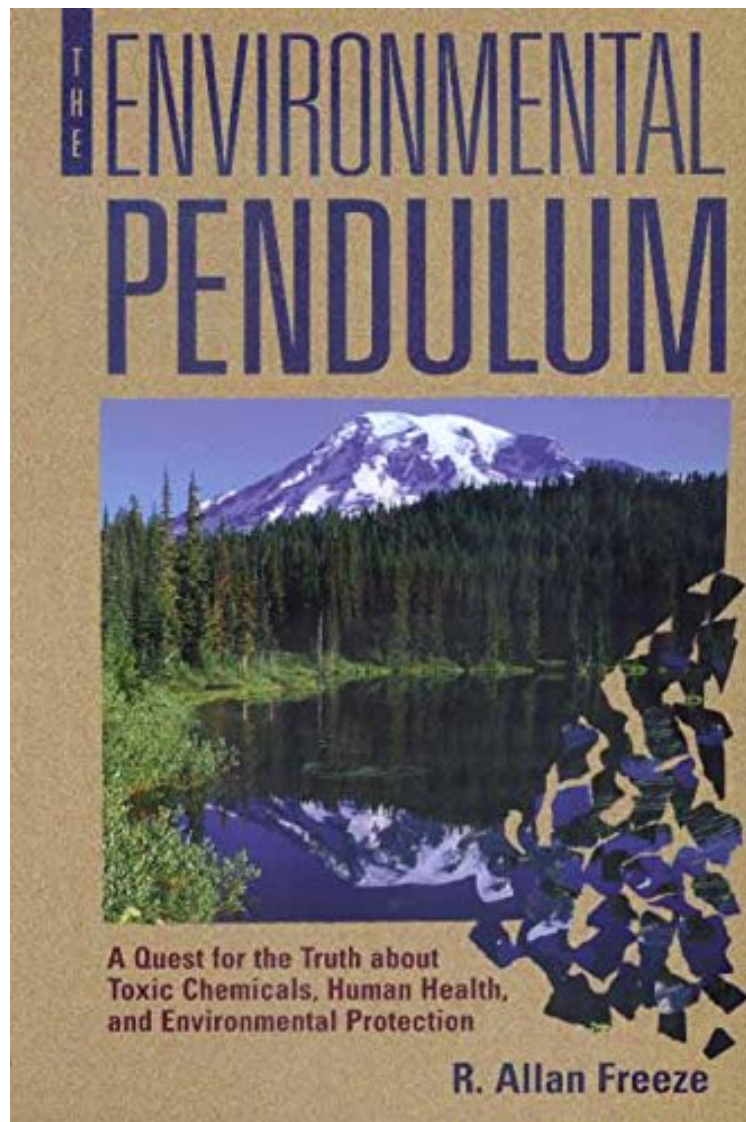


[Free read ebook] The Environmental Pendulum: A Quest for the Truth about Toxic Chemicals, Human Health, and Environmental Protection

The Environmental Pendulum: A Quest for the Truth about Toxic Chemicals, Human Health, and Environmental Protection

R. Allan Freeze

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R. Allan Freeze : The Environmental Pendulum: A Quest for the Truth about Toxic Chemicals, Human Health, and Environmental Protection before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Environmental Pendulum: A Quest for the Truth about Toxic Chemicals, Human Health, and Environmental Protection:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A balanced, practical, and insightful discussion about toxic waste and environmental regulation
By David C. Garen
This book is an excellent description of the environmental issues of toxic waste and the current status of dealing with it. Freeze has written a balanced and credible account based on his many years as a researcher and consultant. One quickly figures out that Freeze has "seen it all", and he offers not only examples from his vast experience but also his thoughtful suggestions for how to proceed in terms of priorities for cleanup as well as modifications to regulations. Freeze is a practical scientist and engineer who is serious about finding workable solutions, not pushing an ideology. I did find it a bit odd that Freeze, a Canadian, has written a very much US-centric book. Perhaps this was done to satisfy the publisher and the target audience. If you didn't know, you would think Freeze is an American, although he obviously has had a lot of professional experience in the US and knows US environmental regulations thoroughly. I also found the use of US customary units (feet, acres, miles, etc.) rather than metric units, as would be appropriate for a scientist and a Canadian, to detract somewhat from what otherwise would be a more scientifically and internationally appropriate exposition. I suppose this was another concession to the US audience. At any rate, this is just a little pet peeve of mine, that Americans can't seem to join the rest of the world and use the metric system. I really appreciated Freeze's comments about how more progress could be made via a cooperative, rather than adversarial, approach. This point came out with regard to the behavior of environmental groups, industry, and the courts. Regarding the latter, I found Chapter 7, The Environmental Game, to be sobering as Freeze explains the difference between a scientist's approach (tell the whole truth, give the full picture) versus an attorney's approach (tell only the part of the story that supports the client's case). No wonder scientists are leery of participating in legal suits. Freeze offers many useful suggestions and ends the book with Chapter 8, Solutions, in which he summarizes the many points he makes throughout the book to deal with issues he has encountered in his experience. This book is very readable, with all technical terms and concepts well defined. He nicely summarizes the main points at the end of each chapter by giving a bullet list. I am impressed with Freeze's balanced, practical, objective presentation. I would recommend this book not only as a thorough discussion of toxic waste but also as a good model for approaching any environmental issue.

The pendulum of environmental policy swings from one extreme to the other, depending on which camp is in power and who has the ear of the media. Underkill is followed by overkill. Concern breeds action; disillusion breeds reaction. The Environmental Pendulum provides a thoughtful and evenhanded assessment of this conflict. Tens of thousands of sites across the country are contaminated with toxic chemicals. Environmentalists warn us that this legacy of carelessness is seriously affecting both human health and the ecological balance of nature. They point out that even improved industrial practices will not eliminate future chemical releases to the environment. Their demand for regulatory control has received wide public support and led to the passage of the Superfund legislation in 1980. Now, after twenty years, the value of the Superfund program is being challenged by corporate America, which argues that excessive cleanup costs have the potential to bankrupt the nation. R. Allan Freeze outlines the difficulties associated with the management of hazardous waste and offers a balanced account of the controversy over the role of environmental contamination in human health. Freeze clarifies what matters and what doesn't with respect to chemical contaminants in the environment, arguing that environmental policies should be based on an accurate appraisal of the risks associated with these toxins. He concludes the book with a brilliant summation of the good news and the bad news of environmental pollution, describing what can and can't be done to bring the situation under control.

From the Inside Flap
"The Environmental Pendulum provides a needed overview of the last 25 years of hazardous waste management. The approach is even-handed and readable for health professionals, engineers, and the public."
—James R. Hunt, Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering, University of California, Berkeley
"Technology has presented humankind with many dilemmas, but none is more challenging than pollution of the environment by toxic chemicals, the subject of The Environmental Pendulum. The potential impact on humans is high, ranging through toxicity, cancer, developmental birth defects, and mutation of eggs and sperm. Every attempt is made to draw the reader, whether professional or lay person, into the dilemma. And this is as it must be, for the dilemma will not disappear. The Environmental Pendulum will provide just the kind of balanced information that every thinking citizen needs to make the tough decisions needed right now and in the future."
—Anthony J. F. Griffiths, Professor of Botany, University of British Columbia