

Table 8.3 A Checklist of Toxic Substances and Hazardous Waste Issues in a Development Review

1. Is the proposed development likely to involve the use, manufacture, storage, or disposal of toxic substances or hazardous waste?
2. If so, what types of toxic substances or hazardous waste are involved, stored, or disposed of on the site?
3. Are there any known or suspected contamination problems on the site?
4. Are there any known or suspected contamination problems in the area?
5. Where are public water supplies located in relation to the site?
6. How does the site fit with community hazard and emergency response plans?
7. Has the developer obtained any necessary state and federal permits?
8. If a residential development or commercial eating establishment is proposed near a known hazardous waste landfill or industry that uses hazardous materials, will public water be provided?

involve the use, storage, or disposal of toxic chemicals should be kept away from drinking water supplies and wellhead protection areas (see Chapter 5). Once a project that involves the use, manufacture, or disposal of toxic substances is approved, planners should make sure that the owners of the business comply with the toxic release reporting requirements of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act.

Summary

Toxic substances present major problems for public health. The federal RCRA requires cradle-to-grave tracking of the manufacture, use, and disposal of toxic substances. Through the toxics release inventory, businesses that release toxic substances must report their annual emissions, discharges, and disposal of toxic substances to the U.S. EPA. The Community-Right-to-Know Act requires businesses that use, dispose of,

or manufacture toxic substances to make their activities known to local governments. The federal Superfund law was enacted to create a process for cleaning up the nation's worst hazardous waste sites. Brownfields are contaminated sites that require an assessment of the contamination before remediation can begin. Brownfields redevelopment is an important component of urban revitalization and the adaptive reuse of former industrial sites. The liability issues with brownfields cleanup have been resolved through voluntary agreements between states and developers and the federal Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act.

Notes

1. Carson, R. "Silent Spring," in D. Ravitch, ed., *The American Reader: Words That Moved a Nation*. New York: HarperCollins, 1990, p. 323.