

The past 30 years have seen the emergence of a growing desire worldwide to take positive actions to restore and protect the environment from the degrading effects of all forms of pollution: air, noise, solid waste, and water. Because pollution is a direct or indirect consequence of waste, the seemingly idealistic demand for “zero discharge” can be construed as an unrealistic demand for zero waste. However, as long as waste exists, we can only attempt to abate the subsequent pollution by converting it to a less noxious form. Three major questions usually arise when a particular type of pollution has been identified: (1) How serious is the pollution? (2) Is the technology to abate it available? and (3) Do the costs of abatement justify the degree of abatement achieved? The principal intention of the *Handbook of Environmental Engineering* series is to help readers formulate answers to the last two questions.

The traditional approach of applying tried-and-true solutions to specific pollution problems has been a major contributing factor to the success of environmental engineering, and has accounted in large measure for the establishment of a “methodology of pollution control.” However, realization of the ever-increasing complexity and interrelated nature of current environmental problems makes it imperative that intelligent planning of pollution abatement systems be undertaken. Prerequisite to such planning is an understanding of the performance, potential, and limitations of the various methods of pollution abatement available for environmental engineering. In this series of handbooks, we will review at a tutorial level a broad spectrum of engineering systems (processes, operations, and methods) currently being utilized, or of potential utility, for pollution abatement. We believe that the unified interdisciplinary approach in these handbooks is a logical step in the evolution of environmental engineering.

The treatment of the various engineering systems presented in *Physicochemical Treatment Process* shows how an engineering formulation of the subject flows naturally from the fundamental principles and theories of chemistry, physics, and mathematics. This emphasis on fundamental science recognizes that engineering practice has in recent years become more firmly based on scientific principles rather than its earlier dependency on empirical accumulation of facts. It is not intended, though, to neglect empiricism when such data lead quickly to the most economic design; certain engineering systems are not readily amenable to fundamental scientific analysis, and in these instances we have resorted to less science in favor of more art and empiricism.

Because an environmental engineer must understand science within the context of application, we first present the development of the scientific basis of a particular subject, followed by exposition of the pertinent design concepts and operations, and detailed explanations of their applications to environmental quality control or improvement. Throughout this series, methods of practical design calculation are illustrated by numerical examples. These examples clearly demonstrate how organized, analytical reasoning leads to the most direct and clear solutions. Wherever possible, pertinent cost data have been provided.

Our treatment of pollution-abatement engineering is offered in the belief that the trained engineer should more firmly understand fundamental principles, be more aware of the similarities and/or differences among many of the engineering systems, and exhibit greater flexibility and originality in the definition and innovative solution of environmental pollution problems. In short, environmental engineers should by conviction and practice be more readily adaptable to change and progress.

Coverage of the unusually broad field of environmental engineering has demanded an expertise that could only be provided through multiple authorships. Each author (or group of authors) was permitted to employ, within reasonable limits, the customary personal style in organizing and presenting a particular subject area, and, consequently, it has been difficult to treat all subject material in a homogeneous manner. Moreover, owing to limitations of space, some of the authors' favored topics could not be treated in great detail, and many less important topics had to be merely mentioned or commented on briefly. All of the authors have provided an excellent list of references at the end of each chapter for the benefit of the interested reader. Because each of the chapters is meant to be self-contained, some mild repetition among the various texts was unavoidable. In each case, all errors of omission or repetition are the responsibility of the editors and not the individual authors. With the current trend toward metrication, the question of using a consistent system of units has been a problem. Wherever possible the authors have used the British system along with the metric equivalent or vice versa. The authors sincerely hope that this doubled system of unit notation will prove helpful rather than disruptive to the readers.

The goals of the *Handbook of Environmental Engineering* series are: (1) to cover the entire range of environmental fields, including air and noise pollution control, solid waste processing and resource recovery, biological treatment processes, water resources, natural control processes, radioactive waste disposal, thermal pollution control, and physicochemical treatment processes; and (2) to employ a multithematic approach to environmental pollution control because air, water, land, and energy are all interrelated. The organization of the series is mainly based on the three basic forms in which pollutants and waste are manifested: gas, solid, and liquid. In addition, noise pollution control is included in one of the handbooks in the series.

This volume, *Physicochemical Treatment Processes*, has been designed to serve as a basic physicochemical treatment text as well as a comprehensive reference book. We hope and expect it will prove to be of high value to advanced undergraduate or graduate students, to designers of water and wastewater treatment systems, and to research workers. The editors welcome comments from readers in all these categories. It is our hope that this book will not only provide information on the physical, chemical, and mechanical treatment technologies, but will also serve as a basis for advanced study or specialized investigation of the theory and practice of the individual physicochemical systems covered.

The editors are pleased to acknowledge the encouragement and support received from their colleagues and the publisher during the conceptual stages of this endeavor. We wish to thank the contributing authors for their time and effort, and for having

patiently borne our reviews and numerous queries and comments. We are very grateful to our respective families for their patience and understanding during some rather trying times.

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