

BOOK REVIEW: RESOURCES KIT FOR HIA PRACTITIONERS: HIA FOR INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS

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The guidebook was published in October 2016 by Habitat Health Impact Consulting Corp with support from the Health Impact Project a collaboration with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Pew Charitable Trusts. The report is available from: <https://statc1.squarespace.com/static/56c532fe4b079eaf38b7ed0/t/581100b15016e1a017835aff/1477509340274/Resource+Kit+HIA+Industrial+Projects.pdf>

Context of resource guide:

The need for the resources guide was identified by having 19 million US workers employed on industrial projects and the work generating 20% of the US gross output in 2014. Only 19 HIAs with a focus on industrial projects have been published by 2016, indicating an area for potential expansion of HIA work.

Summary of content:

The resource guide begins by defining the terms of industrial projects and industrial facilities. For the guidebook an industrial project must have a contained facility in a physical location, experiences or will experience a life cycle of building, operation and decommissioning; and product generation.

A Project Information Checklist is discussed in the third section that provides the HIA practitioner with information they may want to gather during the various phases of the industrial project. This includes a complete project description, labor force information, traffic and transportation, noise, environmental interactions, community interaction and engagement of municipal services and reviewing other technical studies.

In section four, links to industrial project activities and nine potential effects on human health are presented. This includes land acquisition, air emissions, water quantity and quality, traffic and transportation, noise, workers and employment, taxes and royalties, community investment and accidents and malfunctions. The text does note that additional factors may link health to a specific industrial project, such as waste management or project security.

Section five in the guide provides background information

on Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) which identifies human exposure to chemical substances and how this concept compliments the purpose of HIAs. HHRA specifically looks at risk from three factors which are from a hazard, a receptor and a pathway perspectives.

Section six reviews the Environmental Impact Assessment practice in the United States since the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act in 1969 and its relationship to HIAs.

The last section provides a framework for organizing the health effects. The section diagrams the health links tied to the project components, determinants of health and health outcomes.

The Appendices list additional resources for industrial HIAs and provides information on previous industries focused HIAs.

Analysis and evaluation of the resource guide:

The Project Information Checklist and potential health factors noted in section three were especially useful. Questions to consider for the nine key health impacts are also well defined in section four.

Conclusion:

The Resource Kit for HIA Practitioners: HIA for Industrial Projects from Habitat Impact Consulting is a very useful tool for HIA practitioners that are new to working in this sector. The resource guidebook has specific checklists and suggested content to use, as well as links to additional resources and previous industries focused HIAs. I would recommend it for new and experienced HIA practitioners.

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