

Overview

During the past twelve years, the aquatic toxicology group (Subcommittee E47.01) of ASTM has sponsored an annual symposium for the major purpose of bringing together aquatic specialists from industry, government, and academe. The end result of these gatherings has been a debate on the merits of test development, animal and plant culture, nutrition and testing, and, last but not least, the lack of interagency harmony. The underlying intent of the 12th Symposium on Aquatic Toxicology and Hazard Assessment was to hold sessions devoted to updating all the various subfields of aquatic toxicology. Thus, the meeting began with a discussion of the benefits of interagency harmonization, which was largely devoted to the need for unity among the various regulatory bodies devoted to protecting the environment. Reviews of common modes of toxic action, target toxicant analysis, and field techniques offered a forum for discussion on advances that have occurred in these fields since the last deliberation on these topics some symposia ago. The problems associated with statistical interpretation of the results of microcosm testing occupied a full session. New approaches in sediment toxicity testing, the culturing and testing of new organisms, exclusively marine, and the never-ending association between nutrition and testing were brought up to date in several minisymposia. A session was devoted to quality assurance in ectotoxicity testing, which is represented in this symposium volume by a discussion of the New Jersey laboratory certification program. The symposium closed with a heavy attendance at a session on toxicity testing problems involving effluents.

These many minisymposia resulted in this volume, which records the events of this meeting in the form of 34 papers. An update of the diverse subfields of aquatic toxicology will serve as a summary useful to all aquatic specialists. It must be realized that the subjects these minisymposia covered are advancing quickly and, therefore, a review or update is advisable on an annual basis. This information is produced at such speed it would be difficult for one individual alone to be proficient in all areas. Thus, annual symposia of the present type serve a very useful purpose to aquatic specialists from industry, government, and academe by appraising them of the most recent advances in the many subfields of aquatic toxicology.

The symposium chairman is indebted to the minisymposia organizers and to their speakers, who made this symposium a success. The ASTM staff is gratefully acknowledged for their assistance in organizing this twelfth symposium and their efforts toward making its publication timely.

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