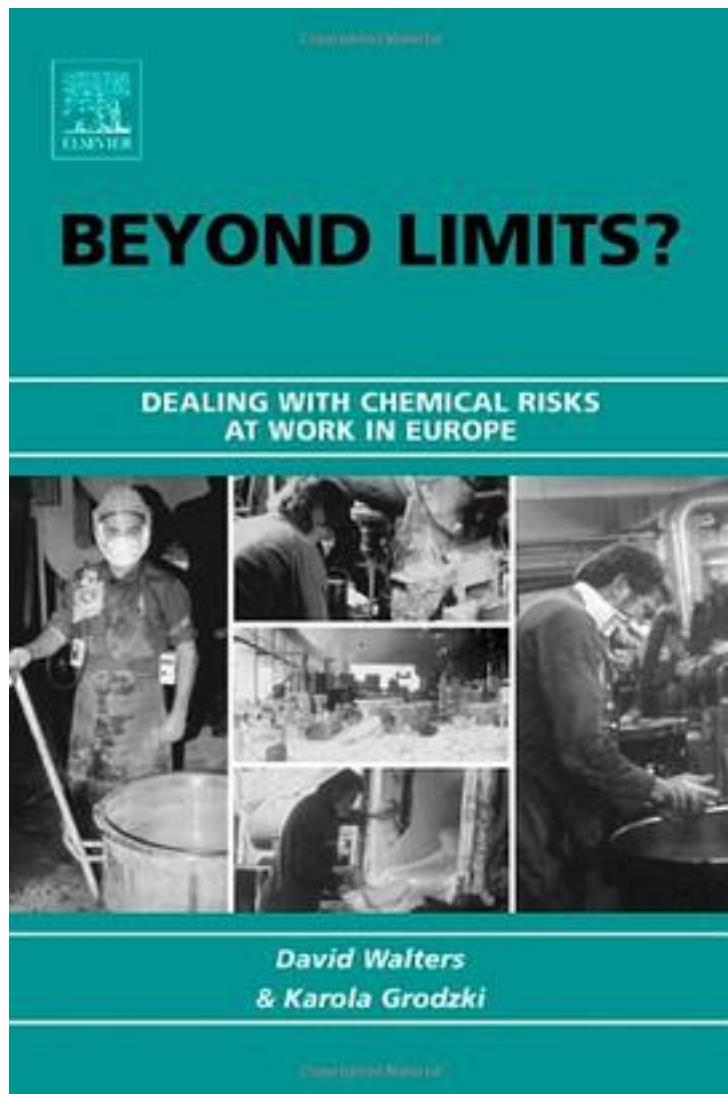


# Beyond Limits?



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著者:Walters, David/ Grodzki, Karola

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Nearly one third of all occupational diseases recognised annually in the EU are related to exposure to chemical substances and it is widely accepted that this represents only a small fraction of the full extent of harm caused by occupational exposure to hazardous substances. The European chemical industry is the largest in the world but it is by no means the only source of occupational exposure to chemical hazards, because chemical products are both used and are bi-products in many diverse forms of work. This book is a study of strategic approaches to managing the risks of working with hazardous substances in Europe. Its central theme concerns the widening gap between debates and developments at national and international levels concerning safety in the use of chemical substances at work in the European Union and practices within workplaces especially within the small and medium-sized workplaces that constitute the vast majority of establishments in which people work in Europe. It sets out to discover what drives informed and competent risk management in chemical health and safety and what role occupational exposure limits play in this process. The subject is particularly topical in the light of emerging strategies on chemical risks at EU level, the future impact of REACH and the significant changes that are occurring in legislative approaches to setting and using exposure limits at national levels in most EU countries. The continuing expansion of the Community to include a range of new member states, with chemical health and safety systems that are considerably less sophisticated than those presently found in northern European member states, makes the book especially timely. It deals with a subject that is a core concern of national and EU level policy makers, regulators, OHS practitioners, employers and trade unions alike. The Authors David Walters is TUC Professor of Work Environment at Cardiff University and formerly Professor of Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety at South Bank University. Karola Grodzki, at the time her research for this book was undertaken, was Research Fellow at the Centre for Industrial and Environmental Safety and Health, South Bank University. She is currently employed by the European Commission. The views expressed in the book are purely those of the author/writer and may not in any circumstances be regarded as stating the official position of the European Commission.

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