


**Speaker - Richard Cartwright**  
 Ambassador, Alliance of Hazardous Materials Professionals



**"Environmental Ethics: A Tragedy of the Commons Perspective"**

**Presentation Outline**

- Need for Environmental/Professional Ethics Training
- Relationship between Professionals & Society
- Tragedy of the Commons Perspective
- Need for Government Regulations
- Current Government Deregulation Uncertainty
- Bottom Line Summary & Review:  
 We Must Still Hold Ourselves to a Higher Standard!


Why do we need Environmental Ethics?



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F\\_rfh9zt5WU&t=42s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_rfh9zt5WU&t=42s)

**Ethics Violations**

- VOC Laboratory Hood Disposal
- Deepwell Injection Spills
- Incinerator Emission Sampling
- Incinerator Inventory Permit



What is the Alliance of Hazardous Materials Professionals?

- Business Networking-Social Club
- Education & Training Organization
- Professional Society



Professional Society Requires:

- High Certification Standards
- Dynamic, Responsive Membership
- Proactive Public Relations
- Professional Recognition Goals
- Public Service Outreach
- Code of Ethics





Codes of professional ethics are established by professional societies to help guide members in performing their job functions according to sound & consistent ethical principles

### Who are We?

- Demonstrated our education background & relevant work experience
- Passed rigorous & comprehensive exam:
  - 25% Laws and Regulations
  - 35% Science & Technology
  - 40% Management Principals & Practical Application
- Maintained our proficiency
  - Meet recertification requirements [document 17 CMPs (certification maintenance points) every 5 years]
  - Continuing education (at least 20 hours/per year)
- ***Uphold an enforced ethical code***



- Highest moral integrity from those responsible for handling & transporting dangerous goods
- Certificants required to practice in a manner:
  - consistent with all applicable laws & regulations
  - demonstrate integrity, honesty & fairness in all activities
  - strive for excellence in all matters of ethical conduct

### Our Credential's Value to Society

- Professionalism requires a public commitment and a realization that our competence has significant social **value**
- Society turns to professionals for guidance and judgments in eradicating & rectifying problems



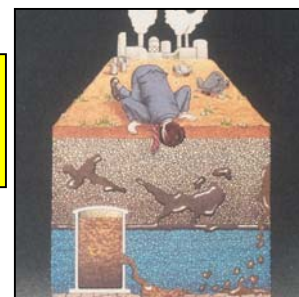
### Our Relationship with Society

- Based on public trust and confidence
- Confidence is acquired through experience
- Trust, however, is much more subjective
- In order to deal with trust in a more objective manner: a code of Ethics has been established



### Code of Ethics #1

Our primary responsibility is to protect the public and the environment



### Code of Ethics #2

Shall act with integrity in any relationship that involves an employer or client



### Code of Ethics #3

Shall function only within our area of competence



### Code of Ethics #4

Shall behave with professional decorum & restraint, and shall not exhibit conduct that brings discredit to our credentials



### Code of Ethics #5

- Shall participate in continuing education and professional development opportunities, share pertinent information with the professional community and the public, disseminate acquired knowledge and skill to others & uphold ethical precepts of our profession
- Shall seek opportunities to be active in civic affairs and to promote our profession



### Professional Discipline

- Unprofessional acts & questionable ethics by any individual will decrease **value** of our credentials
- Fortitude to report potential ethical violations
- Collective discipline within our membership must be enforced, including certification revocation



### Tragedy of the Commons

- Garrett Hardin's Essay in Science Magazine (1968)
- Warned that as our human population increases, there would be mounting pressures on resources at the local and global levels, leading to overexploitation & ruin



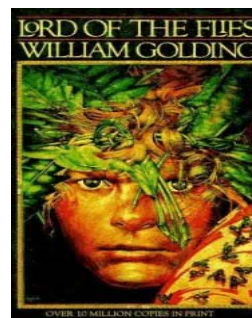
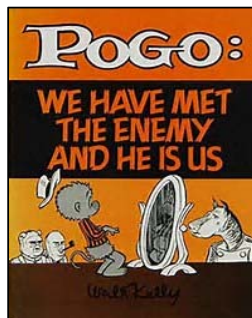
Freedom in a commons brings ruin to all.

### Garrett Hardin's Hypothetical Essay

- Fourteenth century Britain was organized as a loosely aligned collection of villages, each with a common pasture for villagers to graze horses, cattle and sheep
- Each household attempted to gain wealth by putting as many animals on the commons as it could afford
- As villages grew in size, more and more animals were placed on the commons, overgrazing ruined the pasture
- No stock could be supported on the commons thereafter
- As a consequence of population growth, greed, and the logic of the commons, village after village collapsed

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSuETYEgY68&t=11s>

### Need for Government Regulation



### Government Deregulation Uncertainty

- Mandates to eliminate two regulations for each new regulation proposed with an end goal of eliminating 75% of our regulations is creating uncertainty & anguish within our profession
- Yes, governments change!
- However, the foundational basis of our professional ethics doesn't change!!!
- **Bottom Line: We Must Still Hold Ourselves to Higher Standards!**



### Paracelsus (1493-1541)

Alchemist & Toxicologist

**All substances are "poisonous"; there is none which is not a "poison". The right dose differentiates a poison and a remedy**



### Plethora of Competing Dynamics:

- Globalization vs. National Interests
- Urban vs. Rural Perspectives
- Collective (Tribal) Interests vs. Individualism
- Left Wing Politics vs. Right Wing Politics
- Real News vs. Fake News (alternative facts)
- Abundance vs. Scarcity Perspectives
- Demands to do more with less resources

### Professional Ethics Review (1)

- Along with knowledge & leadership, ethical conduct is key in setting AHMP apart from another group
- In order for ethics to mean anything, violations need to have consequences
- Specific principles need to be set to give members a framework to follow



### Professional Ethics Review (2)

- AHMP professionals are tasked with translating technical information for non-technical individuals
- In order to maintain impartiality, we must perform our duties to the best of our ability consistent with all applicable laws & regulations



### Professional Ethics Review (3)

- Our primary responsibility is to protect both the public and the environment
- In order to maintain independence & credibility, we must act with integrity in any relationship that involves an employer, client, or a regulator



### Professional Ethics Review (4)

- Our hazardous materials profession is very large & complex
- None of us can be an expert at all aspects of our industry
- To maintain credibility, we must represent our qualifications honestly and function only within our level of competence



### Professional Ethics Review (5)

- Poor ethical conduct discredits local AHMP Chapters
- Professional behavior, decorum, and restraint builds and enhances individual & organization reputations



### Professional Ethics Review (6)

- Complying & upholding a *Code of Ethics* presents a statement to the outside world that we are committed to a high level of honesty, integrity, and trust
- IHMM bestows credentials/titles upon worthy professionals as a notification that an individual follows specific technical as well as ethical criteria





Code of Ethics - Everyday Applications

- Conduct business within the spirit of the law
- Treat your clients with respect
- Treat your co-workers with respect
- Always perform to the best of your ability
- Don't condone, promote, or support any unethical conduct



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