

Casting Environmental Governance: The Evolution of Regulatory Relationships in the Wisconsin foundry industry

by

Emily C. Rubenstein

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the evolving shape of environmental governance using an extended case study of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, drawing on their efforts to reduce pollution in the Wisconsin foundry industry. This analysis follows the development of the Department's efforts to change their practices over the past 30 years and explores a more recent "institutional innovation" called the Benzene Reduction Action Team (otherwise known as BRAT Co.) The organization is a virtual company that brings together members from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Wisconsin Cast Metals Association (WCMA), a trade organization representing the foundry industry, in a partnership to help the industry comply with Wisconsin's Hazardous Air Pollutant rule and to collaboratively develop alternative compliance procedures. This thesis situates BRAT Co. in a wider context of government efforts to innovate within a regulatory environment and to redefine how an environmental agency can help to reduce pollution through a cooperative process that actively involves the regulated community.

Thesis Supervisor: David W. Laws
Title: Lecturer, Department of Urban Studies and Planning
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Thesis Reader: Jennifer Nash
Title: Director, Regulatory Policy Program
Center for Business and Government
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University