



RISK REGULATION SEMINARS

SPRING 2009

PENN PROGRAM ON REGULATION

In cooperation with The Fels Institute of Government • Initiative for Global Environmental Leadership • Program on Law, the Environment and the Economy • Wharton Risk Management and Decision Processes Center

PRESENTS . . .

January 27, 2009

4:30 p.m. – 6:00 pm, Room G-50, Jon Huntsman Hall, The Wharton School

New Directions for Risk Assessment in the Incoming Administration and Beyond

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Over the past 25 years, Congress, the White House, and the general public have increasingly expected EPA and other federal and state agencies to use quantitative risk assessment (QRA) to set regulatory priorities and determine the stringency of individual regulations. Although risk assessment has greatly improved our ability to identify and control hazards to health, safety, and the environment, the risk assessment process has become bogged down by challenges to its timeliness and credibility, a lack of adequate resources, and disconnects between the available scientific data and the information needs of decision-makers. To mark the 25th anniversary of the publication by the National Research Council (NRC) of the influential "Red Book" (*Risk Assessment in the Federal Government: Managing the Process*), the NRC released the committee report *Science and Decisions: Advancing Risk Assessment* in December 2008.

Dr. Thomas Burke, chair of the new NRC committee, will summarize the *Science and Decisions* report, which makes significant recommendations both about the technical aspects of risk assessment (in particular, a new "unified approach" for quantifying risks from both carcinogenic and non-carcinogenic agents) and about increasing the utility of risk assessment for evaluating the merits of various concrete options for controlling hazards. Building on the recommendations of several earlier NRC reports, the *Science and Decisions* report also emphasizes the value of EPA increasing stakeholder involvement in both technical and decision-making arenas.

Thomas A. Burke is a Professor and Associate Chair at The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Department of Health Policy and Management, with joint appointments in the Department of Environmental Health Sciences and the School of Medicine Department of Oncology. Currently he is Director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Excellence in Environmental Public Health Tracking and the Center for Excellence in Environmental Health Practice. He is also Co-Director of the Johns Hopkins Risk Sciences and Public Policy Institute. His research interests include the development of new approaches to environmental health surveillance, and the application of health risk assessment to public policy. He was Principal Investigator for the Pew Environmental Health Commission which established the framework for a national approach to environmental public health tracking. Prior to his appointment at Johns Hopkins, Dr. Burke was Deputy Commissioner of Health for the State of New Jersey and was Director of the Office of Science and Research in the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. Dr. Burke is a member of the National Academy of Sciences Board on Environmental Studies and Toxicology. He was Inaugural Chair of the Advisory Committee to the Director of the CDC National Center for Environmental Health and a member of the Executive Committee of the EPA Board of Scientific Counselors. Dr. Burke received his PhD in epidemiology from the University of Pennsylvania, his MPH from the University of Texas, and his BS from Saint Peter's College.

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