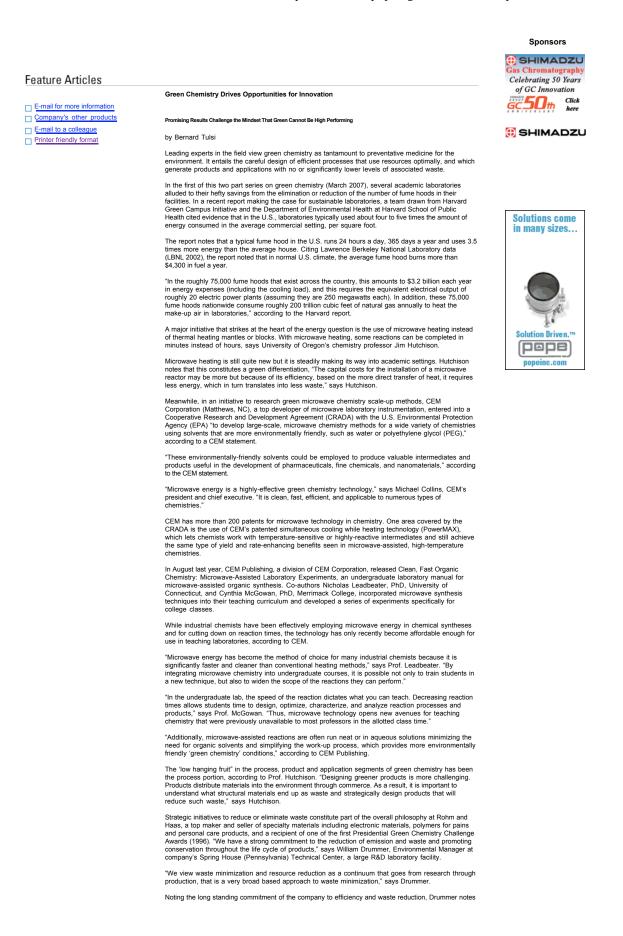
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that programs to achieve such objectives have been in place for some time now. "The terminology has changed to some extent. We have gone from phrases like waste minimization to pollution prevention, from resource reduction to sustainable development and green chemistry, but to a great extent, a lot of our processes have remained very similar," says Drummer.

"When a new process comes on site, it goes through an environmental safety and health review process with a view towards minimizing the hazards," says Alisa Kreft, Health and Safety Manager at Rohm and Haas Spring House Technical Center.

Part of the review seeks to determine whether the minimum amount of material is being used, whether the experiment can be done by modeling rather than actual bench work, if the size of the reaction can be minimized, if the energy consumption can be minimized, if the amount of water used could be minimized—all with a view to minimizing waste, according to Kreft.

To be sure, this kind of review, though not necessarily an identical one, could be readily found these days at most research laboratories as part of the standard operating procedures.

Based on the review, a process is deemed successful if it "has low emissions based on accepted thresholds in air, water and waste, has no odor issues, researcher exposure is minimized and the researcher is appropriately protected," says Drummer.

In identifying current and future challenges, Kreft says that improving energy efficiency is a key area. "There are lots of ways to do that but one is through modeling—the ability to enter technical questions and use modeling rather than actual experimentation."

Other challenges include the need to keep the workspace safe without the use of hoods and how to run the existing hoods with the greatest energy efficiency.

"These are still major challenges for the R&D facility in terms of improving sustainable development and minimizing waste," says Kreft.

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