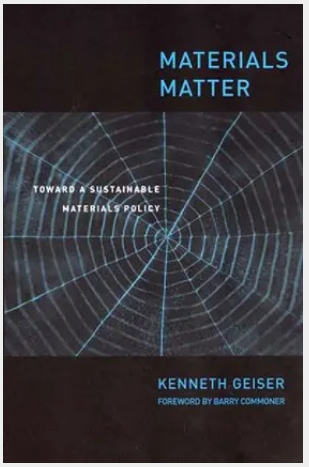
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Materials Matter

Toward a Sustainable Materials Policy



The products we purchase and use are assembled from a wide range of naturally occurring and manufactured materials. But too often we create hazards for the ecosystem and human health as we mine, process, distribute, use, and dispose of these materials. Until recently, most research has focused on the waste end of material cycles. This book argues that the safest and least costly point at which to avoid environmental damage is when materials are first designed and selected for use in industrial production. Materials Matter presents convincing evidence that we can use fewer materials and eliminate the use of many toxic chemicals by focusing directly on material (chemical) use when products are designed. It also shows how manufacturers can save money by increasing the effectiveness of material use and reducing the use of toxic chemicals. It advocates new directions for the material sciences and government policies on materials. And it argues that manufacturers, suppliers, and customers need to set more socially responsible policies for products and services to achieve higher environmental and health goals.

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36,30 €
36,30 € (zzgl. MwSt.)

Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage

Artikelnummer: 9780262571487
Medium: Buch
ISBN: 978-0-262-57148-7
Verlag: MIT Press
Erscheinungstermin: 25.05.2001
Sprache(n): Englisch
Auflage: Erscheinungsjahr 2001
Serie: Urban and Industrial Environments
Produktform: Kartoniert
Gewicht: 714 g
Seiten: 497
Format (B x H): 152 x 229 mm

Kundenservice Verlag Dr. Otto Schmidt KG
Neumannstraße 10, 40235 Düsseldorf | kundenservice@otto-schmidt.de | 0221-93738-997 (Inland)