

**Case Analysis – Corporate Social Responsibility**  
***Management Safety Concerns – Industrial vs. Federal***

Kirk was a bright individual who was being groomed for the Controller's position in a medium-sized manufacturing firm. He was very diligent in completing his work, tending to concerns and ensuring that day to day operations ran smoothly for success within the firm. After his first year as Assistant Controller, the officers of the firm were starting to include him in major company functions. For instance, today he was attending the monthly financial statement summary given at a prestigious consulting firm. During the meeting, Kirk was intrigued at how well all of the financial data he had been accumulating was transformed by the consultant into revealing charts and graphs.

Kirk was generally optimistic about the session and the company's future looked promising, until the consultant started talking about the new manufacturing plant that the company would be adding to the current location and the costs associated with the project on a cost per unit basis of the chemically plated products that it would be producing. At that time, Bob (the President) and John (a chemical engineer) began discussion regarding the waste treatment and disposal problems. John mentioned that the current waste facilities were not adequate to handle the waste problems that would be created by the "ultramodern" new plant in a manner that would meet the industry's fairly high standards, although they would still comply with the federal standards.

Kirk's boss, Henry, noted that the estimated cost per unit would be increased if waste treatment facilities were upgraded according to the recent industry standards. While industry standards were currently more stringent than federal regulations, environmentalists were pressuring strongly for improving regulations at the federal level to meet the industry standards. Bob mentioned that since their closest competitor did not have waste treatment facilities that already existed at their firm, he was not in favour of any more expenditures in this area. Most managers at the meeting agreed with Bob, and business continued on to another topic.

Kirk did not hear a word during the rest of the meeting. He kept wondering how the company could possibly have such a casual attitude toward the environment and the harm that would be done if the new plant was built without upgrading the waste and disposal facilities. Despite his feeling towards the discussion that he was just a part of, he did not know if, how or when he could share his opinion. Soon he started reflecting on whether this was the right firm for him.

***Use the case analysis process to determine what should be done in this situation.***

***What actions should Kirk take? Why?***