

Look for the answers to these questions:

- What is an externality?
- Why do externalities make market outcomes inefficient?
- What public policies aim to solve the problem of externalities?
- How can people sometimes solve the problem of externalities on their own? Why do such private solutions not always work?

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Externalities	Externalities
 'Markets are usually a good way to organize economy activity' In absence of market failures, the competitive market outcome is efficient, maximizes total surplus Externality: one type of market failure The uncompensated impact of one person's actions on the well-being of a bystander 	 Negative externality Impact on the bystander is adverse Positive externality Impact on the bystander is beneficial Self-interested buyers and sellers Neglect the external costs or benefits of their actions So the market outcome is not efficient
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Externalities

- 'Government action can sometimes improve upon market outcomes'
 - Why markets sometimes fail to allocate resources efficiently
 - How government policies can potentially improve the market's allocation
 - What kinds of policies are likely to work best

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ASK THE EXPERTS Vaccines

"Declining to be vaccinated against contagious diseases such as measles imposes costs on other people, which is a negative externality."









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	Externalities
• Int	ernalizing the externality:
 Altering incentives so that people take into account the external effects of their actions 	
—	n our example, the \$10/liter tax on sellers makes sellers' costs = social costs.
• If I	narket participants pay social costs
_	Market equilibrium = social optimum
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Active Learning 1 Analysis of a positive externality The market for flu shots · External benefit \$500 = \$100/shot 400 - Draw the social value curve. S 300 - Find the socially optimal Q. 200 - What policy would internalize this 100 externality? D 0 0 10 20 30 0 e scanned, copied or duplicated, or posted to a publicly a certain product or service or otherwise on a passwo

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Effects of Externalities: Summary

- If negative externality
 - Market quantity larger than socially desirable
- If positive externality
 - Market quantity smaller than socially desirable
- To remedy the problem, "internalize the externality"
 - -Tax goods with negative externalities

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– Subsidize goods with positive externalities

ASK THE EXPERTS

Vaccines



Public Policies Toward Externalities **Public Policies Toward Externalities** Command-and-control policies Corrective taxes and subsidies - Regulate behavior directly - Corrective taxes (Pigovian taxes) · Limits on quantity of pollution emitted - Induce private decision makers to take · Requirements that firms adopt a particular account of the social costs that arise from technology to reduce emissions a negative externality Market-based policies -Places a price on the right to pollute - Incentives so that private decision makers -Reduce pollution at a lower cost to society will choose to solve the problem on their own -Raise revenue for the government · Corrective taxes and subsidies Enhance economic efficiency · Tradable pollution permits

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Corrective Taxes vs. Regulations

Corrective taxes are better for the environment:

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 The corrective tax gives firms incentive to continue reducing pollution as long as the cost of doing so is less than the tax

- If a cleaner technology becomes available, the tax gives firms an incentive to adopt it
- In contrast, firms have no incentive for further reduction beyond the level specified in a regulation

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Example of a Corrective Tax: The Gas Tax

The gas tax targets three negative externalities:

- <u>Congestion</u>
 The more you drive, the more you contribute to congestion.
- <u>Accidents</u> Larger vehicles cause more damage in an accident.
- <u>Pollution</u> Burning fossil fuels produces greenhouse gases.

A. Regulation



ASK THE EXPERTS

"A tax on the carbon content of fuels would be a less expensive way to reduce carbon-dioxide emissions than would a collection of policies such as 'corporate average fuel economy' requirements





Active Learning 2

A. Answers

Each firm must reduce emissions by 10 tons. Cost of reducing emissions: \$1,000/ton for Acme, \$2,000/ton for US Electric.

- Compute cost of achieving goal with this policy:
 - Cost to Acme: (10 tons) x (\$1,000/ton) = \$10,000

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- Cost to USE: (10 tons) x (\$200/ton) = \$20,000
- Total cost of achieving goal = \$30,000



Active Learning 2

B. Answers

Goal: reduce emissions from 80 to 60 tons Cost of reducing emissions: \$1,000/ton for Acme, \$2,000/ton for USE.

- Compute cost of achieving goal for Acme:
 - Sells 10 permits to USE for \$1,500 each, gets \$15,000
 - Uses 20 permits, emits 20 tons SO_2
 - Spends \$20,000 to reduce emissions by 20 tons
 - Net cost to Acme: \$20,000 \$15,000 = \$5,000

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Public Policies Toward Externalities Tradable pollution permits system Reduces pollution at lower cost than regulation Firms with low cost of reducing pollution do so and sell their unused permits Firms with high cost of reducing pollution buy permits Result: Pollution reduction is concentrated among those firms with lowest costs



Public Policies Toward Externalities

 Objections to the economic analysis of pollution

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- "We cannot give anyone the option of polluting for a fee." - by late Senator Edmund Muskie
- People face trade-offs
 - -Eliminating all pollution is impossible
 - Clean water and clean air opportunity cost: lower standard of living

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Private Solutions to Externalities Private Solutions to Externalities The types of private solutions The Coase theorem -Moral codes and social sanctions - If private parties can bargain without cost over the allocation of resources - Charities They can solve the problem of externalities - Self-interest of the relevant parties on their own • Integrating different types of businesses Whatever the initial distribution of rights - Interested parties can enter into a contract - Interested parties can reach a bargain: · Everyone is better off Outcome is efficient





Private Solutions to Externalities

3. Jane can legally compel Dick to get rid of the dog (Spot)

- -Dick gets a \$8,000 benefit from the dog
- -Jane bears an \$5,000 cost from the barking
- Efficient outcome
 - Dick keeps Spot
 - Private outcome: Dick pays Jane \$6,000 to put up with Spot's barking

The private market achieves the efficient outcome regardless of the initial distribution of rights
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value swimming in Sunny Moon Lake at \$1,000,000.

A nearby factory pollutes the lake water, and would have to pay \$500,000 for non-polluting equipment.

- A. Describe a Coase-like private solution.
- B. Can you think of any reasons why this solution might not work in the real world?

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Private Solutions to Externalities

Why private solutions do not always work

-High transaction costs

- Costs that parties incur in the process of agreeing to and following through on a bargain
- Stubbornness: (最牛釘子戶)
 - bargaining simply breaks down
- Coordination problems
 - · Large number of interested parties
 - · Coordinating everyone is costly

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Summary

 When a transaction between a buyer and seller directly affects a third party, the effect is called an externality.

- If an activity yields negative externalities, such as pollution, the socially optimal quantity in a market is less than the equilibrium quantity.
- If an activity yields positive externalities, such as technology spillovers, the socially optimal quantity is greater than the equilibrium quantity.

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Summary

• Governments pursue various policies to remedy the inefficiencies caused by externalities.

- Regulating behavior
- Internalizes an externality using corrective taxes
- Issue permits (similar results to imposing corrective taxes on polluters)

Summary

- According to the Coase theorem, if people can bargain without cost, then they can always reach an agreement in which resources are allocated efficiently.
 - In many cases, however, reaching a bargain among the many interested parties is difficult, so the Coase theorem does not apply.

Chapter 10: Externalities

Market Failure? Or, Lack of Market Failure!

- Caused by lack of property rights!
- Social Cost/Benefit ≠ Private Cost/Benefit
- Market-based Public Policy:
 - Corrective Taxes
 - Tradable Pollution Permits
- Private Solutions: Coase Theorem

Homework: Mankiw, Ch.10, Problem 1, 4, 5, 8, 9 Challenge Questions (Past Midterms) 2007 - Essay Q6b

- ▶ 2008 Essay C5-9 (Multi-Choice Q12, Q13)
- 2009 Essay C1-4 (Multi-Choice Q13)
- ▶ 2010 Essay A (True/False Q10)
- ▶ 2014 Essay B
- 2015 Essay A4-5, B3
 2016 Essay D

Chapter 10: Externalities