



Hobbling the Environmental Protection Agency would threaten Tennessee's health, families, jobs and economy

Support from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is essential to protecting Tennessee's air, water, and land. From protecting waterways from dangerous runoff to enforcing clean air standards, EPA grants provided the state with more than \$234 million in funding from 2012 to 2016. Unfortunately, the Trump Administration and many Members of Congress are working to hollow out the EPA and cut its budget to its lowest level since the 1970s, posing threats to millions of Tennesseans who depend on the agency to protect their health and the state's tourism and business climate.

EPA's budget will be negotiated in a backroom by a President and EPA Administrator who have laid out a roadmap to cripple the EPA, along with many Congressional leaders who have shown little interest in protecting environmental safeguards. The EPA's budget could be bargained away in the blink of an eye, and Tennesseans could be the losers.

Environment and public health are at risk

More dangerous runoff in the water

Program at Risk: Nonpoint source pollution program grants. Proposed cut: Eliminated

Runoff, sometimes called "Nonpoint Source Pollution," is the leading cause of water quality problems in the United States. It comes when rainwater washes over areas containing contaminants such as industrial waste, agricultural pesticides or lawn-treatment chemicals, and gets into surface water, ground water, or soil.

Dozens of Tennessee projects have used EPA grant money to combat nonpoint source pollution. In Morgan County, for example, water quality samples taken in 1998 showed that the entire 29-mile length of Crab Orchard Creek, a tributary of the Emory River, was contaminated by polluted runoff, much of it believed to have trickled in from abandoned coal mines. EPA grants helped launch a series of projects, including construction of filtration ponds and a new wetland area, to reduce the damage from mine runoff. By 2007, surveys of the creek showed that it had returned to health.

More Code Red days

**Program at Risk: State and Local Air Quality Management Grants/Tribal Air Quality Management Grants
Proposed cut: 33% | 30%**

Among Tennessee's biggest sources of EPA funding is the agency's air pollution control program grants. From 2012 to 2016, EPA provided \$14.6 million in grants to support Tennessee clean air programs. In Chattanooga, where severe air quality problems in the late 1960s prompted the community to establish a county air pollution control board and establish stringent local air pollution rules, EPA funding is about one-third of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Air Pollution Control Bureau's budget. The Bureau hasn't had a budget increase since 2002 and has been laying off staff. EPA provides similar support to local pollution control or health department programs in the Knoxville, Nashville and Memphis areas.

* FY12-16 funding totals obtained from <https://www.usaspending.gov/Pages/Default.aspx>

The enemy underground: leaking underground storage tank grants

Program at Risk: Leaking underground storage tank categorical grants. Proposed cut: Eliminated

Across the country, thousands of underground storage tanks and accompanying pipes — many of them made from older corroding steel — hold and carry a variety of fuels and chemicals. When tanks leak harmful chemicals such as oil, gas, benzene and toluene into soil and ground water, drinking water and soil are fouled, community health is jeopardized, and economic development is crippled. Preventing and addressing spills from these backlogs is a major environmental priority. According to EPA, Tennessee has more than 240 leaking underground tanks in need of cleanup. EPA support is essential to Tennessee programs to monitor underground storage tanks, detect leaks of petroleum products, address the causes, repair any damage to soil or groundwater and hold polluters accountable for paying their fair share of cleanup costs.

Fewer cleanups and less economic development at polluted properties

Program at Risk: Brownfield grants. Proposed cut: 28%

Brownfield sites are properties where contamination prevents economic development and threatens public health and safety. Research has shown that residential property values near restored brownfield sites increased between 5 and 15 percent and can increase property values in a 1.24-mile radius of that site. A study analyzing data near 48 brownfield sites shows an estimated \$29 million to \$97 million in additional tax revenue was generated for local governments in a single year after cleanup. This is two to seven times more than the \$12.4 million EPA contributed to those brownfield sites. Before cleanup and redevelopment can happen safely and be permitted to go forward, brownfield sites must be assessed and tested for soil contamination. The risk of hazardous substances, petroleum or asbestos being released when disturbing soil at the site or dismantling properties. To carry out this assessment work, EPA funds pay for expert tests of soil, ground water, sediment, surface water and vapors. EPA grants also help pay for the actual cleanup.

Tennessee has more than 130 listed brownfield sites — properties where hazardous pollution threatens public health and safety and prevents economic development. From 2012 to 2016, Tennessee received nearly \$7 million in EPA grants that have helped local counties and communities clean up polluted properties.

More dangerous runoff in the water

Program at Risk: Water pollution control grants. Proposed cut: 33%

EPA Water Pollution Control can support a wide variety of water pollution prevention and control programs and activities, including monitoring and assessing water quality, developing water quality standards, identifying impaired waters and total maximum daily loads, managing national pollutant discharge elimination system permits, ensuring compliance, implementing enforcement actions, protecting source water, and managing outreach and education programs. Tennessee received \$11.7 million in such grants from 2012 to 2016; the Trump administration's proposed budget would cut these grants by 33 percent.

More lung cancer deaths from radon exposure

Program at Risk: Indoor Radon Grant Program. Proposed cut: Eliminated

Invisible, odorless radon is the nation's second leading cause of lung cancer, responsible for about 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year. EPA's State Indoor Radon Grant Program promotes radon-reducing features in new homes and schools, and inspections and fixes in existing homes. The program also educates and enlists consumers, real estate professionals, state and local building code officials, schools officials, nonprofit public health organizations and professional organizations. From 2012-16, the EPA provided \$1.1 million in State Indoor Radon Grant Program Grants to Tennessee.

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