

EPA Budget cuts threaten the health of our families and most vulnerable communities

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has worked to protect human health and the environment for more than four decades, cleaning our air, water, and land. During that time, we have experienced a growing economy and an expanding population, with millions more cars on the road.

Deep budget cuts [proposed](#) by the Trump administration would jeopardize Americans' health and safety, reducing funds—including [\\$666.2 million per year EPA grants directly to states](#)—needed to address pollution from lead, clean up toxic sites, ensure access to clean water, and much more.

If the President succeeds in his plan to cut EPA's budget by almost a third, the result will be more asthma attacks among children, more toxic pollution in our communities, and more lead in our drinking water.

What benefits are at risk from EPA budget cuts?

Clean air

- **The lives of 45,000 Americans are saved every year** by EPA programs cutting [air pollution](#) and [toxic mercury](#).
- Over 24 million Americans have been [diagnosed with asthma](#), including over 3 million Latinos.
- Asthma attacks were the cause of [688,000 pediatric emergency room visits and over \\$53 billion in associated medical costs](#) in America in 2008.
- EPA grants cover about 25% of state and local air quality monitoring. Almost half of that money would disappear under the Trump budget.
- EPA protections help reduce the occurrence of "code red" days – when air pollution is so bad that children and seniors are advised not to spend time outside.
- Programs to monitor and cut air pollution are [especially important for Latinos](#) in the U.S., nearly half of whom live in counties that frequently violate standards for ground-level ozone, [such as](#) Los Angeles County in California and Maricopa County in Arizona. Latinos also often have reduced access to and awareness of relevant healthcare resources, and are more likely to hold jobs in occupations that expose workers to outdoor air pollution.

Clean water

- [124.4 million Americans](#), including over 45 million people in the 10 states with the highest proportion of Latinos, rely on headwater, rain-fed, and seasonal streams for their **drinking water**.
- EPA helps deal with "[runoff](#)" [pollution](#) – including excess fertilizers and insecticides, grease and toxic chemicals from urban streets and energy production, acid drainage from abandoned mines, and bacteria and nutrients from livestock, pet wastes and faulty septic systems – that drains into our waterways. [EPA provided states with \\$163.4 million to help protect America's water in FY 2016; a program Trump's budget proposes to slash.](#)
- **EPA also helps keep our beaches clean.** Grants such as [\\$495,000](#) given to the Florida Healthy Beaches Program, help states monitor recreational beaches for fecal pollution and alerts the public when high bacteria levels creates the risk for gastro-intestinal illness, eye, ear and nose infections, skin rashes and infections, and worse.

Declining lead levels

- There is no safe level of lead, a known neurotoxin that damages children's IQs for their entire lives.
- Over the past five decades, EPA has worked to reduce or eliminate the use of lead in gasoline, paint, plumbing pipes, and soil. The results: blood lead levels across the country have [declined more than 90%](#) since the mid-1970s.
- But more needs to be done: More than half a million kids in the U.S. today, a disproportionate number of whom are poor, have elevated levels of lead in their blood, primarily from lead paint and pipes. **The Trump budget would slash programs that can help these children.**

Toxic-free communities

- In communities across the U.S., families are threatened by industrial hazardous waste, radioactive materials, and toxic chemicals such as lead, asbestos, and dioxin—causing cancer, reproductive harm, and other damaging health impacts.
- Contaminated land and water also imposes economic burdens and hardships on communities. Abandoned industrial pollution sites sink real estate values, discourage investment, and undermine the efforts of local communities to re-develop and revitalize their economies.
- **There are more than 1,330 sites on a list of the most highly polluted properties nationwide, known as [Superfund sites](#).**
- Populations that are minorities, low-income, linguistically isolated, and less educated are [more likely to live near these sites](#) than the U.S. population as a whole.
- **Yet the Trump administration is proposing to slash the Superfund program by a third.** With communities and states fighting to protect their families and re-develop their economies, this is no time to shut down EPA's hazardous waste clean-up programs.

Environmental justice

- **Trump's budget would shut down EPA's Office of Environmental Justice, a department dedicated to the "fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies."**
- The Office of Environmental Justice helps to prepare and coordinate information and resources to help communities improve understanding and build capacity to effectively participate in local decision-making regarding their health and surroundings.
- Recent Environmental Justice grants [have helped](#) train farmworkers to protect children from pesticides, and provided organizing support for low-income, predominantly Latino communities to understand and engage in policy decisions regarding their drinking water.



A hazy Los Angeles in December 1948 before the EPA was established and the Clean Air Act was passed.