

How hobbling the Environmental Protection Agency would threaten West Virginia’s health, families, jobs and economy

Support from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is essential to protecting West Virginia’s water, land and air. From protecting drinking water from chemicals and agricultural run-off to cleaning up Superfund and other hazardous waste sites, EPA grants provided the state with more than \$230 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 West Virginians 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 West Virginians could be the losers.

Eliminating and Slashing EPA Programs that Protect West Virginia’s Environment

The Trump Administration’s Road Map

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt and the Trump Administration are championing 30 percent cuts that would hollow out the EPA and cut its budget to its lowest level since the 1970s. If enacted, these cuts would reverse decades of progress cleaning up pollution, including toxic substances, that foul our drinking water, air and soil.

The Trump Administration’s road map

Programs, Grants, and Initiatives	Purpose	Trump Budget	2012-2016 Grants
Water Pollution Control Grants	Supports water quality improvement and clean up	Cut 30%	\$11.0 million
Chesapeake Bay Program	Fights runoff pollution and protects West Virginia’s rivers and streams	Eliminate	\$10.5 million
Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program (Section 319 grants)	Fights runoff pollution from roads, parking lots and excessive fertilizer	Eliminate	\$9.0 million
Leaking Underground Storage Tanks grants	Protects water and soil from tanks leaking chemicals	Eliminate	\$5.5 million
Hazardous Waste Management	Monitor threats and cleanup of hazardous waste	Cut 30%	\$8.6 million
Brownfield	Supports cleanup and redevelopment of polluted sites	Cut 30%	\$7.8 million

The House of Representatives

The House-passed budget includes numerous cuts that would move our nation's public health and environmental quality backwards:

- **Big cuts in water quality programs:** The budget would slash more than \$300 million from programs to keep water clean
- **Soft on polluters:** Key efforts to enforce environmental safeguards and hold polluters accountable would be cut between 5-15 percent across multiple programs—including cleanup of Superfund hazardous waste sites—which could mean less support for legal and investigative staff who gather evidence and make companies pay for cleanups.
- **Reckless on homeland security:** A 15 percent cut in homeland security efforts that help identify vulnerable industrial facilities and water supplies, which can be critical in natural disasters.
- **A retreat on science:** The House budget would make deep cuts in research and development programs that help identify the most advanced, cost-effective means of preventing, detecting, and cleaning up pollution.

The House of Representatives		
Programs, Grants, and Initiatives	Purpose	House Budget Cuts
Water Programs		\$312.3 million
Research on Safe and Sustainable Water	Develops science & technologies to keep water clean and safe	\$15.9 million
Human Health Protection	Monitor and treat drinking water	\$14.8 million
Water Quality Protection	Provide loans for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects.	\$31.6 million
Clean Water SRF	Finance infrastructure projects to improve water quality and public wastewater systems	\$250 million
Enforcement Programs		\$50.4 million
Science and Technology	Provide expert scientific and technical support for environmental enforcement cases	\$2.1 million
Environmental Progs and Mgmt	Enforce civil and criminal environmental laws	\$36.1 million
Hazardous Substance Superfund	Ensure that responsible parties conduct cleanups	\$12 million
Homeland Security		\$8.5 million
Science and Technology	Research to protect water system security and deal with terrorist attacks and other disasters	\$4.9 million
Environmental Progs and Mgmt	Support EPA communications and protection of water infrastructure during a homeland security incident	\$1.5 million
Buildings and Facilities	Protection of EPA personnel and infrastructure	\$500,000
Hazardous Substance Superfund	Prepare for and respond to incident involving possible chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear agents	\$2 million

More than 1.8 million West Virginians depend on a safe and healthy environment to live a good life. Over the last five years, West Virginia has received more than \$230 million in grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to protect the state's environment and economy. Millions more have gone to support state and local environmental and public health efforts, including assistance in the form of science and technology, legal expertise and enforcement.

But the Trump Administration and many Members of Congress are working to cut the EPA’s budget by 30 percent. These historic cuts would reverse decades of progress in cleaning up the toxic substances that foul drinking water, air and soil, posing grave threats to health and safety. They would strip the EPA of decades of scientific and technical expertise that West Virginia has turned to time and again to support state and local cleanups of dangerous pollution, as well as the legal support to go after polluters.

Such cuts could threaten the state’s public health and attractiveness to tourists. For every family, especially their vulnerable children and seniors, these cuts would move West Virginia’s environment backward to a dirtier and more dangerous era: More poisons in the soil and toxic substances in the water, and more of the cancers that follow. More mercury, arsenic, lead and other toxic substances that have no place in anyone’s lungs or drinking water. More corroding underground storage tanks and more mine waste and hazardous Superfund sites awaiting cleanup. More pesticides in food, water, and the environment. More unaddressed waste sites that threaten community health and sap economic development. And fewer investigations to make polluters pay for the costs of cleaning up their waste.

As the Congress moves towards adopting a new budget this fall, cuts have already been proposed by both the Administration and by Appropriations Committee members in Congress. Many vital spending decisions will be made behind closed doors as members horse-trade and make deals with an administration that is eager to jettison pollution prevention and cleanup programs. Why is it so important to understand which anti-pollution programs are being targeted for deep cuts or outright elimination? So that West Virginians can weigh in with their Members of Congress to ensure that EPA funding is fully preserved.

The threat to West Virginia’s water

For West Virginia, where memories are still fresh of the 2104 Elk River chemical spill that contaminated the water supply of nearly 300,000 people in Charleston and nine counties,¹ clean water is a critical issue. But proposed Trump Administration budgets cuts would decimate funding for programs that protect rivers, lakes, streams and groundwater across the state.

More dangerous runoff in the water

Program at Risk: Water pollution control grants

Because water pollution control is so critical to West Virginia’s health, EPA Water Pollution Control Grants, which help states build and sustain effective water quality programs, are a vital source of support. Grants can support monitoring and assessing water quality, protecting source water, developing water quality standards, identifying polluted waters and total maximum daily loads, managing pollutant discharge elimination permits, and ensuring compliance and enforcement with applicable laws. West Virginia received \$11 million in such grants from 2012 to 2016; those grants would be reduced by 30 percent under the Trump budget proposal.

EPA Funding to West Virginia FY12-FY16	
Water Pollution Control	\$11.0 Million

Program at Risk: Chesapeake Bay Program

Although West Virginia does not touch the Chesapeake Bay, EPA’s Chesapeake Bay Program,² a unique regional effort with five other states and the District of Columbia, provides very important support to many of the state’s streams and rivers that feed into the bay. West Virginia received \$10.5 million in Chesapeake Bay Program grants from 2012 to 2016 to help reduce nutrient and sediment load from West Virginia waterways feeding into the Bay. The Trump administration’s proposed budget would eliminate the program.

EPA Funding to West Virginia FY12-FY16	
Chesapeake Bay Program Grants	\$10.5 Million

Program at Risk: Nonpoint source pollution grants

Polluted runoff, sometimes called “nonpoint source pollution,” is the number one source of water pollution in the United States today.³ In contrast to “point-source” pollution, which can be traced to a single location such as a mine or a factory waste pipe, “nonpoint source” pollution seeps off broad areas such as parking lots and roads, construction sites, agricultural lands, etc. Stormwater can threaten water supplies with animal waste laden with harmful pathogens, sewage, mine and industrial waste, pesticides, mine waste, and oil and gas from roadways.

EPA Funding to West Virginia FY12-FY16	
Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants	\$9.0 Million

The Trump Administration’s proposed budget would eliminate an EPA program that has provided \$9 million to West Virginia from 2012 to 2016 to control pollutants carried by rainfall runoff into its drinking water, rivers and lakes.

The Threat to West Virginia’s Land

The Trump Administration would drastically reduce EPA funding for programs that protect West Virginians from the health and safety risks of contaminated soil and that help clean up pollution so that properties can be returned to productive economic use. The positive effects of clean soil multiply through the environment, since contaminated soil can also pollute groundwater.

Weakening the fight against hazardous waste

Program at Risk: Hazardous waste management grants

EPA’s hazardous waste management grants provide funding to states to oversee landfills, incinerators, storage facilities and other sites where hazardous wastes such as PCBs and other toxic chemicals are stored. West Virginia received \$8.6 million in grants to manage the state’s hazardous waste program from 2012 to 2016; the Trump administration’s proposed budget would cut these grants by 30 percent.

EPA Funding to West Virginia FY12-FY16	
Hazardous Waste Management Grants	\$8.6 Million

Fewer clean-ups and economic development at polluted properties

Program at Risk: Brownfield grants

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.⁴

EPA Funding to West Virginia FY12-FY16	
Brownfield Grants	\$7.8 Million

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.

The Trump administration’s proposed budget would cut brownfield restoration programs by 30 percent.

These cuts could hamper cleanups at more than 220 brownfield sites in West Virginia.⁵ From 2012-16, West Virginia received \$7.8 million in EPA grants that have helped local counties and communities clean up polluted properties to protect people’s lives and spark job-creating economic redevelopment.

The Enemy Underground: Leaking Underground Storage Tank Grants

Program at Risk: Leaking Underground Storage Tank Grants and Trust Fund

Across the country, thousands of underground storage tanks and accompanying pipes—many of them made from older corroded steel—hold and carry a variety of fuels and chemicals.⁶ When tanks are at risk of leaking harmful chemicals such as oil, gas, benzene and toluene into soil and ground water, drinking water is fouled, backyards and businesses become dangerous, community health is jeopardized, and economic development is crippled.

West Virginia has a backlog of more than 600 leaking underground storage tanks (or LUSTs).⁷ EPA has supported essential programs in West Virginia to monitor these tanks, detect leaks of petroleum products, address the causes of leaks, repair damage to soil or groundwater, hold polluters responsible for cleanup costs, and contribute funds for cleanup if the responsible party can't be found or is no longer in business. Leaking underground storage tanks cleanups received \$5.5 million in EPA grant funding in West Virginia from 2012 to 2016.

EPA Funding to West Virginia FY12-FY16	
Leaking Underground Storage Tanks	\$5.5 Million

The Trump Administration's proposed budget would curtail leaking tank assistance to states. West Virginia's \$5.5 million receives federal LUST grants from two sources. The first—prevention and detection grants, would be eliminated entirely. The second—a trust fund paid for by a one-cent federal fuel tax which provided support for monitoring and cleanup assistance, would be cut in half.

The Threat to West Virginia's Air

West Virginians have good reason to be concerned about the air they breathe. According to the American Lung Association, Weirton, WV (which shares a metro area with Pittsburgh and New Castle, PA) is the 8th most polluted metro area in the country in terms of long-term particle pollution, and 17th for short-term particle pollution.⁸

More code red days

Program at Risk: Clean Air Act grants

The Trump Administration budget would cut nearly one-third from programs that help states, local and tribal communities monitor air quality.

For decades, the Clean Air Act and U.S. EPA grants have helped states and communities make historic progress in reducing air pollution, with EPA grants covering almost 30 percent of state and local air monitoring costs.

EPA Funding to West Virginia FY12-FY16	
Air Pollution Control Program Support	\$7.2 Million

Cleaner air means more productive workers, fewer Code Red days where parents must keep kids indoors, and fewer attacks for the 18,000 children and 83,000 adults in West Virginia diagnosed with asthma.⁹ Asthma attacks were the cause of 3,599 pediatric emergency room visits and over \$348 million in associated medicals costs in West Virginia in 2008.¹⁰ The lives of an estimated 798 West Virginians are saved each year by programs cutting air pollution and toxic mercury.¹¹

West Virginia received \$7.2 million in EPA grants from 2012 to 2016 to manage air pollution control efforts statewide.

West Virginia EPA Grants, FY2012-2016

(with information on grants of \$500,000 or more)

Recipient	Grants	Purpose
WV Department of Environmental Protection	\$168,675,835	Air Pollution Control Program Support Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Cooperative Agreements Capitalization Grants for Clean Water State Revolving Funds Capitalization Grants for State Revolving Fund Chesapeake Bay Program Congressionally Mandated Projects Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant Program and Related Assistance Hazardous Waste Management State Program Support Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund Corrective Action Program Multipurpose Grants to States and Tribes Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants Pollution Prevention Grants Program Regional Wetland Program Development Grants State and Tribal Response Program Grants State Clean Diesel Grant Program State Underground Storage Tanks Program State Underground Water Source Protection Superfund State and Indian Tribe Core Program Cooperative Agreements Superfund State, Political Subdivision, and Indian Tribe Site-Specific Cooperative Agreements Surveys, Studies, Research, Investigations, Demonstrations, and Special Purpose Activities Relating to the Clean Air Act Underground Storage Tank Prevention, Detection and Compliance Program Water Pollution Control State, Interstate, and Tribal Program Support Water Quality Management Planning WPC State and Interstate Program Support
WV Department of Health & Human Resources	\$48,429,548	Capitalization Grants for Drinking Water State Revolving Funds Congressionally Mandated Projects Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant Program and Related Assistance Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund State Indoor Radon Program State Lead Program Grants State Public Water System Supervision Toxic Substances Compliance Monitoring TSCA Title IV State Lead Grants Certification of Lead-Based Paint Professionals Water Protection Grants to the States
Town of Moorefield	\$5,500,000	Congressionally Mandated Projects
Business Development Corporation of the North	\$1,558,500	Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Cooperative Agreements
WV Department of Agriculture	\$1,090,267	Performance Partnership Grants

City of Charles Town	\$900,000	Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Cooperative Agreements
Mingo County Commission	\$728,000	
WV Division of Natural Resources	\$715,000	Regional Wetlands Program Development Grants
WV Department of Agriculture	\$676,562	Performance Partnership Grants
City of Huntington	\$600,000	Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Cooperative Agreements
City of Romney	\$500,000	Congressionally Mandated Projects
WV University Research Corporation	\$452,206	
City of Martinsburg	\$400,000	
City of Thomas	\$400,000	
WayneCEDA - Wayne County Economic Development	\$400,000	
West Virginia University	\$280,377	
City of Morgantown	\$200,000	
Environmental Law Institute	\$200,000	
Morgan County School Board	\$200,000	
Wyoming County Economic Development Authority	\$200,000	
Coalfield Development Corporation	\$192,300	
University of Tulsa	\$118,900	
The Mountain Institute	\$91,000	
Friends of Decker's Creek Inc	\$55,600	
Southern Appalachian Labor School	\$25,000	
City of Philippi	\$24,600	
Town of Addison	\$16,000	
Berkeley County Solid W Authority	\$10,900	

Notes

Unless otherwise indicated, all data in this report are current as of July 2017 and figures for government spending and grants are drawn from www.usaspending.gov, and from official federal government budget documents. Additional information is drawn from state budget sources.

¹ <https://www.epa.gov/wv/protecting-source-water-west-virginia>

² <https://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/about-chesapeake-bay-program-office>

³ http://www.iisgcp.org/catalog/downloads_09/id_256.pdf

⁴ <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-brownfields-funding-announced-roseville-newark-norwalk-painesville-piqua-port>

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- ⁵ <https://www.epa.gov/cleanups/cleanups-my-community>
- ⁶ <https://www.epa.gov/ust/learn-about-underground-storage-tanks-usts>
- ⁷ <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-11/documents/ca-16-34.pdf>
- ⁸ <http://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/healthy-air/sota/city-rankings/most-polluted-cities.html>
- ⁹ www.lung.org/assets/documents/healthy-air/state-of-the-air/state-of-the-air-2017.pdf
- ¹⁰ https://noharm.org/sites/default/files/lib/downloads/climate/Economic_Affliction_of_Asthma.pdf
- ¹¹ <https://www.epa.gov/mats/mercury-and-air-toxics-standards-west-virginia>