

Republicans — especially the House GOP — often lambaste EPA. The phrase “jack-booted thugs” will stick in my memory a long time. A recent NBC/WSJ [poll](#), however, shows EPA is actually one of our more popular institutions:

|                  | %Positive | %Negative | Difference |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| EPA              | 40        | 28        | +7         |
| Barack Obama     | 38        | 40        | -4         |
| Democratic Party | 38        | 50        | -2         |
| Republican Party | 29        | 45        | -16        |
| The Tea Party    | 22        | 41        | -19        |

According to other recent [polls](#), Congress has an approval rating of about 13%. So, at 40%, EPA is three times more popular than Congress. [In fact, after I originally posted this, I learned that the June 19 [Gallop poll](#) showed Congress sinking to a 7% approval rating, a historic low.]

Notice that EPA not only ranks at the top in positive ratings but has the lowest number of negative ratings. Also interestingly, the percentage of the public thinking that most government regulations are necessary has gone up from 42% to 50% over the past twenty years. Over the same period of time, the number agreeing that “the government should do more” has gone from 32% to 46%.

Of course, attacks on EPA may resonate with the Republican base and with the Koch brothers and other major GOP funders. But they don’t seem to have nearly as much traction with the public as a whole.