

The [Environmental Protection Network](#), a coalition of former EPA professionals, has issued a [detailed analysis](#) of Trump's proposed EPA budget. We knew the proposal was bad, but the new analysis shows just how damaging the proposed cuts would be on many different dimensions. Here are a few key takeaways.

First EPA's budget is already lean. Adjusting for inflation, it's at its lowest point in three decades. That was before the 1990 Clean Air Act and recent chemical safety regulation. EPA is also dealing with complex problems such as interstate transport of air pollution that weren't really on the agenda back then. In the meantime, the country's population and economy have grown dramatically, so EPA is stretched thinner than it was thirty years ago. And Trump's 2-for-1 order triples the amount of work required to issue a new regulation by requiring that two existing regulations be repealed at the same time. To the extent there was "fat" in the EPA budget, much of it is already gone.

Second, the budget will hurt states and industry as well as EPA's national activities. In terms of the states, the budget includes a 45% cut in grants to states, tribes, and local governments for pollution control. Given constraints on state budgets, it will be hard for state governments to make up the difference. Moreover, the budget eliminates two of the ten EPA regional offices, reducing the ability of states to work with EPA officials who are familiar with local problems. In my view, this gives the lie to the claim that the Administration just wants to return regulatory authority to the states. If the Administration was serious about moving more regulation to the states, it would shift current grant programs and some EPA program funding into block grants. It would also strengthen the regional offices rather than cutting them, to help provide backup and support for state programs. Obviously, that's not happening — because the goal isn't to shift control of environmental protection to the states; the goal is just to reduce environmental protection.

Third, the cuts aren't limited to controversial issues like climate change. The proposal also butchers programs that address pollution of interstate water bodies, clean up of toxic waste, oversight of contaminated federal property, and ocean protection.

Whatever you might think about Trump's ability to "make America great again," one thing is clear: he *does* have a concrete plan to restore American pollution to its heights.