

The Trump Administration left a trail of regulatory destruction behind it. Cleaning up the mess and issuing new regulations is Priority #1 for the Biden Administration. Under EPA head Michael Regan, the effort is beginning to pick up steam.

EPA has begun the year with several major new regulatory efforts. No one of them is transformative standing alone, but their cumulative impact will be substantially cleaner air and lower carbon emissions.

Feb. 28. EPA [proposed](#) an unexpectedly strong expansion of the existing rules governing interstate air pollution. The proposal would strengthen existing limits for coal and gas-fired power plants, but it would also add other categories of industry such as cement. In addition, it adds western states like California to the rule's coverage. EPA estimates that the benefits of the rule far exceed its costs. It projects that "In the year 2026, the proposed rule would prevent approximately 1,000 premature deaths, reduce hospital and emergency room visits for thousands of people with asthma and other respiratory problems, help keep hundreds of thousands of children and adults from missing school and work due to respiratory illness, and decrease asthma symptoms for millions of Americans."

March 7. EPA [proposed](#) stringent new rules to limit emissions from heavy trucks, a major source of urban air pollution. This rule is particularly relevant to disadvantaged communities and communities of color, which are often located near major arteries and transportation hubs. EPA estimates that in 2045 alone the rule will prevent:

- Between 860 and 2,100 premature deaths
- 6,700 hospital admissions and emergency department visits
- 18,000 cases of asthma onset in children
- 3.1 million cases of asthma symptoms and allergic rhinitis symptoms
- 78,000 lost days of work
- 1.1 million lost school days

March 9. EPA [restored](#) of California's authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles. This matters not only for California but for the sixteen states that have taken advantage of a provision in federal law allowing them to piggyback on the California rules. The Trump Administration had revoked California's longstanding regulatory authority. The Biden EPA concluded that the revocation was based on an erroneous interpretation of the statute and that even if that interpretation had been correct, the Trump EPA also got the facts wrong.

On April 1, just after the quarter ended, EPA finalized new fuel efficiency rules for cars,

undoing a Trump rollback. The new rules will require an average of 49 miles per gallon for the 2026 model year. That gets EPA's Q2 off to a strong start.

Each of these regulatory initiatives represents thousands of hours by experts in gathering data, modeling, and drafting the regulation and its supporting justifications. It takes intense effort and dedication to make so many big regulatory moves at once. Proposing regulations is only the first step. EPA will need to process and respond to public comments on proposals, and then work through complicated litigation to get the final regulations upheld. But nothing important was ever done in a day.