

ISSUE BRIEF

THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S PRO-CANCER AGENDA:

AMERICANS COULD FACE AN EXTRAORDINARY INCREASE IN EXPOSURE TO CANCER-CAUSING TOXICS AND RADIATION

Over the nearly two years of President Donald Trump's second term, his administration has taken more than 500 actions that harm public health or the environment.¹ When faced with this onslaught of harm, it can be difficult to see the strategic agenda at play. However, NRDC's new analysis reveals that the Trump administration is executing a sweeping and long-planned—but quiet—government-wide campaign to dismember major programs intended to prevent exposure to cancer-causing toxics and radiation. In sum, this administration has reversed course: America's government is no longer fighting a War *on* Cancer but fighting a War to *Promote* Cancer.

© Mark Mulligan/Houston Chronicle via Getty Images



People fish along the Texas City Dike across from the refineries inside the Texas City industrial complex, including Marathon and Valero, May 2021.

These actions include:

- Dismantling protections against carcinogenic PFAS “forever chemicals”
- Rolling back radiation safeguards for nuclear plants and nearby communities
- Expanding production of the weed killer Roundup and supporting immunity from liability for its manufacturers, despite substantial evidence that the active ingredient glyphosate is a probable human carcinogen
- Giving producers of carcinogenic ethylene oxide and numerous other carcinogens a free pass to keep polluting
- “Revisiting” standards that would finally phase out asbestos use

This is not an accident. Much of this campaign can be found throughout the Heritage Foundation’s Project 2025 blueprint and has long been advocated for by industry. The campaign is being waged in the halls of agencies created to protect the public against toxic and cancer-causing agents, including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), the Department of Energy (DOE), the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), and even the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The administration has also systematically defunded or gutted programs that advance key types of cancer prevention, research, and treatment. This is a deliberate campaign to help the chemical, oil, and nuclear industries while leaving the American people more exposed to cancer-causing chemicals.

NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO STOP THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER IN AMERICA

In one form or another, cancer affects nearly every family in America. Whether it’s a sister with breast cancer, a mom with uterine cancer, a dad with prostate cancer, or a friend with lung cancer, the disease is an epidemic. Within the United States, rates of breast cancer have been increasing over the past two decades, with younger women facing a steeper increase in diagnosis.² People younger than 50 years old have experienced a 2.9 percent increase of colon cancer each year from 2013 to 2022.³ Nearly 230,000 people are expected to be diagnosed with lung cancer in 2026.⁴ Prostate cancer is expected to be diagnosed in more than 330,000 men in 2026, and the incidence of prostate cancer is 70 percent higher in Black men than white men.⁵ This racial disparity is not limited to prostate cancer. Black Americans, for example, have the highest overall cancer death rate and lower five-year survival rates than white Americans, disparities shaped in part by increased exposure to cancer risks and less access to prevention, early detection, and care.⁶

The disease is also a scourge among younger populations. Cancer is the number one cause of death by disease among children and adolescents in the United States. Over the past four decades, the number of kids diagnosed annually with leukemia has increased by about 35 percent.⁷ Adolescent cancers have increased by about 1 percent per year since 2015.⁸ Brain and central nervous system tumors are the leading cause of cancer death in children, and far too many young adults are being diagnosed before the age of 35.⁹

© Selma Boerlein/Getty Images



A child with cancer receiving chemotherapy treatment in hospital.

Even when cancer is being treated or is in remission, it casts a dark shadow over those afflicted and their families. Cancer, and the often-torturous regimens used to treat it, can have devastating, lifelong physical and psychological impacts. The economics of cancer are significant and can wreak havoc on family finances and well-being. Indeed, a recent study found that cancer patients are nearly five times more likely to declare bankruptcy than other Americans.¹⁰ The National Cancer Institute has estimated that cancer-related medical costs in the United States are about \$209 billion per year, though the American Cancer Society believes that “this is an underestimate because it did not account for the rising cost of treatment,” and many prescription medicines alone cost more than \$100,000 annually.¹¹

While cancer continues to pose enormous risks, government efforts to attack the disease over the past several decades have yielded some positive results. The trend toward increased incidence of some cancers has been dampened (mostly due to reduced tobacco use) and cancer treatments have improved. In some cases, the government has taken decisive action to reduce exposure to carcinogens—such as forever chemicals in tap water—and introduced controls on certain cancer-causing air pollutants, including ethylene oxide and other hazardous organics. But far more needs to be done.

How are members of the Trump administration tackling this crisis? They are not and instead are actively making things worse. They have pulled an abrupt about-face that portends a ratcheting up of cancer’s rampage.

WHAT THE ALL-OF-GOVERNMENT PRO-CANCER AGENDA LOOKS LIKE

President Trump promised that his administration would “make America healthy again” and would take actions “drastically lowering chronic disease rates and ending childhood chronic disease.”¹² But his administration’s actions tell a very different story.

Across the federal government, the Trump administration is weakening the scientific guidelines used to identify and prevent cancer risks, rolling back safeguards that limit exposure to carcinogens, and dismantling the agencies and research programs responsible for protecting the public from toxic chemicals and radiation.

These actions amount to far more than a collection of individual regulatory rollbacks. They represent a fundamental shift in federal policy away from preventing exposure to cancer-causing pollution and toward giving polluting industries greater latitude to expose workers, families, and communities to substances known or suspected to cause cancer.



© Nick Simonite for NRDC

Emissions rising from an oil refinery complex near homes in Texas.

REJECTING THE SCIENCE USED TO PROTECT PEOPLE FROM CANCER

At the foundation of the administration’s agenda is an effort to weaken how the federal government evaluates cancer risk.

Abandoning the principle that there is “no safe level of exposure” to carcinogens

For decades, federal health and environmental agencies have generally recognized that exposure to carcinogens can carry some degree of cancer risk even at very low levels. This “no safe level of exposure” principle has helped drive policies aimed at reducing harmful exposure as much as reasonably possible.

The chemical and nuclear industries have long sought to overturn that approach, and Project 2025 outlined much the same goal.¹³ The Trump administration is now putting those plans into practice.

Under this administration, as detailed below, former chemical-industry lobbyists and lawyers now oversee the EPA toxics policy. These officials have moved the agency away from the “no safe level” principle for carcinogens, including in a precedent-setting safety reassessment of the widely used cancer-causing chemical formaldehyde.¹⁴ If this effort is successful, the EPA is likely to take the same approach for other carcinogens in the chemical industry’s crosshairs, including hexavalent chromium, which is known to cause lung cancer.¹⁵

At the same time, both the NRC and the DOE are eliminating the obligation to reduce exposure to radioactive carcinogens to the lowest reasonably achievable level, despite decades of scientific evidence that any level of radiation poses a cancer risk.¹⁶ As recently as 2021, the NRC rejected a petition seeking to abandon the “no safe level” standard for radiation, which is widely characterized as a known human carcinogen.¹⁷ However, soon after President Trump began his second term, he issued an executive order directing the commission to reconsider its reliance on the “no safe level”

threshold and the “as low as reasonably achievable” (ALARA) standard, which drives NRC to make every reasonable effort to keep radiation exposure as far below regulatory limits as practical, to minimize cancer risks.¹⁸

President Trump also fired a Democratic commissioner and installed a new chair; soon thereafter, the supposedly independent federal agency proposed to eliminate ALARA, even while acknowledging it could not refute the science indicating there is “no safe threshold” of exposure to radioactive carcinogens.¹⁹ The elimination of ALARA is supported by the nuclear industry and was urged by the Project 2025 blueprint.²⁰

In January 2026, Energy Secretary Chris Wright eliminated the use of the “no safe level of exposure” and ALARA standards for controlling radioactive carcinogens by DOE.²¹ The Trump administration’s DOE management argued this step was needed to boost nuclear energy growth.²²

These unprecedented actions run contrary to the long-standing scientific recognition that there is no safe level of exposure to cancer-causing compounds and radioactivity. Even as these rollbacks are underway, a study led by scientists at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health has found that people living in counties closer to operational nuclear power plants have higher rates of cancer mortality than those located farther away, though the researchers said more study would be needed to establish causality.²³ Although the argument from the Trump administration is that these changes are necessary to increase nuclear energy production, as NRDC has previously stated, regulation “is not an obstacle to nuclear energy, it is the foundation of public confidence.”²⁴

Replacing long-term evidence with less robust testing methods

After decades of relying on scientifically accepted long-term human or rodent studies to evaluate chemical hazards—including links to cancers—the EPA is increasingly relying on short-term tests known as “new approach methods” (NAMs). These NAMs involve the use of computer models, tests on cells and proteins in a petri dish, and engineered tissues, for example. However, when it comes to chronic or systemic health effects, these methods lack the ability to capture the biological processes that occur in whole living organisms.²⁵ Chemicals linked to serious chronic health effects can appear safer simply because the NAMs being used are poorly suited to detect diseases, such as cancer, that develop over many years. Many experts believe this is a key reason the chemical industry is a proponent of NAMs, plus they are faster and cheaper than long-term human or rodent studies. For cancer and other complex disorders, animal-based experimentation remains an essential component to keeping populations safe, yet the EPA has been moving away from this type of research.

One recent example of this is para-dichlorobenzene (p-DCB), a chemical used in mothballs, deodorizers, pesticides, some plastics, and other products. The NIH has classified p-DCB as “reasonably anticipated” to be a human carcinogen,

while the World Health Organization has classified it as “possibly carcinogenic to humans.”²⁶ Human population studies have found associations between p-DCB exposure and certain reproductive and other cancers.²⁷ Yet the EPA treated a five-day NAM study as evidence of long-term safety, while sweeping aside published studies linking p-DCB with cancer in people. A scientific committee that reviewed the five-day NAM protocol warned that it may fail to identify many critical human health concerns because of “other potential effects including reproductive, developmental, endocrine, neurological, or immune system toxicity are not necessarily accounted for.” The committee went on to say that “these effects are potentially more sensitive”—that is, these health effects may occur at lower doses of exposure to the chemical—than the limited number of adverse effects reported in the NAM studies.²⁸

The shift to NAMs comes at a time when the Trump administration is also making a massive shift toward artificial intelligence (AI). The administration has fired 1,500 EPA scientists, many of whom would have been involved in interpreting scientific test results, and AI has been used to review NAM data.²⁹ Thus, under the current administration’s new approach, chemical evaluations will be done by testing cells in a petri dish with data interpreted by AI platform such as ChatGPT.

This is a formula for disaster. The result of a reliance on such NAM studies is likely to be a regulatory system that does not merely weaken protections against known carcinogens but increasingly fails to identify dangerous chemicals as carcinogens in the first place.

Disregarding cancer findings from established scientific authorities

The administration is also rejecting or disavowing the EPA’s own scientists’ conclusions and those of respected independent scientific bodies when they justify stronger human protections.

In addition to rejecting research about carcinogens such as radiation or p-DCB, the Trump EPA has dismissed the World Health Organization’s finding that the widely used herbicide atrazine is a probable human carcinogen.³⁰ The agency is likewise disavowing its previous risk assessment of ethylene oxide, which found that the chemical is substantially more carcinogenic than previously understood, and is moving to weaken toxic air pollution standards governing ethylene oxide emissions.³¹ As discussed below, administration officials similarly have attacked respected scientific bodies’ findings that the widely used herbicide glyphosate (Roundup) also is a probable human carcinogen.³²

When scientific findings support stronger protections against cancer-causing chemicals, the administration is increasingly attacking the science, rather than addressing the cancer risks.



Duke Energy's two unit coal- and gas-fired Belews Creek Steam Station in Stokes County, North Carolina, on April 10, 2024.

ROLLING BACK PROTECTIONS AGAINST CANCER-CAUSING POLLUTION

Manipulating the underlying science makes it easier to forgo future safeguards. But the administration has not waited in attacking long-standing regulatory safeguards against cancer either. It is already rolling back legal limits on dangerous pollution and chemicals and weakening protections in workplaces and consumer products.

Granting polluters exemptions from toxic air pollution standards

Early in the second Trump administration, the EPA invited regulated facilities to seek “presidential exemptions” from Clean Air Act pollution standards simply by sending the agency an email.³³ As a result, President Trump issued seven different presidential proclamations across six industries, exempting 200 facilities from hazardous air pollution standards, including for carcinogens. Those facilities include petrochemical plants that release cancer-causing chemicals such as benzene and chloroprene, coal-burning power plants that release carcinogens such as arsenic and fine particulates, coke ovens that produce steelmaking inputs laced with both arsenic and benzene, and commercial sterilizers that emit ethylene oxide.³⁴

The EPA’s own data show pollution from exempted facilities rising sharply afterward. NRDC’s analysis of the EPA data found significant environmental and public health impacts from the facilities that were exempted from air pollution laws. For example, it is estimated that the 11 coal plants given federal bailout funding and regulatory rollbacks in 2025 were responsible for 450 to 650 premature deaths from particulate matter and ozone, 160 emergency room visits, and 56,130 asthma attacks in children per year.³⁵ Many of the increased emissions from these dirty coal plants also are carcinogenic, including fine particulate matter and several cancer-causing heavy metals.

The price tag from this extra pollution: as much as **\$17 billion in just short-term public health costs** from increased respiratory issues, illnesses, and asthma attacks that led to more emergency room visits and hospital admissions, more days out sick from school or work, and more early deaths. And this is just for the near-term health harms. It does not include the staggering costs from the longer-term rise in cancers caused by these same pollutants.³⁶

Such blanket EPA exemptions, lacking any scientific review, effectively allow some of the nation’s largest industrial polluters to continue releasing cancer-causing and toxic pollutants at levels that federal laws were specifically designed to prohibit.

Weakening protections against toxic pollution from coal-burning power plants

In addition to issuing the presidential exemptions for more than 200 specific facilities, the EPA has adopted across-the-board rollbacks of national standards limiting hazardous air pollution from all power plants that burn coal and oil. The increased pollution resulting from these rollbacks includes cancer-causing arsenic, nickel, cadmium, fine particulates, and other carcinogenic and toxic pollutants.³⁷

The EPA has also weakened wastewater controls for coal ash pollution from power plants, allowing greater discharges of arsenic, cadmium, mercury, and other contaminants linked to cancer and other toxic effects.³⁸

Dismantling protections against PFAS “forever chemicals”

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a class of thousands of synthetic chemicals, many of which have been linked to kidney, testicular, and other cancers, as well as a range of other serious health effects. They are often called “forever chemicals” because they are highly resistant to breaking down in the environment. Yet the Trump EPA is dismantling protections against PFAS.

For many people, their primary exposure to PFAS is through their drinking water; the EPA has estimated that as many as 105 million people are exposed to PFAS in their tap water at levels exceeding the agency’s 2024 standards.³⁹ Yet the EPA is implementing plans to repeal four out of its six drinking

water safeguards for PFAS and to delay enforcement of the remaining two by another two years.⁴⁰ Similarly, on August 11, 2026, the EPA quietly rescinded its two guidance documents that had established recommendations for state and federal Clean Water Act permit writers to address PFAS contamination in industrial discharges to surface waters and in publicly owned sewage treatment plants across the United States.⁴¹

In November 2025, the EPA also announced plans to weaken requirements for PFAS polluters to report toxic discharges, while the administration separately began considering weaker PFAS limits for consumer goods.⁴² In May 2026, the EPA withdrew a Biden administration proposal addressing certain PFAS cleanups under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.⁴³ And a recent Pentagon report, confirming what had been found by a *New York Times* investigation, showed that PFAS cleanups by the Department of Defense have slowed to a crawl, with the start of some key cleanups being delayed to 2051 or later.⁴⁴

Further demonstrating the EPA’s recent mission to weaken PFAS protections, in July 2026, the agency withdrew an assessment that found serious cancer and other health risks from spreading PFAS-contaminated sewage sludge on agricultural land as fertilizer.⁴⁵ Rather than pursue stronger protections, the EPA replaced the assessment with voluntary (i.e., non-enforceable) guidance suggesting that sewage treatment utilities consider how they might address PFAS contamination.

Dismantling and delaying protections against carcinogenic soot and asbestos and reports on other key carcinogens

The Trump Justice Department asked a federal court to revoke the 2024 EPA standards that strengthened protections against fine-particle pollution, or soot, which contributes to lung cancer, respiratory ailments such as asthma, and heart disease.⁴⁶ Before 2024, those limits had not been tightened in more than a decade, despite growing knowledge of soot’s harms to health. The Trump EPA also refused to implement the strengthened standards according to the timeline required by the Clean Air Act.⁴⁷ Fortunately, these dangerous acts were met with swift rebukes; on June 26, 2026, a unanimous panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit rejected the administration’s attempt to undo the stronger safeguards.⁴⁸

Meanwhile, in June 2025, the EPA announced it would revisit the rule banning virtually all remaining uses of cancer-causing asbestos, which further delayed lifesaving protections for workers and families.⁴⁹ In June 2026, the agency pushed back its timeline for a major asbestos rule yet again.⁵⁰ It also moved to delay requirements to report health and safety data for 16 toxic chemicals, including carcinogens such as benzene, bisphenol A, and vinyl chloride.⁵¹



Activist Sandy Wynn-Stelt speaks about Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) blood testing and medical monitoring at the 2022 PFAS Conference in Wilmington, North Carolina, on June 15, 2022. Wynn-Stelt’s husband Joel Stelt died of liver cancer in 2016 and she was diagnosed with cancer in 2020 and underwent surgery. When her blood was tested it was found to contain PFAS levels 750 times the national average. For years they drank water from a well contaminated with PFAS from tannery waste dumped in the 1960s by Wolverine World Wide, located across the street from their home.



A worker walking past a sign warning of the danger of asbestos exposure posted on a fence outside a construction site in Boston, Massachusetts.

Promoting glyphosate (Roundup) while shielding manufacturers from liability

The Trump administration has also taken steps to promote glyphosate, the active ingredient in the herbicide Roundup, despite substantial evidence that it is a probable carcinogen to humans.⁵² The World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer and numerous scientific studies have linked the herbicide to cancer.⁵³

Nevertheless, President Trump issued an executive order aimed at expanding production of Roundup (formerly produced by Monsanto, now by Bayer).⁵⁴ His administration also supported the chemical industry's efforts in the Supreme Court to shield manufacturers from legal liability in lawsuits brought by cancer victims exposed to Roundup.⁵⁵ On June 25, 2026, the Supreme Court sided with the administration and the chemical industry.⁵⁶ The administration's actions regarding Roundup have enraged activists in the Make America Healthy Again movement, which has long focused on getting rid of this widely used pesticide.

Weakening protections for workers exposed to carcinogens

The Trump administration is causing workers to lose protections against cancer-causing chemicals. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) proposed roughly two dozen deregulatory actions in 2025, including more than a dozen that would give employers "greater compliance flexibility" to address respiratory threats from specific carcinogens, including asbestos, arsenic, and benzene. Employers would be allowed, for example, to use "less burdensome" approaches to protecting workers from breathing cancer-causing chemicals.⁵⁷

OSHA also has proposed narrowing its interpretation of the Occupational Safety and Health Act's "general duty clause," potentially restricting the agency's ability to act when employers expose workers to dangerous levels of carcinogens and other toxic chemicals.⁵⁸

The Trump EPA, meanwhile, has proposed reversing a 2024 policy that prevented the agency from assuming workers were adequately protected because they supposedly use respirators or other personal protective equipment.⁵⁹ Doing so would allow the EPA to shift greater responsibility for avoiding toxic exposure onto individual workers.⁶⁰

Putting protections against dangerous consumer products at risk

The administration has weakened the CPSC, the independent agency responsible for protecting Americans from carcinogenic and other dangerous materials in consumer products.

For decades, the CPSC had bipartisan membership and commissioners were only removable for cause. However, in May 2025, President Trump fired all three Democratic CPSC commissioners without citing any specific cause.⁶¹ A federal court ruled the firings illegal.⁶² But the Trump Justice Department and industry groups persuaded the Supreme Court to overturn a bedrock 91-year-old Supreme Court decision that had prohibited the president from firing independent agency commissioners without cause. The Supreme Court allowed the firings at the CPSC and other independent agencies to stand.⁶³



A water researcher tests a sample of water for PFAS on February 14, 2023, at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Center For Environmental Solutions and Emergency Response in Cincinnati.

The resulting two-member, Republican CPSC has moved to revoke or withdraw a series of consumer-safety rules and proposals.⁶⁴ Among the issues now before the commission is a petition seeking restrictions on likely carcinogenic organohalogen flame retardants used in children's toys. In 2017, the commission had approved moving forward with a rule to control the use of these flame retardants by a three-to-two vote (with the three Democratic commissioners voting yes, and the two Republican commissioners voting no).⁶⁵ With the commission weakened and the White House asserting greater control over its rulemaking, observers believe that the future of those protections is in jeopardy.⁶⁶ According to the CPSC's 2026 regulatory agenda, the commission will continue to study the issue and has no current plans to control these carcinogenic compounds, nearly a decade after it voted to move forward with a rule banning or regulating them.⁶⁷

DISMANTLING THE GOVERNMENT'S CAPACITY TO PREVENT CANCER

The administration is also attacking the scientific institutions and public servants responsible for identifying cancer risks and developing national protections.

Gutting scientific infrastructure at the EPA, CDC and other agencies

The Trump administration eliminated the EPA's Office of Research and Development and its Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS), which have played a central role in determining the cancer and other health risks posed by toxic chemicals. IRIS was established by the EPA in 1985 to create a database of human health assessments for various chemicals, providing scientific analyses that were not tied to the corporations with an economic interest in the outcome.⁶⁸

Both the chemical industry and Project 2025 had called for IRIS to be dramatically overhauled or eliminated.⁶⁹ The administration has made that a reality by firing or reassigning dozens of scientists from IRIS and the Office of Research and Development to other parts of the EPA, and by adding a disclaimer to the IRIS website that questions the validity of the more than 500 assessments conducted since 1985.⁷⁰

Scientists have been removed across the government, not just within the EPA. An investigation by former government scientists reported by the *New York Times* in September 2026 found that CDC has been "zombified."⁷¹ The centers have lost nearly a third of their staff to layoffs, resignations and retirements since President Trump took office, including about half (48 percent) of their chronic disease staff that track and work to prevent cancer and other long-term illnesses.⁷² Entire divisions have been shuttered, including, for example, the program that works to prevent and track smoking,⁷³ the nation's leading cause of cancer.⁷⁴ This, and political interference from senior HHS management, reportedly have hobbled the CDC's ability to address key health threats.⁷⁵

Government-wide, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists, since President Trump took office in 2025, nearly 95,000 government science employees and over 10,000 PhD scientists have been laid off or left their jobs.⁷⁶ The loss of that scientific infrastructure does more than affect any single chemical assessment. It weakens the ability of the EPA and other agencies to independently determine which pollutants or other agents cause cancer or are otherwise dangerous and how much exposure poses a threat to human health.⁷⁷

Slashing NIH staff, research, and cancer-related science

The administration also has sharply reduced the capacity of the NIH. The respected journal *BMJ* published an article in September 2026 entitled "Trump's Dismantling of NIH Research Continues Apace," documenting the ongoing effort to eviscerate the NIH's research programs.⁷⁸ A November 2025 analysis found that cuts and freezes to NIH grants at major universities had halted roughly 380 clinical trials involving some 74,000 patients.⁷⁹ NIH's workforce fell from approximately 21,000 employees at the end of 2024 to 17,100 in 2026, including the loss of roughly 1,100 PhD-level employees.⁸⁰

Those cuts threaten cancer research directly. Federal investments in RNA vaccine technology, for example, have supported decades of work not only on infectious diseases but also on cancer treatments and personalized cancer vaccines. A March 2026 study in *JAMA Network Open* identified 178 NIH grants related to RNA vaccines for both viruses and cancer between 1997 and 2025, representing \$1.65 billion in funding.⁸¹ Researchers described personalized cancer vaccines as a major frontier for RNA technology, particularly given the more than two million new cancer diagnoses each year in the United States. Yet the administration's recent and proposed funding cuts threaten that progress.⁸²

The administration has made particularly significant cuts to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, the NIH institute devoted specifically to studying environmental causes of cancer and other diseases. Indeed, the administration proposed eliminating the institute entirely in its fiscal year 2027 budget.⁸³ Administration officials also halted the publication of *Environmental Health Perspectives*, a widely cited peer-reviewed journal that has published research documenting cancer and other health risks associated with toxic chemicals and environmental pollution. A private institution has stepped in to take over publication instead.⁸⁴

Weakening research does not make health risks disappear. It simply makes them harder to detect and document, and therefore easier for polluters, regulators, Congress, and the courts to overlook or ignore.

Firing independent science advisors and putting industry insiders in charge of chemical safety

While the administration has reduced its own independent scientific capacity, it has appointed numerous former chemical-industry lobbyists, lawyers, and trade-association executives to serve in senior positions overseeing chemical safety and environmental policy.⁸⁵ Among them are:

- David Fotouhi, who is now second in command at the EPA as deputy administrator. He is a former industry lawyer who challenged the EPA's ban on asbestos, fought against controls on cancer-causing and otherwise toxic contaminants such as PFAS and polychlorinated biphenyls, and worked to roll back water protections while serving in the EPA during Trump's first term.⁸⁶
- Aaron Szabo, who lobbied for the petrochemical industry and was hired to run the EPA's air pollution program (he reportedly left the EPA in October 2026).⁸⁷
- Nancy Beck, a former executive at the American Chemistry Council, who now helps to oversee chemical safety evaluations at the EPA.
- Lynn Dekleva, another former senior American Chemistry Council official, who worked for DuPont for 32 years, fought formaldehyde regulations, and is now a senior official in EPA's chemical safety office.
- Steven Cook, a former chemical-industry lawyer involved in efforts to repeal a PFAS cleanup rule, who is now a senior official in EPA's hazardous waste and Superfund office.
- Kyle Kunkler, previously the soybean industry's lead lobbyist and an advocate for continued use of the cancer-linked pesticide dicamba, who is now employed in the EPA's chemical safety office.⁸⁸

The administration has also gutted the EPA's independent scientific advisory panels, firing its entire Science Advisory Board and Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee.⁸⁹ To replace these independent experts, the EPA has begun to install "industry players and academics" with deep ties to corporations regulated by the agency.⁹⁰ Similarly, industry and consulting firm scientists now make up the majority on EPA's panel of outside chemical advisors. Of its 23-member slate for the Science Advisory Committee on Chemicals—which offers advice on chemical risk evaluations under the Toxic Substances Control Act—more than half currently work or previously worked for corporate interests.⁹¹ In the same vein, the EPA singled out for firing a scientist on the National Drinking Water Advisory Council who had signed a petition urging the agency to follow science in its decision-making.⁹²

By changing the EPA from an expertise-driven body to an industry-aligned agent, the administration is making it harder to identify and prevent the next generation of cancer risks.

FREEDOM FROM CANCER... OR FREEDOM TO POLLUTE?

Cancer research and public policy are not only about finding better treatments after people get sick; they are also about preventing needless exposure to substances that make people sick in the first place.

Yet the Trump administration has spent the past two years in office systematically shifting budgets, policy priorities, and legal standards away from those basic protections and toward rewarding the industries responsible for pollution.

Congress has both the authority and the responsibility to provide oversight of these actions, to ensure adequate funding and staffing, and to use its levers of power—including appropriations restrictions and reports—to demand that the government protect the public from cancer-causing agents. Its failure to aggressively investigate the dismantling of public health protections leaves families and communities to bear the consequences on their own.

A healthy life should not be treated as an obstacle to somebody else's profit margin. The freedom to breathe clean air, drink safe water, eat safe food, work without needless exposure to carcinogens, and raise children without avoidable toxic risks should be among the most basic expectations of life in America. Americans should not have to wonder whether the water coming from their taps contains cancer-causing chemicals, whether the air they breathe carries toxic pollution from a nearby industrial facility, or whether going to work means being unnecessarily exposed to carcinogens.

Instead of ensuring these basic freedoms, the Trump administration is creating a system in which polluters are given greater leeway to expose everyone in the nation to cancer-causing toxics and radiation.

Endnotes

- 1 NRDC, “White House Watch: Tracking Attacks on Our Environment & Health,” September 28, 2026, <https://www.nrdc.org/resources/white-house-watch-tracking-attacks-our-environment-health>.
- 2 American Cancer Society, “Key Statistics for Breast Cancer,” last modified June 24, 2026, <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/key-statistics.html>, and American Cancer Society, “Trends in Incidence and Mortality Rates, 2026, <https://cancerstatisticscenter.cancer.org/#/>.
- 3 American Cancer Society, “Key Statistics for Colorectal Cancer,” last modified January 14, 2026, <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/colon-rectal-cancer/about/key-statistics.html>.
- 4 American Cancer Society, “Key Statistics for Lung Cancer,” last modified January 13, 2026, <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/lung-cancer/about/key-statistics.html>.
- 5 American Cancer Society, “Prostate Cancer Awareness Month: American Cancer Society Reports New Cases Are Up 3% but Earlier Diagnosis Improves Patient Outcomes,” news release, September 1, 2026, <https://pressroom.cancer.org/prostate-cancer-awareness-2026>.
- 6 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Cancer and African American People,” February 13, 2025, <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/health-equity/african-american.html>.
- 7 Children’s Cancer Cause, “Childhood Cancer Facts and Figures,” last modified September 2026, <https://www.childrenscancercause.org/facts>.
- 8 American Childhood Cancer Organization, “US Childhood Cancer Statistics,” accessed August 2026, <https://www.acco.org/us-childhood-cancer-statistics/>.
- 9 Children’s Cancer Cause, “Childhood Cancer Facts and Figures.”
- 10 See, American College of Surgeons, “Cancer Diagnoses Linked to Lasting Financial Challenges, Studies Find,” October 18, 2024, <https://www.facs.org/media-center/press-releases/2024/cancer-diagnoses-linked-to-lasting-financial-challenges-studies-find/>.
- 11 American Cancer Society, *Cancer Facts & Figures 2026*, 2026, 2-3, <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2026/2026-cancer-facts-and-figures.pdf>.
- 12 President Donald J. Trump, “Establishing the President’s Make America Healthy Again Commission,” Exec. Order No. 14212, 90 Fed. Reg. 9833 (February 13, 2025), <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/02/19/2025-02871/establishing-the-presidents-make-america-healthy-again-commission>.
- 13 Heritage Foundation, *Mandate for Leadership: The Conservative Promise* (Project 2025), 2023, 409, 423 https://static.heritage.org/project2025/2025_MandateForLeadership_FULL.pdf#page=465.
- 14 On December 3, 2025, the EPA proposed revisions to its Toxic Substances and Control Act formaldehyde risk evaluation, a potentially precedent-setting change that would mean increased risk to both toxic chemicals and radiation. EPA, “EPA Releases Updated Draft Risk Calculation Memorandum for Formaldehyde under TSCA for Public Comment,” last modified December 3, 2025, <https://www.epa.gov/chemicals-under-tsca/epa-releases-updated-draft-risk-calculation-memorandum-formaldehyde-under-tsca>. The move would reverse the agency’s long-standing (and accurate) position that there is no threshold at which exposure to the carcinogen is safe. Lynn Dekleva and Nancy Beck, senior EPA toxic chemicals officials appointed by the Trump administration and former chemical industry executives, have long advocated for this change. See, Hiroko Tabuchi, “She Fought for a Carcinogen. Now She’s at the E.P.A., Approving New Chemicals,” *New York Times*, February 26, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/26/climate/epa-lynn-dekleve-formaldehyde.html>; Tom Perkins, “Trump EPA Relied on Industry Science to Weaken Formaldehyde Cancer Rules, Documents Show,” *Guardian*, March 27, 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/mar/27/trump-epa-cancer-rules-formaldehyde>.
- 15 OSHA, “Hexavalent Chromium: Health Effects,” accessed September 10, 2026, <https://www.osha.gov/hexavalent-chromium/health-effects>.
- 16 For example, in 2005 the National Academies’ National Research Council published a comprehensive meta-analysis of low-dose radiation research. The Academies concluded, “The scientific research base shows that there is no threshold of exposure below which low levels of ionizing radiation can be demonstrated to be harmless or beneficial.” National Academies, “Low Levels of Ionizing Radiation May Cause Harm,” news release, last modified June 29, 2005, <https://www.nationalacademies.org/news/low-levels-of-ionizing-radiation-may-cause-harm>. Similarly, the EPA endorsed the non-threshold approach and models in its 2011 report on radioactive cancer risk, finding that “underlying the risk models is a large body of epidemiological and radiobiological data. In general, results from both lines of research are consistent with a linear, no-threshold dose (LNT) response model in which the risk of inducing a cancer in an irradiated tissue by low doses of radiation is proportional to the dose to that tissue.” EPA, *EPA Radiogenic Cancer Risk Models and Projections for the U.S. Population*, April 2011, https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2025-03/bbfinalversion_508-d.pdf.
- 17 NRC, “Linear No-Threshold Model and Standards for Radiation,” 86 Fed. Reg. 45923 (August 17, 2021), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-08-17/pdf/2021-17475.pdf>.
- 18 President Donald J. Trump, “Ordering the Reform of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission,” Exec. Order No. 14300, 90 Fed. Reg. 22587 (May 23, 2025), <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/05/29/2025-09798/ordering-the-reform-of-the-nuclear-regulatory-commission>.
- 19 See, Matthew McKinzie, Kit Kennedy, and Bemnet Alemayehu, “The Nuclear Regulatory Commission Is Rewriting the Rules That Are Supposed to Keep Nuclear Safe,” NRDC, September 14, 2026, <https://www.nrdc.org/bio/matthew-mckinzie/nuclear-regulatory-commission-rewriting-rules-are-supposed-keep-nuclear-safe>; Claire Zhang, “NRC Mulls Changes to Radiation Safety Requirements,” *FYI*, American Institute of Physics, March 17, 2026, <https://www.aip.org/fyi/nrc-mulls-changes-to-radiation-safety-requirements>; Francisco Camacho, “NRC Considers Eliminating Half-Century-Old Radiation Standard,” *E&E News*, March 17, 2026, <https://www.eenews.net/articles/nrc-considers-eliminating-half-century-old-radiation-standard/>. As *Politico* has reported, President Trump appointed Ho Nieh as chair of the NRC in January 2026, “cementing his remake of the independent agency in a move long expected by nuclear observers.” Nieh joined the NRC as a Republican commissioner in December 2025, when the Senate confirmed his nomination as well as that of Republican commissioner Doug Weaver. Republicans now hold a three-to-two majority on the commission, after Trump fired a Democratic commissioner in June 2025. Nieh is a veteran of the nuclear industry. Francisco Comacho, “Trump Replaces NRC Chair as He Remakes Agency,” *Politico*, January 9, 2026, <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2026/01/09/trump-replaces-nrc-chair-as-he-remakes-agency-00718042>.
- 20 Nuclear Energy Institute, *Accelerating NRC Reform: Industry Recommendations*, July 2025, <https://www.nrc.gov/docs/ML2521/ML25213A112.pdf>; Heritage Foundation, *Mandate for Leadership*, 409: “Set clear radiation exposure and protection standards by eliminating ALARA (‘as low as reasonably achievable’) as a regulatory principle and setting clear standards according to radiological risk and dose rather than arbitrary objectives.”
- 21 Francisco Camacho, “DOE Kills Decades-Old Radiation Safety Standard,” *E&E News*, January 12, 2026, <https://www.eenews.net/articles/doe-kills-decades-old-radiation-safety-standard/>.
- 22 See, James P. Danley, DOE Deputy Secretary, Memorandum to the Secretary, initialed and approved by Secretary Wright, January 9, 2026; Warren Cornwall, “Scientists Decry Trump’s Rush to Loosen Radiation Exposure Standards,” *Science*, February 19, 2026, <https://www.science.org/content/article/scientists-decry-trump-s-rush-loosen-radiation-exposure-standards>; Camacho, “DOE Kills Decades-Old Radiation Safety Standard”; Zhang, “NRC Mulls Changes.”

- 23 Yazan Alwadi et al., “National Analysis of Cancer Mortality and Proximity to Nuclear Power Plants in the United States,” *Nature Communications* 17 (2026), <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-026-69285-4>.
- 24 McKinzie, Kennedy, and Alemayehu, “The Nuclear Regulatory Commission Is Rewriting the Rules.”
- 25 See, Jennifer Sass, “EPA Must Rely on Proven Science,” NRDC, August 26, 2024, <https://www.nrdc.org/resources/epa-must-rely-proven-methods>.
- 26 See, International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), “Chemical Fact Sheets: Dichlorobenzenes,” accessed Oct. 1, 2026, https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/wash-documents/water-safety-and-quality/chemical-fact-sheets-2022/dichlorobenzenes-fact-sheet-2022.pdf?sfvrsn=1c16a619_2&download=true; National Toxicology Program, “Dichlorobenzene,” in *Report on Carcinogens*, 15th ed., National Institutes of Health, 2021, <https://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/sites/default/files/ntp/roc/content/profiles/dichlorobenzene.pdf>; Division of Toxicology and Environmental Medicine, “Public Health Statement: Dichlorobenzenes,” Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), August 2006, <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/ToxProfiles/tp10-cl-b.pdf>; ATSDR, *Toxicological Profile for Dichlorobenzenes*, April 2006, <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles/tp10-p.pdf>. For the EPA’s recent reassessment, see, EPA, *Draft Transcriptomic Assessment for o-Dichlorobenzene and p-Dichlorobenzene*, April 2026, <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2026-04/28-p-dichlorobenzene-draft-transcriptomic-assess-o-dcb-and-p-dcb-tsd-for-draft-risk-evaluation-public-release-apr-2026.pdf>.
- 27 Ibid.; Georgia Wilson Pridgen, Jianmin Zhu, and Yudan Wei, “Exposure to p-Dichlorobenzene and Prevalent Endocrine-Related Reproductive Cancers Among US Women,” *Environmental Science and Pollution Research International* 30, no. 32 (July 2023): 78324–78331, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37269516/>; Julia E. Heck et al., “Retinoblastoma and Ambient Exposure to Air Toxics in the Perinatal Period,” *Journal of Exposure Science & Environmental Epidemiology* 25, no. 2 (March–April 2015):182–186, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24280682/>.
- 28 Board of Scientific Counselors, *Report of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Board of Scientific Counselors EPA Transcriptomic Assessment Product (ETAP) Panel*, December 19, 2023, 13, https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-03/final-bosc-report-etap-epa-response_31924.pdf.
- 29 Aaron Glantz and Story Hinkle, “The EPA May Soon Deploy AI to Regulate Toxic Chemicals. It’s Not Telling the Public,” *Christian Science Monitor*, September 15, 2026, <https://www.csmonitor.com/Environment/2026/0915/ai-epa-trump-chemicals-pesticides-environment>.
- 30 International Agency for Research on Cancer, “IARC Monographs Evaluation of the Carcinogenicity of Atrazine, Alachlor, and Vinclozolin,” November 21, 2025, <https://www.iarc.who.int/infographics/iarc-monographs-evaluation-of-the-carcinogenicity-of-atrazine-alachlor-and-vinclozolin/>. See also, Sophie Samantaroy, “US EPA Dismisses WHO Cancer Agency Determination That Widely Used Herbicide Is ‘Probably Carcinogenic,’” *Health Policy Watch*, May 1, 2026, <https://healthpolicy-watch.news/us-epa-dismisses-who-cancer-agency-determination-that-widely-used-herbicide-is-probably-carcinogenic/>.
- 31 Giancarlo Vargas, “EPA Proposed Rescinding Ethylene Oxide Emissions Standards for Commercial Sterilizers,” Harvard Law School Environmental & Energy Law Program, April 21, 2026, <https://eelp.law.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Ethylene-Oxide-Quick-Take.pdf>.
- 32 International Agency for Research on Cancer, “Glyphosate Monograph now Available,” July 29, 2015, <https://www.iarc.who.int/news-events/glyphosate-monograph-now-available/>; Russell C. Cattley et al., “Carcinogenicity of Atrazine, Alachlor, and Vinclozolin,” *Lancet Oncology* 27, no. 1 (January 2026), [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1470-2045\(25\)00702-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1470-2045(25)00702-8).
- 33 EPA, “Clean Air Act Section 112 Presidential Exemption Information,” last modified March 12, 2026, <https://www.epa.gov/stationary-sources-air-pollution/clean-air-act-section-112-presidential-exemption-information>.
- 34 NRDC, “Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services v. Trump,” last modified July 13, 2026, <https://www.nrdc.org/court-battles/texas-environmental-justice-advocacy-services-v-trump>; NRDC, “Greater-Birmingham Alliance to Stop Pollution, et al. v. Trump, et al.,” last modified April 10, 2026, <https://www.nrdc.org/court-battles/greater-birmingham-alliance-stop-pollution-et-v-trump-et>; NRDC, “Coal Pollution Spiked After Trump Administration’s ‘Free Pass to Pollute,’” news release, February 26, 2026, <https://www.nrdc.org/press-releases/coal-pollution-spiked-after-trump-administrations-free-pass-pollute>; EPA, “National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Coke Ovens: Pushing, Quenching, and Battery Stacks, and Coke Oven Batteries; Residual Risk and Technology Review,” 89 Fed. Reg. 55684 (July 5, 2024).
- 35 Amanda Levin, “What Wright Gets Wrong About Dirty, Ugly Coal,” NRDC, June 10, 2026, <https://www.nrdc.org/media/what-wright-gets-wrong-about-dirty-ugly-coal#health>.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 NRDC, “EPA Dismantles Protections for Mercury and Air Toxics from Power Plants,” news release, February 20, 2026, <https://www.nrdc.org/press-releases/epa-dismantles-protections-mercury-and-air-toxics-power-plants>.
- 38 NRDC, “EPA Proposes to Weaken Safeguards Against Coal Ash Pollution in Groundwater, Threatening Community Drinking Water Sources Around the Country,” April 9, 2026, <https://www.nrdc.org/press-releases/epa-proposes-weaken-safeguards-against-coal-ash-pollution-groundwater-threatening>.
- 39 EPA, “PFAS National Primary Drinking Water Regulation,” 89 Fed. Reg. 32532 (April 26, 2026), <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/26/2024-07773/pfas-national-primary-drinking-water-regulation>.
- 40 On May 20, 2026, the EPA proposed to revoke the drinking water standards for four of the six PFAS for which the agency had set standards in 2024. EPA, “Rescission of Regulatory Determinations and Removal of Related Provisions for Four PFAS Substances (PFHxS, PFNA, HFPO-DA (GenX), and the Mixture of These Three PFAS Plus PFBS),” 91 Fed. Reg. 29413 (May 20, 2026), <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/05/20/2026-10085/rescission-of-regulatory-determinations-and-removal-of-related-provisions-for-four-pfas-substances>. The same day, the agency also proposed to delay for two more years the drinking water standards for the other two PFAS for which it had set standards in 2024. EPA, “Extending the Compliance Deadline for the PFOA and PFOS Maximum Contaminant Levels,” 91 Fed. Reg. 29425 (May 20, 2026), <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/05/20/2026-10086/extending-the-compliance-deadline-for-the-pfoa-and-pfos-maximum-contaminant-levels>. On September 11, 2025, the EPA had announced it would no longer defend in court the rules that protect people from unsafe levels of PFAS “forever chemicals” in drinking water, seeking to reverse legal protections put into place the year before. In its motion filed in federal court, the EPA asked the court to axe its determinations to regulate and enforceable standards for four PFAS chemicals: GenX, PFHxS, PFNA, and PFBS. Separately, the EPA had previously announced that it would seek to extend the compliance deadline for PFOA and PFOS standards by two years from 2029 to 2031. See, NRDC, “EPA Seeks to Roll Back PFAS Drinking Water Rules, Keeping Millions Exposed to Toxic Forever Chemicals in Tap Water,” news release, September 12, 2025, <https://www.nrdc.org/press-releases/epa-seeks-roll-back-pfas-drinking-water-rules-keeping-millions-exposed-toxic-forever>.
- 41 Jessica Kramer, EPA Assistant Administrator for Water, “Initial Review of EPA Office of Water Guidance Documents,” memorandum to the Office of Water Program Directors, August 11, 2026, https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2026-09/initial-review-of-ow-guidance_memo_june-2026.pdf.
- 42 EPA, “EPA Proposes Changes to Make PFAS Reporting Requirements More Practical and Implementable, Reducing Regulatory Burden,” news release, November 10, 2025, <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-proposes-changes-make-pfas-reporting-requirements-more-practical-and-0>; Tom Perkins, “Trump Officials Quietly Move to Reverse Bans on Toxic ‘Forever Chemicals,’” *Guardian*, April 5, 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/apr/05/trump-pfas-toxic-forever-chemicals>.
- 43 EPA, “Definition of Hazardous Waste Applicable to Corrective Action for Releases from Solid Waste Management Units; Withdrawal,” 91 Fed. Reg. 25266 (May 8, 2026), <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/05/08/2026-09179/definition-of-hazardous-waste-applicable-to-corrective-action-for-releases-from-solid-waste>.

- 44 Hiroko Tabuchi, "Toxic 'Forever Chemical' Cleanups at Military Sites Face Years of Delay," *New York Times*, September 9, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/09/09/climate/pfas-military-bases-cleanup-delays.html>; Hiroko Tabuchi, "Bipartisan Anger Grows at Pentagon's Delayed 'Forever Chemicals' Cleanups," *New York Times*, July 30, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/07/30/climate/pfas-forever-chemical-pentagon-cleanup-delay.html>; Hiroko Tabuchi, "Defense Department Delays Cleanup of 'Forever Chemicals' Nationwide," *New York Times*, September 23, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/23/climate/military-defense-pfas-forever-chemicals-cleanup-delay.html>.
- 45 Miranda Willson, "EPA Ditches Biden-Era Assessment on PFAS in Sludge," *E&E News*, July 1, 2026, <https://www.eenews.net/articles/epa-ditches-biden-era-assessment-on-pfas-in-sludge/>.
- 46 NRDC, "Trump's EPA Abandons Defense of National Soot Standard That Saves Lives," news release, November 25, 2025, <https://www.nrdc.org/press-releases/trumps-epa-abandons-defense-national-soot-standard-saves-lives>.
- 47 NRDC, "Coalition Sues Trump EPA for Failure to Implement Life-Saving National Soot Standard," April 14, 2026, <https://www.nrdc.org/press-releases/coalition-sues-trump-epa-failure-implement-life-saving-national-soot-standard>.
- 48 Kentucky v. EPA, No. 24-1050 (D.C. Cir. 2026), <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/cadc/24-1050/24-1050-2026-06-26.html>; NRDC, "Court Orders the EPA to Implement National Soot Standard," June 26, 2026, <https://www.nrdc.org/press-releases/court-orders-epa-implement-national-soot-standard>.
- 49 Hiroko Tabuchi, "E.P.A. Plans to Reconsider a Ban on Cancer-Causing Asbestos," *New York Times*, June 16, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/16/us/epa-trump-asbestos-ban-delay.html>.
- 50 Travis Rodgers, "EPA Delays Legacy Asbestos Rule Again, Seeks Industry Data," *Asbestos.com*, July 10, 2026, <https://www.asbestos.com/news/2026/07/10/epa-delays-legacy-asbestos-rule-again-seeks-industry-data/>.
- 51 Amudalat Ajasa, "EPA Just Delayed Reporting Safety Data on 16 Toxic Chemicals. Here's What to Know," *Washington Post*, June 12, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2025/06/12/epa-toxic-chemicals-safety-data/>.
- 52 International Agency for Research on Cancer, "IARC Monograph on Glyphosate," March 20, 2015, <https://www.iarc.who.int/featured-news/media-centre-iarc-news-glyphosate/>.
- 53 Carey Gillam, "Trump Enrages MAHA with Order Granting 'Immunity' to Glyphosate Pesticide Production," *New Lede*, February 19, 2026, <https://www.thenewlede.org/2026/02/trump-enrages-maha/>; International Agency for Research on Cancer, "IARC Monograph on Glyphosate"; Simona Panzacchi et al., "Carcinogenic Effects of Long-Term Exposure from Prenatal Life to Glyphosate and Glyphosate-Based Herbicides in Sprague-Dawley Rats," *Environmental Health* 24, no. 36 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12940-025-01187-2>.
- 54 President Donald J. Trump, "Promoting the National Defense by Ensuring an Adequate Supply of Elemental Phosphorus and Glyphosate-Based Herbicides," Exec. Order No. 14387, 91 Fed. Reg. 8703 (February 23, 2026), <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/02/23/2026-03628/promoting-the-national-defense-by-ensuring-an-adequate-supply-of-elemental-phosphorus-and-glyphosate-based-herbicides>.
- 55 Brief of the United States as Amicus Curiae, *Monsanto Co. v. Durnell*, No. 24-1068, (U.S. Supreme Court, filed December 1, 2025), https://www.supremecourt.gov/DocketPDF/24/24-1068/386073/20251201170732560_24-1068%20-%20Monsanto%20v.%20Durnell.pdf; Rachel Frazin, "Trump Admin Backs Monsanto Effort to Limit Roundup Lawsuits over Glyphosate," *Hill*, December 2, 2025, <https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/5630178-glyphosate-bayer-monsanto-roundup-maha-scotus-lawsuits/>.
- 56 *Monsanto Co. v. Durnell*, 609 U.S. 371 (2026), https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/25pdf/24-1068_n7ip.pdf.
- 57 OSHA, "Deregulatory Rulemaking," accessed August 2026, <https://www.osha.gov/deregulatory-rulemaking>.
- 58 OSHA, "Occupational Safety and Health Standards; Interpretation of the General Duty Clause: Limitation for Inherently Risky Professional Activities," 90 Fed. Reg. 28370 (July 1, 2025), <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/07/01/2025-12236/occupational-safety-and-health-standards-interpretation-of-the-general-duty-clause-limitation-for>; OSHA, "Comment from Ginsburg, Matthew and Reindel, Rebecca; American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)," Regulations.gov, November 3, 2025, <https://www.regulations.gov/comment/OSHA-2025-0041-0835>.
- 59 EPA, "Procedures for Chemical Risk Evaluation Under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)," 90 Fed. Reg. 45690 (September 23, 2025), <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/09/23/2025-18431/procedures-for-chemical-risk-evaluation-under-the-toxic-substances-control-act-tsca>.
- 60 EPA, "Comment Submitted by Alaska Community Action on Toxics et al. (Part 1a of 4)," Regulations.gov, November 13, 2025, <https://www.regulations.gov/comment/EPA-HQ-OPPT-2025-0260-0148>.
- 61 Lauren Kirchner, "Product Safety Agency in Jeopardy After White House Abruptly Fires Its Democratic Leaders," *Consumer Reports*, 2026, <https://www.consumerreports.org/product-safety/white-house-abruptly-fires-cpsc-leaders-a5001806785/>.
- 62 Boyle v. Trump, 791 F. Supp.3d 585 (D. Md. June 13, 2025), https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCOURTS-mdd-8_25-cv-01628/pdf/USCOURTS-mdd-8_25-cv-01628-0.pdf.
- 63 Trump v. Boyle et al., 606 U.S. ___, 145 S.Ct. 2653 (July 23, 2025), https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/24pdf/25a11_2cp3.pdf; Trump v. Slaughter, 609 U.S. 422 (June 29, 2026), https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/25pdf/25-332_qn12.pdf.
- 64 CPSC, "CPSC Withdraws Rules that Are Outdated, Fail to Advance Safety; New Leadership Focuses on Hazards That Pose Real Risks," news release, August 20, 2025, <https://www.cpsc.gov/Newsroom/News-Releases/2025/CPSC-Withdraws-Rules-That-Are-Outdated-Fail-to-Advance-Safety-New-Leadership-Focuses-on-Hazards-That-Pose-Real-Risks>.
- 65 See, CPSC, "Statement of Commissioner Elliot F. Kaye on the Petition on Organohalogen Flame Retardants," September 20, 2017, https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/Commissioner_Kaye_Statement_on_Organohalogen_Fire_Retardants_Petition_9.20.17.pdf; CPSC, "Guidance Document on Hazardous Additive, Non-Polymeric Organohalogen Flame Retardants in Certain Consumer Products," 82 Fed. Reg. 45268 (September 28, 2017), <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/09/28/2017-20733/guidance-document-on-hazardous-additive-non-polymeric-organohalogen-flame-retardants-in-certain>.
- 66 Kirchner, "Product Safety Agency in Jeopardy."
- 67 Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, "Petition for Rulemaking for Various Products Containing Organohalogen Flame Retardants," accessed 2026, <https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/eAgendaViewRule?pubId=202510&RIN=3041-AD49>.
- 68 EPA, "History of IRIS," last modified August 27, 2026, <https://www.epa.gov/iris/basic-information-about-integrated-risk-information-system#history>.
- 69 Heritage Foundation, *Mandate for Leadership*, 433.
- 70 EPA, "Basic Information About the Integrated Risk Information System," last modified August 27, 2026, [https://www.epa.gov/iris/basic-information-about-integrated-risk-information-system#history~:text=As%C2%A0indicated%C2%A0in,and%20properly%20implemented](https://www.epa.gov/iris/basic-information-about-integrated-risk-information-system#history~:text=As%C2%A0indicated%C2%A0in,and%20properly%20implemented; Sharon Lerner,); Sharon Lerner, "A Huge Setback: New EPA Directive Could Weaken Hundreds of Chemical Regulations," *ProPublica*, May 1, 2026, <https://www.propublica.org/article/trump-epa-directive-chemical-assessments>.

- 71 Apoorva Mandavilli, ‘Zombified’ C.D.C., Hobbled by Cuts, Struggles to Fulfill Scientific Mission, *New York Times*, September 26, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/09/26/health/cdc-staff-cuts-rfk-jr.html>.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 NIH, National Cancer Institute, Adult Tobacco Use, https://progressreport.cancer.gov/prevention/tobacco/adult_smoking, last reviewed April 2025.
- 75 Mandavilli, “‘Zombified’ C.D.C.”
- 76 Gretchen Goldman, “Update: Attacks on Independent Science and How We’re Fighting Back,” *Equation* (blog), Union of Concerned Scientists, July 22, 2026, <https://blog.ucs.org/gretchen-goldman/update-attacks-on-independent-science-and-how-were-fighting-back/>
- 77 Lerner, “A Huge Setback.”
- 78 Brian Owens, “Trump’s ‘Dismantling’ of NIH Research Continues Apace,” *BMJ* 394 (2026), <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj-2026-100781>.
- 79 Vishal R. Patel, Michael Liu, and Anupam B. Jena, “Clinical Trials Affected by Research Grant Terminations at the National Institutes of Health,” *JAMA Internal Medicine* 186, no. 1 (2026): 126-128, <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2025.6088>.
- 80 Rachana Pradhan and Katheryn Houghton, “The NIH Workforce Is Its Smallest in Decades. Here’s the Work Left Behind,” *KFF Health News*, March 6, 2026, <https://kffhealthnews.org/health-industry/the-week-in-brief-nih-workforce-cuts-trump-administration-hhs/>; Monica Hersher and Jeffrey Mervis, “U.S. Government Has Lost More than 10,000 STEM Ph.D.s Since Trump Took Office,” *Science*, January 26, 2026, <https://www.science.org/content/article/u-s-government-has-lost-more-10-000-stem-ph-d-s-trump-took-office>.
- 81 Anirudha S. Chandrabhatla, Adishesh K. Narahari, and Kevin Jin, “National Institutes of Health Funding for RNA Vaccine Research,” *JAMA Network Open* 9, no. 3 (March 2026), <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2026.0046>.
- 82 Laine Bergeson, “RNA Vaccine Funding Cuts Threaten Decades of Scientific Progress,” Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, March 4, 2026, <https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/covid-19/rna-vaccine-funding-cuts-threaten-decades-scientific-progress>.
- 83 Delger Erdenesanaa et al., “Trump’s 2027 Budget Proposes Deep Cuts to Science Programs,” *Chemical & Engineering News*, April 6, 2026, <https://cen.acs.org/policy/trump-budget-fy2027-science-nsf-epa-nih-fda/104/web/2026/04>.
- 84 Rebecca Trager, “Leading Environmental Health Journal Defunded by Trump Administration Has Been Saved,” *Chemistry World*, January 8, 2026, <https://www.chemistryworld.com/news/leading-environmental-health-journal-defunded-by-trump-administration-has-been-saved/4022745.article>.
- 85 Hiroko Tabuchi, “The Former Lobbyists Making Key Decisions at the E.P.A.,” *New York Times*, October 21, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/21/climate/epa-former-lobbyists.html>.
- 86 See, Sharon Lerner, “Donald Trump’s No. 2 Pick for the EPA Represented Companies Accused of Pollution Harm,” *ProPublica*, January 22, 2025, <https://www.propublica.org/article/david-fotouhi-donald-trump-epa-pollution>; Association of Washington Business et al. v. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Civil Action No. 23-cv-3605 (D.D.C., complaint filed December 4, 2023), <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/25499386-fotouhi-assn-of-wash/>.
- 87 See, Alex Cuadros, “The Trump EPA Official in Charge of Methane Regulations Helped Write an Oil Industry Argument Against Those Rules,” *ProPublica*, April 1, 2026, <https://www.propublica.org/article/trump-epa-methane-deregulation-aaron-szabo-oil-gas-axpc>; Alex Guillén and Zack Colman, “EPA Air Chief Szabo Won’t Leave Agency as Previously Planned,” *E&E News*, July 28, 2026, <https://www.eenews.net/articles/epa-air-chief-szabo-wont-leave-agency-as-previously-planned/>.
- 88 Tabuchi, “The Former Lobbyists”; Tabuchi, “She Fought for a Carcinogen”; Lisa Friedman, Hiroko Tabuchi, and Coral Davenport, “Trump Stocks E.P.A. with Former Oil, Gas and Chemical Executives,” *New York Times*, January 25, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/25/climate/epa-staff-oil-gas-chemical-industry-lobbyists.html>.
- 89 Sean Reilly, “‘Do What Y’all Need to Do’: How EPA Fired Its Science Advisers,” *E&E News*, July 25, 2025, <https://www.eenews.net/articles/do-what-yall-need-to-do-how-epa-fired-its-science-advisers/>; “EPA Fires Science Advisers,” *Politico*, January 28, 2025, <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/01/28/epa-fires-science-advisers-00201156>
- 90 See, Rachel Franzin, “EPA Appoints Industry Players and Academics to Its Science Advisory Board,” *Hill*, April 17, 2026, <https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/5837073-new-epa-science-advisory-board/>.
- 91 Ellie Borst, “EPA Stacks Chemical Advisory Panel with Industry, For-Hire Scientists,” *E&E News*, July 20, 2026, <https://www.eenews.net/articles/epa-stacks-chemical-advisory-panel-with-industry-for-hire-scientists/>.
- 92 Miranda Willson, “Fired EPA Water Adviser Sues over Termination,” *E&E News*, June 22, 2026, <https://www.eenews.net/articles/fired-epa-water-adviser-sues-over-termination/>.