



## Minnesota Benefits From the Energy and Environmental Programs

### The Environmental Protection Agency Protects Us from Harmful Pollution

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides broad-ranging [benefits](#) to all Americans. The EPA ensures that our water is clean, our air is breathable, and that our communities are protected from toxic hazards and the impacts of climate change. The EPA coordinates with state and local governments, businesses, and other stakeholders to provide services through grants to states, law enforcement, and health and safety standards. President Trump's budget, however, proposes slashing the agency by nearly a third – a plan for more pollution, less accountability for breaking the law, and worse health for Minnesota.

### Protecting Minnesota's Water Resources:

The EPA sets health-based standards limiting contaminants in drinking water and establishing thresholds for safe swimming and fishing. It provides billions of dollars to communities to deliver safe drinking water and improve water quality. The EPA can also step in to ensure the safety of drinking water sources threatened by oil and gas operations when states refuse to act. After disasters, the EPA provides resources to get drinking water and sewage treatment back online quickly.

- EPA provides [grants](#) to states to implement control programs for "non-point" sources of water pollution, like agricultural runoff, which are often poorly controlled but which also can be significant contributors to water bodies' degradation. In fiscal year 2016, EPA provided Minnesota with approximately **\$5.4 million**. Trump's budget proposes cutting categorical grants by roughly 45%.
- In Fiscal Year 2016, EPA provided Minnesota with **roughly \$25 million in water infrastructure grants** under the Clean Water Act's State Revolving Fund program. Nationally, EPA reports that since 1987, the program "provided over ... \$118.7 billion to communities" and supported "38,450 low-cost loans" for wastewater system repairs and upgrades that prevent raw sewage discharges, manage contaminated urban runoff, and upgrade publicly owned treatment facilities. By slashing clean drinking water funding coming through the Department of Agriculture for small rural communities, Trump's budget proposal would reduce the overall national investment in water infrastructure and place additional pressure on the revolving funds.
- EPA's [Clean Water Rule](#) protects small streams and other critical water bodies. In Minnesota, headwater, rain-fed, and seasonal [streams](#) contribute to the **drinking water supplies of 980,000 people**. The budget for EPA programs to prevent water pollution should not be reduced.
- President Trump's proposed budget for the EPA would make our failing drinking water system worse. Drinking water violation rates clearly show that even at its current level of funding, the EPA and states are doing an inadequate job of monitoring, testing and enforcing safe drinking water laws. In 2015, [141 violations](#) of the Safe Drinking Water Act were recorded in Minnesota.

**NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL**



- In Minnesota in 2015, [16,358 residents](#) were served by a water system in violation of a health-based standard of the Safe Drinking Water Act. Drinking water in violation of the [Safe Drinking Water Act](#) can lead to increased risk of health impacts like cancer, birth defects, and cognitive impairments.

### **Defending Clean Air in Minnesota:**

The EPA sets and enforces limits on dangerous air pollutants from factories, refineries, power plants, oil and gas extraction, and vehicles. Ensuring these laws are implemented protects public health, helping prevent asthma attacks, birth defects, respiratory and cardiovascular disease and cancer. In addition, EPA ensures Minnesota is protected from other states' unsafe air pollution, because dirty air doesn't stop at state lines.

- In Minnesota, EPA programs to reduce dangerous [air pollution](#) and toxic [mercury](#) **save up to 343 lives** per year. Cutting EPA's budget won't protect our air or health.
- EPA standards to reduce dangerous air pollution and toxic mercury from power plants in Minnesota will create **\$1.2 billion** in [health benefits](#) for the state. Cutting funding for the EPA could jeopardize clean air programs that create millions of dollars in health benefits.
- The EPA plays a central role in protecting our air quality, providing benefits to the **311,194 adults and 80,759 children in Minnesota diagnosed with asthma**. Asthma attacks were the cause of 11,693 [pediatric emergency room visits](#) and over \$860 million in associated [medical costs](#) in Minnesota in 2008.
- Trump's proposed budget would cut enforcement by 24% - this would eliminate funding to pursue cases when power plants violate laws that reduce dangerous emissions in Minnesota's communities.

### **Protecting Minnesota's Communities from Toxic Hazards:**

EPA regulates hazardous waste treatment, handling, and disposal facilities across Minnesota and the country to avoid contamination of our air, water and soils by toxic chemicals. The agency's Superfund Program is also responsible for protecting communities by preventing and cleaning up hazardous releases that endanger community health. Through this program, EPA provides resources to identify and clean up contaminated sites, such as brownfields.

- There are **25 hazardous waste sites** in Minnesota on the EPA's [National Priority List](#) for the Superfund program, which helps communities clean up toxic pollution. Trump's proposed budget would cut the Superfund program by more than 30%, slowing down their ability to help clean up these sites.
- In Minnesota, there are **726 brownfields cleanups listed by the EPA**, land contaminated and needing cleanup to be used or redeveloped. Without funding, the EPA won't be able to assist local communities and states in cleaning up dangerous contamination.



### **Fighting Climate Change:**

Climate change poses threats to our health and our economy. Last year was one of the hottest years on [record](#) in Minnesota. The EPA has the responsibility to clean up the dangerous carbon pollution that fuels climate change. In fact, the EPA already finalized a [plan](#) that would save up to \$54 billion and 3,500 American lives by 2030. Cutting funding for EPA climate change programs will endanger lives and cost money across Minnesota and the country.

### **Promoting Cost-Saving Energy Efficiency in Minnesota:**

The EPA maintains the ENERGY STAR® program, which helps consumers identify the most energy efficient appliances, equipment, and buildings that can save them money and energy.

- Nationally, the [ENERGY STAR New Homes](#) program, which allows homeowners to purchase third-party verified, highly-efficient homes, has **saved American homeowners more than \$4.7 billion on utility bills** over the last 20 years. In total, the program has saved homeowners enough energy to power 2 million homes for a year – while improving comfort and indoor air quality. In 2015, almost 10 percent of all single-family homes built were ENERGY STAR-rated, with these new homeowners expected to save \$21 million annually on their electric and gas bills.
- Over [450,000 buildings](#) across the country use ENERGY STAR's Portfolio Manager database to track and publish their energy use. Of these, around 30,000 commercial buildings – representing a diverse set of buildings including offices, hospitals, congregations, and schools – have achieved an ENERGY STAR rating of 75 or higher. This means that the building is more efficient than at least 75 percent of all similar building types in the nation. In Minnesota, **680 buildings are ENERGY STAR-rated**.
- In the United States, almost 10,000 [school buildings](#) have achieved an ENERGY STAR rating of 75 or higher that results in cost savings and improved indoor air quality. In Minnesota, 165 schools have earned this ENERGY STAR rating with an **estimated annual cost saving of over \$4 million**.
- Trump's budget proposal would eliminate this program entirely, preventing future efficiencies and savings.

### **The Department of Energy Saves Consumers Money in Minnesota:**

The Department of Energy (DOE) runs many popular and effective energy programs that save families money on their utility bills, help low-income families stay warm during the winter, spur innovation and job growth, and keep the United States a global clean energy and technology leader. The Trump administration's budget proposes to increase nuclear weapons spending by 11 percent and severely cut non-defense energy programs. The proposed budget slashes applied research programs to solve practical everyday problems—including those from the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy and Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability by 70 percent and 42 percent, respectively—and the Office of Science by 17 percent.

- DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy handles DOE's statutory requirement to develop minimum efficiency standards for appliances and equipment. The average utility bill in



Minnesota [saves](#) \$436 per year thanks to appliance standards. Trump's budget proposal would cut the office developing these standards by nearly 70%.

- States rely on the DOE for funding and technical expertise to meet their individual energy-related goals and reduce energy costs for their citizens. Minnesota [sees](#) \$18M in annual energy cost savings from the State Energy Projects and leveraged funds, but the Trump budget would eliminate this program entirely.
- The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) provides grants to improve energy efficiency in the homes of low-income families. Typical measures include caulking, insulating, and repairing ducts. The average family [saves](#) \$283 every year thanks to these improvements. Minnesota [has received](#) over \$19 million in funding for weatherization, and in 2015 saw \$86 million in economic benefits from these investments including utility bill savings and reduced unemployment and health costs. The Trump budget would eliminate this program entirely.
- The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides annual assistance to utilities to help households pay for heating and cooling, as well as crisis funding directly to families in emergencies. In 2014 the program [served](#) 135,647 households in Minnesota, yet the Trump budget would eliminate this program entirely.

### **The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Managing our Ocean and Coastal Resources**

More than 124 million Americans [live in coastal communities](#) and rely on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to manage the ocean and coastal resources they rely on for food, jobs, and recreation and which contribute [\\$7.6 trillion to our national economy](#). NOAA is also responsible for [collecting the environmental data](#) that advances our understanding of the ocean ecosystem, guides meteorologists in making their weather forecasts, and alerts us to toxic algal blooms. NOAA satellites support aviation and ocean navigation decisions, keeping Americans safe when they are in the air and at sea. The Trump administration's disastrous budget proposal [cuts NOAA overall by 16%](#) and eliminates important ocean management, research, and education programs.

- NOAA's [National Coastal Zone Management Program](#) partners with states and territories to protect coastal water quality, ensure coastal habitats are able to buffer homes and businesses from storms, sustain healthy fish and wildlife populations, and keep beaches open for tourists and residents to enjoy. In 2016, NOAA invested nearly \$70 million in coastal communities through this program. In Minnesota, NOAA grants help support the [Minnesota's Lake Superior Coastal Program](#), which has provided more than \$12.5 million in awards since 2001 to projects to improve coastal habitat, restore water quality, and increase public engagement. The Trump budget would eliminate this critical grant program and shift the full burden of coastal management over to already strapped state budgets.
- A partnership between NOAA and a national network of 33 university-based programs, the [Sea Grant Program](#) funds coastal research to develop solutions to local and regional challenges, like reducing the Great Lakes' nutrient pollution and improving methods for Gulf of Mexico oyster aquaculture. Minnesota Sea Grant, based at the University of Minnesota, [contributed \\$18.6 million to the economy](#) from February, 2016 through January, 2017 alone. Despite the



program's [widespread success and popularity](#), the Trump administration proposed to terminate the Sea Grant in their FY18 budget.