



The Business Case for EPA Action on Safer Chemicals

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) limits the use of harmful chemicals in many products and keeps the public informed about environmental health risks. Proposed budget cuts would cripple EPA's ability to promote safer chemical use and would result in risks to human health and American businesses.

Americans are demanding more transparency about what's in the products they use, but are still exposed daily to many chemicals with unknown health effects that pose significant economic and public health risks. Controls on hazardous chemicals motivate companies to identify and use safer alternatives. Demand for safer chemicals also offers new business opportunities by fostering R&D, creating new jobs, and making U.S. firms more competitive in today's global marketplace. The EPA regulates harmful chemicals through the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), and other laws. The EPA also reduces Americans' exposure to potentially harmful chemicals through scientific research and consumer awareness efforts like the Safer Choice Program. Without adequate funding for the EPA, the federal government is shirking its duty to protect all Americans from everyday toxic chemical exposure and is abandoning this crucial task to the states.



Costs and Benefits to the Economy

Over 3 billion pounds of toxic chemicals are released by industry into the nation's environment each year, including 50 million pounds of recognized carcinogens. Exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals alone in pesticides, toys, food packaging, and cleaning supplies costs the United States more than \$340 billion annually in health care costs and lost wages, which is about 2% of the nation's gross domestic product. And potential health problems from harmful chemicals pose significant legal and financial liability to today's businesses.

Business leaders also see tremendous opportunities in bringing safer chemicals and products to market. In 2014, 62% of surveyed chemical producers stated that their customers are interested in sustainable chemicals. This research is substantiated by an annual growth rate of 6-10% in the safer chemistry/natural products market, compared to near-zero growth in the conventional chemical market. Fostering development and widespread use of safer chemicals increases trust between companies and their consumers, employees, communities, and investors. It also creates a more competitive, innovative, and economically sustainable American chemical industry.

Business Views on Chemical Safety Issues

Businesses of all kinds and sizes see the value of reducing harmful chemicals in the products they make, sell and use. ASBC polling of small business owners has found that:

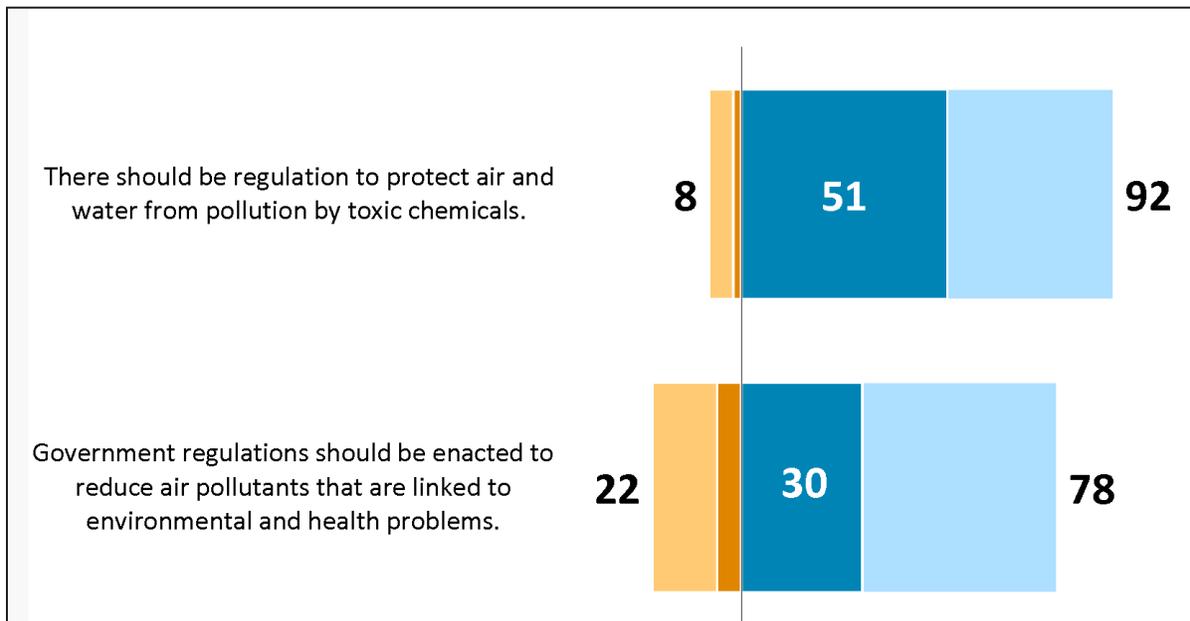
- 82% believe businesses should be required to share chemical ingredient information all along the supply chain, from chemical manufacturer to end-product manufacturer.
- 92% believe there should be regulations to protect air and water from toxic chemicals pollution.

Small businesses aren't alone in these views. Many large businesses are using their marketplace power to demand safer chemicals in their supply chains. Best Buy, Walmart, Kaiser Permanente, and many others have all taken steps to ensure that safer chemicals are used throughout their supply chains and in their everyday practices. Schools, nursing homes, fitness and recreation facilities and many other institutions

are also increasing demand for safer chemicals to use in housekeeping, lawn maintenance, facility renovations, and much more.

Consumer goods using safer chemicals, from makeup to mattresses, have also grown significantly to meet demand. Earth Friendly Products, Seventh Generation, the Honest Company and others committed to safer chemicals have enjoyed notable success in the personal care and household products sectors. "Green" cosmetic companies, including Beautycounter, have grown in popularity as consumers learn about the dangers of some everyday chemicals, and the home furnishings industry has produced an array of "green" winners, too. Naturepedic, started as a manufacturer of crib mattresses using safer materials, has grown into a leading mattress brand. Safer alternatives to conventional products in virtually every area have been developed and are earning success in the marketplace.

Small Business Owners on Toxic Chemicals



Source: American Sustainable Business Council survey, October, 2012

What's at Stake

The Trump Administration's proposed 2018 budget calls for catastrophic cuts to EPA services, imperiling the American public, our businesses, and our economy. Cuts include:

Pollution Prevention (P2) Program – ELIMINATED

This program promotes environmentally sound business practices and the use of environmentally safer chemicals, technologies, and processes. The P2 program reduces the release of hazardous chemicals into air, water, and land; use of hazardous materials; generation of greenhouse gases; and use of water. The P2 program also helps businesses and other operations reduce costs by implementing these preventive approaches.

Endocrine Disruptor Screening Program – ELIMINATED

The program develops and validates scientific methods for evaluating pesticides and other chemicals to determine their potential, damaging interference with normal human endocrine system functioning. The program screens thousands of chemicals and evaluates data to protect public health from endocrine-disrupting chemicals in the environment.

Human Health Risk Assessment Program (HHRA) – cut by 40%

This research program provides essential, updated knowledge on the effects that exposure to pollutants have on human health. Its assessments provide the scientific basis for decisions under key environmental laws including the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), and Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). Public health is a direct victim of this cut.

Grants: Pesticides Enforcement – cut by 38%

These grants fund cooperative agreements that support state and tribal compliance and enforcement related to pesticides, as required by FIFRA.

Research: Chemical Safety and Sustainability – cut by 31%

This program funds innovative research that strengthens EPA's ability to evaluate and predict impacts from the use and disposal of manufactured chemicals. Research outcomes facilitate decisions about the thousands of chemicals circulating in the United States. Research results directly apply to mitigation work at Superfund sites and testing chemical toxicity.



What's at Stake, cont'd

Grants: Pesticides Program Implementation – cut by 30%

These grants translate pesticide regulatory decisions made at the national level into results at the local level. Responsibility for ensuring proper pesticide use is largely delegated to states and tribes, and grant resources allow states and tribes to be more effective regulatory partners at the local level.

Pesticides: Protect Human Health from Pesticide Risk – cut by 16%

The EPA issues pesticide registrations and sets tolerance levels for pesticides in the food of humans and livestock to limit toxic chemical ingestion and protect public health. The program conducts essential risk assessments on new and existing pesticides, encourages the development and use of safer pesticides, and educates pesticide users and the public through labeling and public outreach.

EPA Enforcement – overall cut of 19% (including chemical-related enforcement)

Respect for the rule of law requires that regulations, once enacted, must be enforced. Severe reductions in EPA professional staff levels by approximately 280 people directly undermine legislators' intent and imperil Americans. Note that civil enforcement efforts alone achieve valuable results: in 2016, the EPA achieved commitments by companies to treat, minimize, or properly dispose of 62 billion pounds of hazardous waste; to reduce pollution by 324 million pounds; and to invest an estimated \$13.7 billion in procedures and equipment to control pollution.



Bottom Line

Americans deserve to understand the risks associated with everyday chemicals and to be protected from those that cause significant public health and economic damages. It is more urgent than ever to have the EPA at full funding for full functioning. The urgency of this nationwide need should be supported by Congress in the 2018 budget.