



Center for Health, Environment & Justice

Mentoring a Movement, Empowering People, Preventing

P.O. Box 6806, Falls Church, VA 22040. (703)237-2249. www.chej.org

Trump's Superfund Action is in Majority White Communities, Medium Income Communities and Where There are Deep Corporate Pockets to Pay for Cleanup

We Need to Reinstate the Superfund Polluter Pays Fees

CHEJ has closely followed Superfund under President Trump since he made the program a central part of his EPA, while dismantling other protective policies.

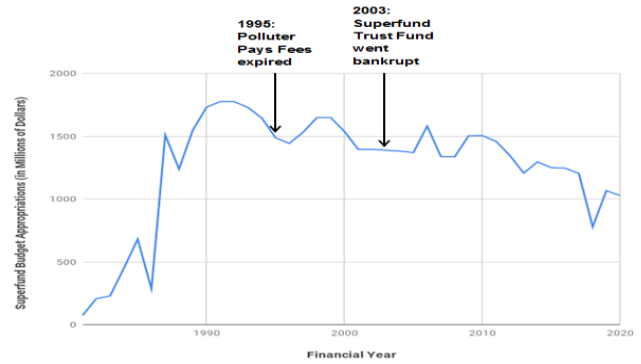
While Trump has set himself apart from other administrations in the work he has done on Superfund, his progress is not as comprehensive as his speeches make it sound. In a meeting with Superfund community leaders, Scott Pruitt stated that the selection of Superfund sites was based solely on “site-specific opportunities or low hanging fruit.” Selected sites were not chosen for the toxic risks to human health or the environment, they were shovel ready or ready for delisting after a five-year review.

- **61.1% of the sites targeted by the Trump Administration were in majority white areas.** 40.7% of the population living in the same zip code as one of Trump's Superfund sites is minority, defined as anyone who doesn't identify as white only.

According to an EPA report the population around Superfund sites are more minority, low income, linguistically isolated, and less likely to have a high school education than the U.S. population as a whole

- **The majority, 79.6%, of Superfund sites targeted for cleanup by the Trump Administration have responsible parties to pay for the cleanup.** Out of 54 sites on the Administrator's Emphasis and Redevelopment Opportunity lists, **only 5 were confirmed to be Orphan sites.** For four sites, no clear determination could be made, and for two sites, there were potential funding sources that were not potentially responsible parties.
- **Trump's budget has cut Superfund funding to a new low.** In the first three years of Trump's presidency, Superfund received \$2,878 million dollars compared to Obama's Superfund allocation of \$4,470 million dollars.

- This graph shows EPA’s Superfund Budget Appropriations over time. In 2003, taxpayers, not polluters, were providing the funds to clean up orphan toxic sites.



- Without reinstating the Polluters Pays Fees orphan sites will never be cleaned up. Recently Minden, West Virginia was added to the Superfund priority list. The site has been defined as an emergency removal site for over thirty years. Minden has no responsible party as the company went out of business decades ago and is not likely to be cleaned up any day soon.
- Without building the fund through Polluters Pays Fees EPA will not have the ability to use their triple damages or adequate funds to cleanup a site and sue responsible corporations later.
- Without the fee the agency is handcuffed in their ability to act, with little or no resources, to protect public health and the environment at Superfund sites.

See full report: [A Report on the US EPA’s Superfund Program Under the Trump Administration](#)

There were two ways to fund Superfund. The first was through budget appropriations set every year based on how much money EPA received through the federal budget. The second was through Polluter Pays Fees, which were taxes on companies that produced chemicals commonly found in Superfund sites. The two sources of funding together provided a significant pool of funds in the Superfund program to clean up the most toxic hazardous waste sites in the country. Today, Polluter Pays Fees are no longer collected—the only way Superfund is funded is through federal taxpayers’ dollars.

[Superfund Reinvestment Act H.R. 4088](#)