

Trump's Environmental Racism

Here are just 10 ways Donald Trump's environmental racism is targeting communities of color already suffering from polluted air, dirty water, and toxic chemicals.

1. **Trump is silencing communities of color.** On the same day [tear gas was used](#) to clear protesters outside the White House, Trump [advanced a rule change](#) that would stop communities of color from having a say on major polluting projects in their neighborhoods. A report from the NAACP, Clean Air Task Force, and National Medical Association found Black Americans are [75% more likely](#) to live in fenceline communities that border polluting facilities like oil and gas refineries.
2. **Trump used the pandemic as an excuse to roll back 69 environmental protections.** Trump waived environmental safeguards, giving refineries and industrial facilities an “open license to pollute.” In

Houston's most heavily industrialized areas, air pollutants [surged as much as 62%](#) after Trump's rollback, according to a Texas A&M analysis of air monitoring stations.

3. **Trump ignored calls to limit dirty soot pollution linked to COVID-19 deaths.** Scientists have warned that soot pollution [disproportionately affects](#) communities of color and can cause [cancer, heart disease, and asthma](#), which [kills Black children](#) at 10 times the rate as white children. Soot in the air was [linked to higher death rates](#) from COVID-19 around the same time we learned that Black Americans were [dying at three times the rate](#) as whites from the disease. Still, Trump [overruled calls from scientists](#) to set tighter air quality standards on soot pollution after [disbanding](#) the panel of scientists created to determine what levels of these pollutants are safe to breathe. .
4. **Trump rolled back clean cars standards critical for protecting air quality.** Car exhaust is another [major source](#) of the soot pollution that is killing people of color. One study found that communities of color in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic breathe [66% more air pollution](#) just from car exhaust than white residents — exposure that was made worse when Trump [insisted](#) on rolling back clean cars standards.
5. **Trump made it easier for coal power plants to keep spewing dangerous toxic pollution into the air.** Coal power plants are the other [major source](#) of the soot pollution that is killing people of color. In addition to fine soot particles, coal power plants spew [mercury, lead, cadmium, and arsenic](#) into the air. An [NAACP report](#) found that six million Americans live within three miles of a coal power plant and that population is disproportionately people of color. Trump [rolled back rules](#) on pollution from coal power plants in order to help keep older, dirty coal plants in operation longer.
6. **Trump pushed dangerous pipeline projects through tribal lands.** Native Americans have been on the front lines of protecting their access to clean drinking water sources from irresponsible fossil fuel development. After fighting off permits for the Keystone XL pipeline, Trump's response was to [repeatedly change the rules](#) to give the oil companies what they want and to silence the people fighting for clean water.
7. **Trump tried to gut environmental justice enforcement.** In his first budget request to Congress, Trump [tried to completely eliminate](#) the environmental justice office at the EPA. This is the office charged with

addressing the disparities in pollution experienced by communities of color. In fact, [in every single year](#) of his presidency, Trump has sought to either eliminate or drastically slash funding for environmental justice at the EPA.

8. **Trump's EPA ignored pleas from a Black community affected by a coal ash dump.** Residents in [Uniontown, Alabama](#), a town that is 90% Black, filed a civil rights complaint with the U.S. EPA over a toxic coal ash waste landfill containing arsenic, mercury, and lead. [Despite reports](#) of odors, nose, throat, and eye irritation, dizziness, and nausea, Trump's EPA declined to test or monitor the site, instead relying on data from an air monitoring station miles away. Trump even took things a step further and [relaxed rules](#) for how this toxic coal ash is stored.
9. **Trump rolled back chemical disaster rules, putting communities of color who live near chemical plants at risk.** "[Refinery row](#)" in Texas and "Cancer Alley" in Louisiana are places where oil refineries and chemical plants are located too next to predominantly Black and Latinx communities. In Cancer Alley, [researchers found](#) that the neighborhoods with higher percentage, the higher the risk of cancer goes. [During Hurricane Harvey](#), plants in Texas were allowed to release [more than 1 million pounds](#) of dangerous pollutants, but Trump actually rolled back the rule known as the "[chemical disaster rule](#)" which sets requirements for chemical plants to plan for emergency situations.
10. **Trump called climate change a "hoax."** The denial of climate change is a racist act on its own. Everything about climate change has a disproportionate impact on people of color, and casting doubt of the reality of climate change devalues the Black and Latinx lives lost from [lung disease](#), [heat stress](#), and [extreme weather](#) that strike communities of color the hardest.

Check The Facts:

Get even more facts and sources from our research team here:

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RESEARCH

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS

On June 1st, 2020, Tear Gas Was Used To Clear Protesters From Lafayette Square Near The White House. Following protests that occurred on Monday, June 1st, 2020 at Lafayette Square park in Washington, DC, WUSA 9 journalist Nathan Baca reported: "With the DC National Guard staying within the Lafayette fenceline, we witnessed US Park Police supported by the US Secret Service advancing after a few minutes to consolidate their lines. They meant to take over the intersection of H and 17th Street. We witnessed canisters venting out green-colored gas. After watching the line of US Park Police and Secret Service march south on 17th Street past us, we went back to the intersection of H and 17th where we found canisters scattered on the street. You can see me holding one looking towards the new protective line, where a block away, President Trump was visiting St. John's Episcopal Church. I took one canister labeled as holding OC gas pellets. I handed WUSA9's Darren Haynes a canister labeled as holding CS projectiles. Thursday morning, after denials from the White House and federal agencies that any tear gas was used, we discovered what that SPEDE-HEAT CS label meant: artificial tear gas was inside." [[WUSA 9, 6/4/2020](#)]

On June 1st, 2020, The White House Submitted Proposed Changes To Environmental Review Rules To Be Finalized. On June 2, 2020, E&E News reported: "The Trump administration's controversial rewrite of regulations surrounding the National Environmental Policy Act is closer to being complete. Yesterday, the White House Council on Environmental Quality, chaired by Mary Neumayr, sent the rule to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. The push to retool NEPA rules is part of President Trump's attempt to fundamentally change environmental policy for the long haul. The plan, the White House says, would 'modernize' and speed up environmental review for major projects like bridges, highways and pipelines." [[E&E Greenwire, 6/2/2020](#)]

See our previous research on the impacts of this rule change here: <https://www.climatepower2020.org/resources/trump-shutting-out-communities-of-color/>

RULES WAIVED DURING PANDEMIC

As Of June 29, 2020, Trump's Administration Has Made 69 Moves To Ease Environmental Safeguards During The COVID-19 Crisis. The website Drilled News maintains a tracker of policy actions taken by the Trump administration to ease, waive, or permanently roll back climate-change-related safeguards during the COVID-19 crisis. As of June 29, 2020, the list included 69 actions by the Trump administration. [[Drilled News, last updated 6/29/2020](#)]

Trump Waiving Pollution Requirements During Coronavirus Pandemic. In March of 2019, the Wall Street Journal reported: "The Environmental Protection Agency is planning to waive compliance requirements and deadlines for a range of industries, including oil refiners, water utilities and sewage plants, as it seeks to help businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic, according to Trump administration officials. The biggest change likely will be to waive or postpone coming deadlines to switch to cleaner-burning summer-grade gasoline, according to administration officials and a business lobbyist." [[Wall Street Journal, 3/24/2019](#)]

CBS News Headline: "An Open License To Pollute': Trump Administration Indefinitely Suspends Some Environmental Protection Laws During Coronavirus Pandemic." On March 31st, 2020, CBS News reported: "The Trump administration introduced this week a sweeping relaxation of environmental laws and fines during the coronavirus pandemic. According to new guidelines from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), companies will largely be exempt from consequences for polluting the air or water during the outbreak. In a letter to all government and private sector partners on Thursday, the EPA's Assistant Administrator for Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Susan Parker Bodine said that the agency does not expect power plants, factories or other companies to meet environmental standards and reporting of pollution during this time — and it won't pursue penalties if companies break the rules." The article later quoted Gina McCarthy, president and CEO of the Natural Resources Defense Council and former EPA Administrator, who said "This is an open license to pollute. Plain and simple." [[CBS News, 3/31/2020](#)]

After Trump Used The COVID-19 Crisis To Waive Air Pollution Enforcement, Pollution Levels In Houston's Industrialized Areas Surged As Much As 62%. On April 19, 2020, NBCDFW reported: "Last month, Environmental Protection Agency administrator Andrew Wheeler, a coal lobbyist before Trump appointed him to the agency, announced enforcement waivers for industries

on monitoring, reporting and quickly fixing hazardous releases, in cases the EPA deems staffing problems related to the coronavirus pandemic made compliance difficult. Since then, air pollutants in Houston's most heavily industrialized areas have surged as much as 62%, a Texas A & M analysis of state air monitor readings found." [\[NBCDFW, 4/19/2020\]](#)

Port Arthur Resident On Trump's Rollbacks: "They're Basically Killing Us... We Don't Even Know What We're Breathing." On April 19, 2020, NBCDFW reported: "Danielle Nelson's best monitor for the emissions billowing out of the oil refineries and chemical plants surrounding her home: The heaving chest of her 9-year-old asthmatic son. On some nights, the boy's chest shudders as he fights for breath in his sleep. Nelson suspects the towering plants and refineries are to blame, rising like a lit-up city at night around her squat brick apartment building in the rugged Texas Gulf Coast city of Port Arthur. Ask Nelson what protection the federal government and plant operators provide her African American community, and her answer is blunt. 'They're basically killing us,' says the 37-year-old, who herself has been diagnosed with respiratory problems since moving to the community after Hurricane Harvey in 2017. 'We don't even know what we're breathing,' she says." [\[NBCDFW, 4/19/2020\]](#)

SOOT POLLUTION

DISPROPORTIONATE BURDEN FROM SOOT POLLUTION

Study Found Non-Whites Bear A Disproportionate Burden For PM 2.5 and PM10 Particulate Matter (Soot) Pollution. A study published in the American Journal of Public Health found: “We characterized the populations residing near NEI facilities to determine whether individuals from certain subgroups face disproportionately high burden from nearby PM emissions. We observed disproportionately high burdens for non-Whites and those living in poverty (Table 1; Figure 1). Disparities for non-Whites persist at multiple scales: nationally, in the vast majority of states (Figure A, part a) and in the majority of individual counties (Figure A, part b). The lack of individual-level data on the intersection of racial/ethnic identification and poverty status limited our ability to make direct comparisons; however, overall, racial disparities for both PM2.5 and PM10—specifically between Blacks and Whites—are stronger than are poverty-based disparities (Table 1). This is a consistent observation even when considering urban Whites and Blacks alone (Figure 2). PM2.5 and PM10 disparities for Hispanics are less pronounced or consistent but still present. The diversity within the Hispanic population, which includes both native-born persons and recent immigrants from a variety of countries, has made the catchall “Hispanic” designation vexing for public health research.” [[Mikati, Ihab et al. “Disparities in Distribution of Particulate Matter Emission Sources by Race and Poverty Status.” American journal of public health vol. 108,4 \(2018\): 480-485](#)]

Headline: “Hispanics And Blacks Create Less Air Pollution Than Whites, But Breathe More Of It, Study Finds.” [[CNN, 3/13/2019](#)]

- **Study: Blacks And Hispanic Are Exposed To 56% And 63% More Particulate Air Pollution (PM2.5) Than Is Caused By Their Consumption, While Non-Hispanic Whites Are Exposed To Less Pollution Than They Cause.** According to a study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, “Fine particulate matter (PM2.5) air pollution exposure is the largest environmental health risk factor in the United States. Here, we link PM2.5 exposure to the human activities responsible for PM2.5 pollution. We use these results to explore “pollution inequity”: the difference between the environmental health damage caused by a racial–ethnic group and the damage that group experiences. We show

that, in the United States, PM2.5 exposure is disproportionately caused by consumption of goods and services mainly by the non-Hispanic white majority, but disproportionately inhaled by black and Hispanic minorities. On average, non-Hispanic whites experience a “pollution advantage”: They experience ~17% less air pollution exposure than is caused by their consumption. Blacks and Hispanics on average bear a “pollution burden” of 56% and 63% excess exposure, respectively, relative to the exposure caused by their consumption. The total disparity is caused as much by how much people consume as by how much pollution they breathe. Differences in the types of goods and services consumed by each group are less important. PM2.5 exposures declined ~50% during 2002–2015 for all three racial–ethnic groups, but pollution inequity has remained high.” [[Tessum, Christopher W. et al. “Inequity in consumption of goods and services adds to racial–ethnic disparities in air pollution exposure.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* Mar 2019, 116 \(13\) 6001-6006](#)]

ASTHMA, LUNG CANCER, AND HEART DISEASES

American Lung Association: Particle Pollution From Vehicle Exhaust And Power Plants Can Cause Lung Cancer, Heart Disease, And Asthma Attacks.

According to the American Lung Association: "Lung cancer is the #1 cancer killer of both men and women in the U.S. When you think of risk factors for lung cancer, what comes to mind? Most of us think about the risk associated with smoking cigarettes, but did you know that air pollution can also cause lung cancer? Overwhelming evidence shows that particle pollution in the outdoor air we breathe—like that coming from vehicle exhaust, coal-fired power plants and other industrial sources—can cause lung cancer. Particle pollution increases the risk of dying early, heart disease and asthma attacks, and it can also interfere with the growth and function of the lungs."

[[American Lung Association, 6/21/2016](#)]

African American Children Were Four Times More Likely To Be Admitted To The Hospital And Ten Times More Likely To Die From Asthma.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, “In 2015, African American children had a death rate ten times that of non-Hispanic white children. Black children are 4 times more likely to be admitted to the hospital for asthma, as compared to non-Hispanic white children. [Department of Health and Human Services, Accessed [9/7/18](#)]

LINK TO COVID-19 DEATHS

Harvard Public Health Study: Exposure To Particulate (PM2.5) Air Pollution Linked To Increased Risk Of Death From Coronavirus. A study recently published by researchers at the Harvard University T.H. Chan School of Public Health concluded: “We found that an increase of only 1 µg/m³ in PM2.5 is associated with an 8% increase in the COVID-19 death rate (95% confidence interval [CI]: 2%, 15%). The results were statistically significant and robust to secondary and sensitivity analyses. A small increase in long-term exposure to PM2.5 leads to a large increase in the COVID-19 death rate. Despite inherent limitations of to the ecological study design, our results underscore the importance of continuing to enforce existing air pollution regulations to protect human health both during and after the COVID-19 crisis. The data and code are publicly available so our analyses can be updated routinely.” [[Xiao Wu et al “Exposure to air pollution and COVID-19 mortality in the United States.” medRxiv 2020.04.05.20054502 - Updated 4/24/2020](#)]

- **Headline: “New Research Links Air Pollution to Higher Coronavirus Death Rates.”** [[New York Times, 4/7/2020](#)]
- **Headline: “Air Pollution Linked To Increased Risk Of Death From COVID-19 In U.S., Harvard Study Finds”** [[Newsweek, 4/8/2020](#)]

The Guardian Headline: “Black Americans Dying Of COVID-19 At Three Time The Rate Of White People. On May 20, 2020, The Guardian reported: “The racial wound at the center of the coronavirus pandemic in the US continues to fester, with latest data showing that African Americans have died from the disease at almost three times the rate of white people. New figures compiled by the non-partisan APM Research Lab and released on Wednesday under the title Color of Coronavirus provide further evidence of the staggering divide in the Covid-19 death rate between black Americans and the rest of the nation. Across the country, African Americans have died at a rate of 50.3 per 100,000 people, compared with 20.7 for whites, 22.9 for Latinos and 22.7 for Asian Americans.” [[The Guardian, 5/20/2020](#)]

TRUMP IGNORING SCIENTISTS

Scientists Found That PM2.5 Particulate Matter Pollution (Soot) Was Harmful To Health At Levels Below Existing National Limits. June In June of 2017 a group of scientists published an article in the New England Journal of Medicine that found “In the entire Medicare population, there was

significant evidence of adverse effects related to exposure to PM_{2.5} and ozone at concentrations below current national standards. This effect was most pronounced among self-identified racial minorities and people with low income.” [[Qian Di, M.S. et al “Air Pollution and Mortality in the Medicare Population” N Engl J Med 2017; 376:2513-2522](#)]

Trump’s EPA Disbanded A Key Scientific Advisory Panel Reviewing Particulate Air Pollution Limits. In October of 2018, the New York Times reported: “An Environmental Protection Agency panel that advises the agency’s leadership on the latest scientific information about soot in the atmosphere is not listed as continuing its work next year, an E.P.A. official said. The 20-person Particulate Matter Review Panel, made up of experts in microscopic airborne pollutants known to cause respiratory disease, is responsible for helping the agency decide what levels of pollutants are safe to breathe. Agency officials declined to say why the E.P.A. intends to stop convening the panel next year, particularly as the agency considers whether to revise air quality standards.” [[New York Times, 10/11/2018](#)]

The Disbanded Science Advisory Panel Reported Their Recommendations For Stricter PM 2.5 (Soot) Air Quality Standards Anyway. In a letter to the EPA, the members of the Independent Particulate Matter Review Panel that was disbanded in 2018 wrote: “Based on scientific evidence, as detailed in Attachment B, the Panel finds that the current suite of primary fine particle (PM_{2.5}) annual and 24-hour standards are not protective of public health. Both of these standards should be revised to new levels, while retaining their current indicators, averaging times, and forms. The annual standard should be revised to a range of 10 µg/m³ to 8 µg/m³ . The 24-hour standard should be revised to a range of 30 µg/m³ to 25 µg/m³ . These scientific findings are based on consistent epidemiological evidence from multiple multi-city Page 2 of 11 studies, augmented with evidence from single-city studies, at policy-relevant ambient concentrations in areas with design values at and below the levels of the current standards, and are supported by research from experimental models in animals and humans and by accountability studies” [[Letter to EPA Administrator Wheeler, 10/22/2019](#)]

Science Advisory Panel Warned Trump’s EPA About The Health Risks Of PM 2.5 (Soot) Standards And The Disparities In Health Risk Borne By Minority Communities. In an article to the New England Journal of Medicine, the members of the Independent Particulate Matter Review Panel that was disbanded by Trump’s EPA in 2018 wrote: ““We unequivocally and unanimously concluded that the current PM_{2.5} standards do not adequately protect public health. An annual standard between 10 µg per cubic meter

and 8 µg per cubic meter would protect the general public and at-risk groups. However, even at the lower end of the range, risk is not reduced to zero. The margin of safety increases as the level of the standard is lowered within this range. The choice of standard within this range is a policy judgment reserved for the EPA administrator. In the interest of environmental justice, we advised the administrator that disparities in health risk borne by minority communities need to be taken into consideration in choosing a margin of safety." [[New England Journal of Medicine, 6/10/2020](#)]

Trump's EPA Announced It Would Not Change Ambient Air Quality Standards For Particulate Matter (Soot). On April 14, 2020, the EPA issued a press release, saying: "Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is announcing its proposal to retain, without changes, the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for particulate matter (PM) including both fine particles (PM_{2.5}) and coarse particles (PM₁₀). This proposal comes after careful review and consideration of the most current available scientific evidence and risk and exposure information, and with consultation and confirmation by the agency's independent science advisors." [[EPA Press Release, 4/14/2020](#)]

CAR EXHAUST

Particle Pollution Can Come From A Variety Of Sources Including Power Plants And Vehicle Exhaust. According to the American Lung Association: "Particle pollution is a mix of tiny solid and liquid particles in the air and can be made up of a number of components, such as acids, organic chemicals, metals, soil and dust particles. It can be emitted directly from wood stoves, forest fires, vehicles and other sources, and it can also form from other types of pollution that come from sources like power plants." [[American Lung Association, 6/21/2016](#)]

Union Of Concerned Scientists: "Communities Of Color In The Northeast And Mid-Atlantic Breathe 66 Percent More Air Pollution From Vehicles Than White Residents." In June of 2019, the Union of Concerned Scientists published a report, finding: "Asian American, African American, and Latino residents in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic region are exposed to substantially more air pollution from cars, trucks, and buses than other demographic groups. For many years, this has been a known fact among affected communities, who have experienced firsthand the dangerous health impacts of air pollution, such as lung and heart ailments, asthma, diabetes, developmental problems in children, and premature death." Among the key findings of the report, the Union of Concerned Scientists found: "On average, communities of color in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic breathe 66 percent more air pollution from vehicles than white residents." [[Union of Concerned Scientists, 6/21/2019](#)]

Washington Post Headline: "Trump Administration Moves Forward With Looser Air Rules As Respiratory Disease Grips U.S." On March 31st, 2020, the Washington Post reported: "The Trump administration is moving forward with easing restrictions on air pollution even as the novel coronavirus — and the deadly respiratory disease it causes — grips the country. Many of the moves were a long time coming. But the timing has incensed President Trump critics, who accuse the administration of taking steps that will reduce air quality at a time when scientists are beginning to consider whether pollution increases the risk of coronavirus infection and intensifies the symptoms of covid-19. 'Air pollution reduces our body's ability to fight infection,' Moms Clean Air Force co-founder Dominique Browning said. 'Pollution from power plants and trucks and cars is also one of the causes of the underlying heart and lung problems that make people more vulnerable to covid-19.'" [[Washington Post, 3/31/2020](#)]

Washington Post Headline: "EPA Staff Warned That Mileage Rollbacks Had Flaws. Trump Officials Ignored Them." On May 19, 2020, the Washington

Post reported: “In its rush to roll back the most significant climate policy enacted by President Barack Obama — mileage standards designed to reduce pollution from cars — the Trump administration ignored warnings that its new rule has serious flaws, according to documents shared with The Washington Post.” The Post noted later in the article: “The documents, however, reveal that EPA staff were sidelined as they warned that the revised standards had several defects. Commenting on the preamble’s assertion that the government’s ‘action will result in reductions in climate change-related impacts and most air pollutants compared to the absence of regulation,’ EPA staffers wrote in an internal document in February that ‘this is not correct’ from the agency’s perspective. ‘The action revising the [greenhouse gas] standards will result in increased climate impacts and air pollution emissions compared to the existing standards,’ agency staff wrote in the margins.” [\[Washington Post, 5/19/2020\]](#)

COAL POWER PLANTS

Particle Pollution Can Come From A Variety Of Sources Including Power Plants And Vehicle Exhaust. According to the American Lung Association: "Particle pollution is a mix of tiny solid and liquid particles in the air and can be made up of a number of components, such as acids, organic chemicals, metals, soil and dust particles. It can be emitted directly from wood stoves, forest fires, vehicles and other sources, and it can also form from other types of pollution that come from sources like power plants." [[American Lung Association, 6/21/2016](#)]

Trump's Affordable Clean Energy Rule Will "Substantially Increase Premature Deaths" From Ozone And Particulate Matter. According to a scientific paper published in Environmental Research Letters: "The change in emissions of co-pollutants under the ACE also has implications for regional air quality and public health. SO₂ and NO_x are precursors to ambient PM_{2.5} and NO_x emissions contribute to ambient ozone, both of which have effects on premature mortality and morbidity. States with increased emissions may experience greater difficulty achieving or maintaining the US National Ambient Air Quality Standards established under the Clean Air Act. EPA estimates that, nationally, the ACE will lead to a slightly lower number of PM_{2.5}- and ozone-related premature deaths compared to no policy in 2030, but it estimates that the ACE will substantially increase premature deaths compared to the CPP." [[Keyes A.T. et al., "The affordable clean energy rule and the impact of emissions rebound on carbon dioxide and criteria air pollutant emissions." Environ. Res. Lett. 2019; 14: 044018](#)]

Coal Power Plans Are A Major Source Of Mercury Pollution. According to the Union of Concerned Scientists: "Coal plants are responsible for 42 percent of US mercury emissions, a toxic heavy metal that can damage the nervous, digestive, and immune systems, and is a serious threat to the child development. Just 1/70th of a teaspoon of mercury deposited on a 25-acre lake can make the fish unsafe to eat. According to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Emissions Inventory, US coal power plants emitted 45,676 pounds of mercury in 2014 (the latest year data is available)." [[Union of Concerned Scientists, 12/19/2017](#)]

Air Pollutants From Coal Power Plants Can Include Lead, Cadmium, Carbon Monoxide, Volatile Organic Compounds, and Arsenic. According to the Union of Concerned Scientists: "Other harmful pollutants emitted in 2014 by the US coal power fleet include: 41.2 tons of lead, 9,332 pounds of cadmium, and

other toxic heavy metals. 576,185 tons of carbon monoxide, which causes headaches and places additional stress on people with heart disease. 22,124 tons of volatile organic compounds (VOC), which form ozone. 77,108 pounds of arsenic. For scale, arsenic causes cancer in one out of 100 people who drink water containing 50 parts per billion." [[Union of Concerned Scientists, 12/19/2017](#)]

NAACP Report Found The Populations Within Three Miles Of A Coal Power Plant Are Disproportionately People Of Color. Nearly six million Americans live within three miles of a coal power plant. As noted below, coal power plants tend to be disproportionately located in low-income communities and communities of color: People who live within three miles of a coal power plant have an average per capita income of \$18,400, which is lower than the U.S. average of \$21,587. Among those living within three miles of a coal power plant, 39 percent are people of color — a figure that is higher than the 36 percent proportion of people of color in the total U.S. population. Moreover, the coal plants that have been built within urban areas in the U.S. tend overwhelmingly to be located in communities of color." [[NAACP, 2012](#)]

NPR: "Trump Administration Weakens Climate Plan To Help Coal Plants Stay Open." In June of 2019, NPR published a story titled "Trump Administration Weakens Climate Plan To Help Coal Plants Stay Open." According to the story: "Obama's Clean Power Plan was far broader in scope, setting state-by-state goals for reducing emissions of planet warming carbon dioxide emissions. The rule let states figure out how to meet those goals but made it likely they would close coal plants because those are the biggest emitters of CO2. The Trump administration's ACE rule is narrower and regulates emissions of individual power plants. It will require power plant operators to make the plants more efficient and release fewer emissions per megawatt of electricity generated. The administration's aim is to give coal power plants a chance to stay in business longer despite market pressure from cheaper natural gas, wind and solar." [[NPR, 6/19/2019](#)]

PIPELINES

Trump Revived The Keystone XL Pipeline And The Dakota Access Pipeline In One Of His First Acts As President. In January 2017, the New York Times reported: “In his latest moves to dismantle the legacy of his predecessor, Mr. Trump resurrected the Keystone XL pipeline that had stirred years of debate, and expedited another pipeline in the Dakotas that had become a major flash point for Native Americans.” [New York Times, [1/24/2017](#)]

The Keystone XL Pipeline Would Traverse Lands Of The Great Sioux Nation Guaranteed By Treaty, Including Sacred Sites, Ceremonial Sites, Burial Sites, Water Supplies, And Other Natural Resources Important To Native Nations. According to a resolution in opposition to the Keystone XL pipeline published by the National Congress of American Indians, “the lands over which the pipeline will traverse are the traditional lands of the Great Sioux Nation as guaranteed in the Treaties of 1851 and 1868, and the traditional lands of numerous other Native Nations, and contain numerous sacred sites, ceremonial sites and burial sites, water supplies and other natural resources that are a central aspect to the traditional way of life and spiritual view of the respective Native Nations.” [[National Congress of American Indians resolution October, 2018](#)]

Lawsuit By Native American tribes Successfully Blocked Keystone XL Pipeline In Court. In April of 2020, the Associated Press reported: “A U.S. judge canceled a key permit Wednesday for the Keystone XL oil pipeline that’s expected to stretch from Canada to Nebraska, another setback for the disputed project that got underway less than two weeks ago following years of delays. Judge Brian Morris said the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers failed to adequately consider effects on endangered species such as pallid sturgeon, a massive, dinosaur-like fish that lives in rivers the pipeline would cross.” The article later stated: “Morris is holding a court hearing Thursday on two other lawsuits against the \$8 billion pipeline. American Indian tribes and environmental groups want him to halt the construction at the border while a lawsuit challenging President Donald Trump’s approval of the pipeline last year works its way through the courts. The pipeline was proposed in 2008 and would carry up to 830,000 barrels (35 million gallons) of crude daily to Nebraska, where it would be transferred to another TC Energy pipeline for shipment to refineries and export terminals on the Gulf of Mexico.” [[Associated Press, 4/15/2020](#)]

2019: Trump Signed Two Executive Orders Making It Harder For States To Hold Up Pipeline Permits. In April of 2019, USA Today reported: “Aiming to

streamline oil and gas pipeline projects, President Donald Trump on Wednesday signed two executive orders making it harder for states to block construction because of environmental concerns. The orders were prompted by fossil fuel industry pressure after officials in New York and Washington state had stopped new projects with permitting processes in recent years." [\[USA Today, 4/11/2019\]](#)

Trump's EPA Gutted States Ability To Stop Pipelines That Endanger Their Water. In June 2020, NPR reported: "In recent years climate change activists encouraged states and tribes to exercise their power under section 401 of the Clean Water Act. It gives local authorities the right to review new projects to make sure they don't harm local water. Last August, the Environmental Protection Agency announced it would update the rule "to increase the predictability and timeliness of section 401 certification." It was in response to President Trump's executive order last year, aimed at speeding up approval processes for energy infrastructure. Trump has expressed skepticism about climate change and he campaigned in 2016 on helping the coal and other fossil fuel industries." NPR went on to write: "Wheeler says the new rule will specify timelines for state review and require final action within one year of receiving an application. It also limits the scope of the Section 401 review, directing states to look only at direct effects on local water quality, not larger issues such as climate change." [\[NPR, 6/1/20\]](#)

- **Oil Industry Groups Supported The Proposed Changes.** In October 2019, oil industry groups signed a joint statement in support of Trump's proposed changes to the Clean Water Act: "To allow a single state to wield disproportionate power over projects of national importance is intensely problematic." The letter was signed by American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers, the American Exploration and Production Council, the American Petroleum Institute, the Domestic Energy Producers Alliance, and the Independent Petroleum Association of America. [\[Regulations.gov, 10/28/2019\]](#)
- **The Sierra Club Called The Rule Change "Illegal" And Said It Was "Removing A Vital Mechanism States Use To Protect Their Clean Water."** In a June 2020 press release, the Sierra Club wrote: "Today, former coal lobbyist Andrew Wheeler's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a final rule that illegally scraps section 401 of the Clean Water Act, removing a vital mechanism states use to protect their clean water. The rule change severely limits the time and tools states and tribes have to properly evaluate the effect federally permitted projects, like pipelines and other fossil fuel facilities, would have on waterways. This could force

states to approve water permit applications with insufficient data or prematurely grant authority to issue permits to the federal government. Under the new rules, if a state denies a water permit application for not sufficiently protecting water quality, EPA could decide the state is “waiving” their rights and approve the permit without a state’s approval.” [Sierra Club, [6/1/2020](#)]

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FUNDING

TRUMP SOUGHT TO ELIMINATE THE EPA'S ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE OFFICE

In His 2018 Budget, Trump Proposed Eliminating The EPA's Environmental Justice Office. According to The Guardian: "Planned cuts at the Environmental Protection Agency are set to fall heaviest upon communities of color across the US that already suffer disproportionately from toxic pollution, green groups have warned. Donald Trump's administration is proposing a 25% reduction in the EPA's \$8.1bn budget, eliminating nearly 3,000 jobs and several programs including the agency's environmental justice office." [[The Guardian, 3/3/2017](#)]

The Office Of Environmental Is Tasked With Bridging The Disparity In Pollution Experienced By Communities Of Color And Low-Income Communities. According to The Guardian: "The environmental justice office is tasked with bridging the yawning disparity in pollution experienced by black, Hispanic and low-income communities and wealthier white neighborhoods. It provides grants to communities to mop up toxins and rehabilitate abandoned industrial facilities that are invariably found in poorer areas." [[The Guardian, 3/3/2017](#)]

The Office Of Environmental Justice Oversaw Efforts To Tackle Lead Poisoning, Air Pollution And Other Pollution Experienced By Communities Of Color In The Vicinity Of Toxic Industrial Facilities. According to The Guardian: "In the final months of Barack Obama's administration, the EPA unveiled a new effort to tackle lead poisoning, air pollution and other problems suffered by communities of color situated next to waste treatment plants, smelters and other sources of toxins. But this plan will be cut down in its infancy should the environmental justice office be dismantled." [[The Guardian, 3/3/2017](#)]

IN EVERY BUDGET PROPOSED BY THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE HAS BEEN ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK

Enforcement Funding

For Fiscal Year 2018, Trump Tried To Eliminate Environmental Justice Enforcement. According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2018 would have eliminated funding for the environmental justice component of the EPA's enforcement program and the environmental justice enforcement component of the Hazardous Substances Superfund program. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2018](#)]

For Fiscal Year 2019, Trump Tried To Slash Environmental Justice Enforcement By \$5.2 Million, Or 73% Below Previous Levels. According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2019 included \$2 million for the environmental justice component of the EPA's enforcement program, a cut of almost \$4.7 million from what Congress previously enacted at \$6.691 million. He also proposed to eliminate funding for environmental justice enforcement under the Hazardous Substances Superfund program, which Congress previously funded at \$554,000. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2019](#)]

For Fiscal Year 2020, Trump Tried To Slash Environmental Justice Enforcement By \$4.7 Million Or 63% Below Previous Levels. According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2020 included \$2,739,000 million for the environmental justice component of the EPA's enforcement program, a cut of \$3.998,000 million from what Congress previously enacted at \$6,737,000. He also proposed to eliminate funding for environmental justice enforcement under the Hazardous Substances Superfund program, which Congress previously funded at \$758,000. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2020](#)]

For Fiscal Year 2020, Trump Proposed Cutting Funding For NEPA Implementation By Over \$1 Million. According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 202 included \$16,598,000 for NEPA Implementation, a cut of \$1,024,000 from what Congress previously enacted at \$17,622,000. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2020](#)]

For Fiscal Year 2021, Trump Tried To Slash Environmental Justice Enforcement By Almost \$7.5 Million, Or 73% Below Previous Levels.

According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2021 included \$2,279,000 for the environmental justice component of the EPA's enforcement program, a cut of \$6,825,000 from what Congress previously enacted at \$9,554,000. He also proposed to eliminate funding for environmental justice enforcement under the Hazardous Substances Superfund program, which Congress previously funded at \$633,000. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2021](#)]

Funding For Tribal Projects

For Fiscal Year 2020, Trump Proposed Slashing Funding For Tribal Air Quality Management By Almost \$4 Million. According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2020 included \$8,963,000 for Tribal Air Quality Management, a cut of \$3,866,000 from what Congress previously enacted at \$12,829,000. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2020](#)]

For Fiscal Year 2020, Trump Tried To Slash Funding For The Tribal General Assistance Program By Over \$21 Million. According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2020 included \$44,233,000 for the Tribal General Assistance Program, a cut of \$21,243,000 from what Congress previously enacted at \$65,476,000. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2020](#)]

- **The Tribal General Assistance Program Provides Grants And Technical Assistance To Cover Costs Of Planning, Developing And Establishing Tribal Environmental protection Programs.** According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Tribal General Assistance Program “provides grants and technical assistance to tribes to cover costs of planning, developing, and establishing tribal environmental protection programs consistent with other applicable provisions of law administered by EPA. EPA will work with tribes to reprioritize their planning and implementation efforts.” [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2020](#)]

For Fiscal Year 2020, Trump Proposed Eliminating State Grant Funding For Gold King Mine Water Monitoring. According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2020 eliminated state grant funding for Gold King Mine water monitoring, which was previously allocated \$4,000,000. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2020](#)]

Funding For Other Areas Of Environmental Justice

For Fiscal Year 2020, Trump Proposed Eliminating Funding For State Grants For Reducing Lead In Drinking Water And Halving Grants For Lead Testing In Schools. According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2020 eliminated funding for state grants for reducing lead in drinking water, which was previously allocated \$10,000,000. Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2020 included \$10,000,000 for state grants for lead testing in school, a cut of \$10,000,000 from what Congress previously enacted at \$20,000,000. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2020](#)]

For Fiscal Year 2020, Trump Proposed Eliminating Funding For The Lead Risk Reduction Program. According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2020 eliminated funding for the Toxic Substances Lead Risk Reduction Program, which was previously allocated \$12,627,000. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2020](#)]

For Fiscal Year 2020, Trump Proposed Eliminating Funding For Grants For Safe Water In Small And Disadvantaged Communities. According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2020 eliminated funding for grants for safe water in small and disadvantaged communities, which was previously allocated \$200,000,000. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2020](#)]

For Fiscal Year 2020, Trump Proposed Cutting State Infrastructure Assistance For Clean Water By \$574,115,000 And Infrastructure Assistance For Drinking Water By \$300,000,000. According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2020 included \$1,119,772,000 for state infrastructure assistance for clean water, a \$574,115,000 cut from what Congress previously enacted at \$1,693,887,000. Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2020 also included \$863,233,000 for state infrastructure assistance for drinking water, a cut of \$300,000,000 from what Congress previously enacted at \$863,233,000. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2020](#)]

For Fiscal Year 2020, Trump Proposed Cutting \$18 Million In State Grant Funding For Brownfields Projects. According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2020 included \$62,000,000 in state grant funding for Brownfields Projects, a \$18,000,000 cut from what Congress previously enacted at \$80,000,000. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2020](#)]

For Fiscal Year 2020, Trump Sought To Slash Funding For Cleaning Up Superfund Sites By \$116 Million. According to a budget document from the Environmental Protection Agency, Trump's request to Congress for fiscal year 2020 included \$668,283,000 in state grant funding for Superfund Cleanups, a \$16,000,000 cut from what Congress previously enacted at \$784,740,000. [[EPA Budget In Brief, Fiscal Year 2020](#)]

COAL ASH

UNIONTOWN, AL

Residents Of The 90% Black Town Of Uniontown, Alabama Opposed Plans To Dump Coal Ash From Tennessee In A Nearby Landfill. According to a report from the American Bar Association, “Approximately 90 percent of Uniontown’s population of approximately 2,300 are African American, and with a per capita income of less than \$10,000. More than 40 percent of the population live under the poverty line. When ADEM was reviewing plans to permit Arrowhead Landfill, residents formed coalitions and signed petitions to oppose the facility, knowing that it would bring pollution to their community. In 2007, however, Perry County Commissioners approved the permit anyway. Then in 2010, the County Commission, ADEM, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) all approved the decision to send coal ash from Kingston, Tennessee, to Uniontown. Notably, in 2016, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights wrote a scathing report highlighting the EPA’s failure to protect Uniontown by either implementing principles of environmental justice or by enforcing civil rights.” [[American Bar Association, 4/2/2020](#)]

Uniontown Residents Filed Complaints Over Arrowhead Landfill Describing Strong Odors And Health Impacts Including Irritation Of Nose, Throat, And Eyes, Dizziness, And Nausea. According to a report from the American Bar Association, “Since Arrowhead Landfill first opened in 2007, Uniontown residents have filed multiple complaints with ADEM and testified at public hearings. Then, in 2013, 35 residents living within one mile of the landfill and other interested persons submitted a complaint to the EPA’s Office of Civil Rights (OCR) alleging that ADEM’s decision to reissue and modify the operating permit for Arrowhead Landfill violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, and agency regulations, 40 C.F.R. Part 7. The complaint described several health and nonhealth impacts, including interference with sleep, frequent emission of odors, irritation of nose, throat, and eyes, dizziness, nausea, an increase in the vector population in and around homes close to the landfills, and increased noise from the operation of heavy machinery.” [[American Bar Association, 4/2/2020](#)]

Trump’s EPA Relied On Data From An Air Monitor Miles Away From Uniontown To Determine That There Was No Evidence Of Residents’ Concerns With Coal Ash Dump. In a report on a coal ash dump in Uniontown, AL, the American Bar Association found: “Despite all of this evidence and

additional interviews, site visits, inspection reports, and studies submitted by complainants, the Office of Civil Rights, now named EPA's External Civil Rights Compliance Office (ECRCO), dismissed the complaint in March 2018, declaring that there was 'insufficient evidence' to conclude that ADEM violated Title VI and the EPA's nondiscrimination regulations. In evaluating the sufficiency of evidence, ECRCO focused largely on whether Arrowhead Landfill was in compliance with federal air and water quality monitoring regulations and had capped the coal ash according to requirements. In evaluating the impact of the landfill on air quality, the EPA relied on data from an air monitor miles away from town, which had little relevance to whether community members experience problems with air pollution at fenceline." [[American Bar Association, 4/2/2020](#)]

DANGERS OF COAL ASH

Coal Ash Contains Chemicals Including Arsenic, Selenium, Lead, Mercury, Boron, And Others Known To Cause Cancer, Neurological Damage, Or Heart Ailments. In August of 2019, Politico reported: "The ash, left behind when coal is burned for power generation, contains arsenic, selenium, lead, mercury, boron and other contaminants known to cause cancer, neurological damage or heart ailments. Electric utilities usually store it in massive landfills or unlined ponds that are at a risk of spilling when nearby lakes and rivers flood — as happened in a \$1.2 billion disaster that damaged dozens of homes in Tennessee in 2008, as well as two breaches that fouled a river and lake in North Carolina last year after Hurricane Florence." [[Politico, 8/26/2019](#)]

Duke University Study Found That Easing Coal Ash Storage Rules Would Increase Risks Of Toxic Chemicals Such As Carcinogenic Hexavalent Chromium Contaminating Nearby Water Supplies. In September of 2019, a press release from Duke University announced: "Allowing coal ash to be spread on soil or stored in unlined pits and landfills will raise the risk that several toxic elements, including carcinogenic hexavalent chromium, could leach out of the coal ash and contaminate nearby water supplies across the U.S., according to preliminary findings from a new Duke University study. Federal rules currently prohibit the uncontrolled disposal of coal ash into the environment, but the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has recently proposed amendments to the federal 2015 Coal Ash Rule that will remove this and other safeguards if the ash is dumped or spread for a 'beneficial use,' such as fill." [[Duke University Nicholas School of the Environment press release, 9/30/2019](#)]

TRUMP'S ROLLBACK OF COAL ASH STORAGE RULES

New York Times Headline: "E.P.A. to Roll Back Rules to Control Toxic Ash from Coal Plants." In October of 2019 the New York Times reported: "The Trump administration is expected to roll back an Obama-era regulation meant to limit the leaching of heavy metals like arsenic, lead and mercury into water supplies from the ash of coal-fired power plants, according to two people familiar with the plans. With a series of new rules expected in the coming days, the Environmental Protection Agency will move to weaken the 2015 regulation that would have strengthened inspection and monitoring at coal plants, lowered acceptable levels of toxic effluent and required plants to install new technology to protect water supplies from contaminated coal ash." [[New York Times, 10/31/2019](#)]

The Trump Administration Announced That It Would Relax Rules For The Disposal Of Spent Coal, A "Highly Toxic" Substance That Can Seep Into Drinking Water. "The Trump administration announced Wednesday that it is relaxing rules for the disposal of spent coal used to fuel hundreds of power plants nationwide. But environmental groups say the rollback of coal ash storage regulations established by the Obama administration in 2015 could affect drinking water near dozens of sites. Dalal Aboulhosn, Sierra Club's deputy legislative director for land and water, said legal action was being considered. 'We are poring through the rule change see what our next steps might be,' she said. The coal industry petitioned the Trump administration for the roll back, announced by Environmental Protection Agency Acting Administrator Andrew Wheeler — a former lobbyist for the coal industry. [...] Coal ash is often doused with water for quick cooling and dumping, but the sludge is highly toxic and can seep into aquifers. It can include arsenic, lead, mercury and chromium, experts say." [NBC News, [7/18/18](#)]

Trump's EPA Extended The Length Of Time That The Industry Could Use Unlined Coal Ash Ponds And Groundwater-Adjacent Sites For Dumping. "The EPA extended the time by 18 months that the industry can use unlined coal ash ponds and groundwater-adjacent sites for dumping. The Obama administration sought to phase out those sites by April 2019. The unlined ponds are considered by environmentalists to be the worst offenders for polluting groundwater that sometimes is tapped for drinking. 'The Trump administration is turning a blind eye to damage done to our drinking water,' said Lisa Evans, senior counsel for environmental group Earthjustice. 'This is aimed at saving industry money instead of protecting the public.'" [NBC News, [7/18/18](#)]

CHEMICAL PLANTS

CANCER ALLEY

In Cancer Alley, Black Communities Face A 16% Higher Risk Of Cancer Than White Communities, And Low-Income Communities Face A 12% Higher Risk Than High Income Communities. According to an article published in 2012 in the International Journal of Environmental Public Health on cancer disparities in Louisiana's Cancer Alley, "People in low-income tracts bore a cumulative risk 12% more than those in high-income tracts ($p < 0.05$), and those in black-dominant areas 16% more than in white-dominant areas ($p < 0.01$). Formaldehyde and benzene were the two largest contributors to the disparities. [...] Risk reduction strategies should target emission sources, risk driver chemicals, and especially the disadvantaged neighborhoods." [[Int. J Environ Res Public Health. 2012 Dec; 9\(12\): 4365–4385, 12/3/2012](#)]

- **The Blacker And Poorer The Neighborhood, The Higher The Risk Of Cancer.** According to an article published in 2012 in the International Journal of Environmental Public Health, "Spatial QR analyses showed that magnitude of disparity became larger at the high end of exposure range, indicating worsened disparity in the poorest and most highly concentrated black areas. Cancer risk of air toxics not only disproportionately affects socioeconomically disadvantaged and racial minority communities, but there is a gradient effect within these groups with poorer and higher minority concentrated segments being more affected than their counterparts." [[Int. J Environ Res Public Health. 2012 Dec; 9\(12\): 4365–4385, 12/3/2012](#)]

Cancer Alley Has The "Highest Rate Of Air Pollution-Caused Cancer In The Country." According to a 2015 EPA study cited by DeSmog Blog, the six parishes surrounding a Denka plant in Cancer Alley has the highest rate of cancer from air pollutants in the country: "The neoprene plant emits chloroprene, a chemical recently reclassified as a likely human carcinogen by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). According to a 2015 EPA assessment, residents that live near the plant, including Taylor and his family, have a lifetime cancer risk from air pollution that is 800 times higher than the national average. Those living in the six parishes closest to the Denka facility have the highest risk of air pollution-caused cancer in the country." [[DeSmog Blog, 5/31/2019](#)]

Black Louisianans Have A 12% Higher Incidence Of Cancer And A 35% Higher Cancer Death Rate Then Americans Overall. According to data collected by the National Cancer Institute and presented by the Tulane Environmental Law clinic, "Louisianians have a: 8% higher cancer incidence, 15% higher cancer death rate and Black Louisianians have a: 12% higher cancer incidence, 35% higher cancer death rate compared to Americans overall, based on 2011-2015 data from the National Cancer Institute." [[National Cancer Institute 2011-2015 via Tulane Environmental Law Clinic, 2019](#)]

Seven Of The Ten Census Tracts With The Highest Risk Of Cancer In The Country Are In Cancer Alley. According to data collected by the EPA in 2014 and presented in a Rolling Stone article, seven of the ten census tracts with the highest risk of cancer in the US are in Cancer Alley. [EPA 2014 via Rolling Stone, [10/30/2019](#)]

REFINERY ROW

Refinery Row Consists Of 10 Miles Of Petrochemical Plants Bordered By Residential Neighborhoods In Northern Corpus Christi. According to a report from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry "Refineries and petrochemical facilities in Northern Corpus Christi release chemicals into the outdoor air through stack emissions, general maintenance, startups and shutdowns, and accidental releases. Other sources in the area, such as cars, trucks, trains, barges, gas stations, and dry cleaners, also release chemicals to the outdoor air. Because air is not contained, people living, working, and visiting in the Refinery Row area come in contact with chemicals when breathing the air. Refinery Row consists of about 10 miles of petrochemical facilities, bordered by residential neighborhoods. Because air pollution can be harmful to human health when it accumulates in the air in high enough levels, area residents have long been concerned about the potential dangers of breathing chemicals released from industrial activities at Refinery Row. In 2003, ATSDR agreed to evaluate the residents' concerns about pollutants in the outdoor air." [[Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, 8/29/2016](#)]

- **Government Report Found A Higher Rate Of Asthma In Nueces County (Home To Refinery Row).** According to a report from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry "ATSDR found that Nueces County has a higher rate of asthma hospitalizations among children than Texas as a whole. ATSDR's air evaluation found that exposure to benzene, hydrogen sulfide, particulate matter, and sulfur dioxide detected in Refinery Row outdoor air indicated levels which, although infrequent, could potentially

result in respiratory health effects in susceptible populations like people with asthma or other related respiratory illnesses.” [[Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, 8/29/2016](#)]

- **Government Report Found An Increased Cancer Risk From Long-Term Exposure To Air Pollutants On Refinery Row.** According to a report from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry “Assuming additive effects, the cumulative cancer risk estimate for Refinery Row is the sum of the individual chemical risk estimates. The main contributors to cumulative cancer risk in Refinery Row air are benzene (31%), 1,2-dibromoethane (26%), and chromium (11%). The cumulative cancer risk for a mixture of Refinery Row chemicals is 1.8×10^{-4} (or about 2 additional cancer cases per 10,000 people). Thus, breathing a mixture of chemicals found in outdoor air for many years results in an increased risk of cancer.” [[Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, 8/29/2016](#)]

CHEMICAL DISASTERS

Oil Refineries And Chemical Plants On The Texas Gulf Coast Released More Than 1 Million Pounds Of Dangerous Air Pollutants Following Hurricane Harvey. On September 4, 2017, the Texas Tribune reported: “Oil refineries and chemical plants across the Texas Gulf Coast released more than 1 million pounds of dangerous air pollutants in the week after Harvey struck, according to public regulatory filings aggregated by the Center for Biological Diversity. While attention has zeroed in on the crisis at the Arkema chemical plant in Crosby, other facilities — oil refineries, chemical plants and shale drilling sites — have been reporting flaring, leaks and chemical discharges triggered by Harvey. Emissions have already exceeded permitted levels, after floating rooftops sank on oil storage tanks, chemical storage tanks overflowed with rainwater, and broken valves and shutdown procedures triggered flaring at refineries. The chemicals released in the week after Harvey made landfall, including benzene, 1,3-butadiene, hexane, hydrogen sulfide, sulfur dioxide, toluene and xylene.” [[Texas Tribune, 9/4/2017](#)]

Trump Rolled Back Chemical Plant Safety Rules That Were Meant To Improve Hazard Planning And Coordination With First Responders In An Emergency. In November of 2019, Houston Public Media reported: “Days before President Barack Obama left office in 2017, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency finalized a rule aimed at preventing tragedies like the 2013 explosion and fire in the tiny Central Texas town of West that killed a dozen first responders. Among other requirements, what came to be known

as the 'Chemical Disaster Rule' would have made it easier for the public to access hazard-planning documents and required increased coordination with first responders. It also required companies to provide increased emergency planning information to local officials and to hold more frequent meetings and trainings. On Thursday, the EPA — which delayed implementation of the Obama rule after Trump took office — announced it would largely unwind the regulation, which was widely unpopular in the chemical industry." [[Houston Public Media, 11/22/2019](#)]

CLIMATE CHANGE HOAX

TRUMP'S HOAX COMMENTS

PolitiFact: Trump Repeatedly Called Climate Change A “Hoax” During And Before The 2016 Election. On June 3, 2016, PolitiFact reported: “On Dec. 30, 2015, Trump told the crowd at a rally in Hilton Head, S.C., ‘Obama's talking about all of this with the global warming and ... a lot of it's a hoax. It's a hoax. I mean, it's a money-making industry, okay? It's a hoax, a lot of it.’ That's three times using ‘hoax’ in one sentence. Trump has also used the word on Twitter since his 2012 tweet. On Jan. 25, 2014, Trump tweeted, ‘NBC News just called it the great freeze — coldest weather in years. Is our country still spending money on the GLOBAL WARMING HOAX?’ On Jan. 29, 2014, Trump tweeted: ‘Snowing in Texas and Louisiana, record setting freezing temperatures throughout the country and beyond. Global warming is an expensive hoax!’” The article concluded: “Trump has repeatedly called climate change a ‘hoax’ in speeches, tweets and media appearances, and while he hasn't necessarily repeated the charge that China ‘invented’ climate change, he has said as recently as Jan. 18, 2016, that action on climate change ‘is done for the benefit of China.’” [[PolitiFact, 6/03/2016](#)]

WHAT CLIMATE CHANGE MEANS TO PEOPLE OF COLOR

American Lung Association: “Poorer People And Some Racial And Ethnic Groups Are Among Those Who Often Face Higher Exposure To Pollutants And Who May Experience Greater Responses To Such Pollution.” According to the American Lung Association, “The burden of air pollution is not evenly shared. Poorer people and some racial and ethnic groups are among those who often face higher exposure to pollutants and who may experience greater responses to such pollution. Many studies have explored the differences in harm from air pollution to racial or ethnic groups and people who are in a low socioeconomic position, have less education or live nearer to major sources, including a workshop the American Lung Association held in 2001 that focused on urban air pollution and health inequities.” [[American Lung Association 2/12/2020](#)]

Study Analyzed The Impact Of Racist Exclusionary Housing Practices And Found Neighborhoods In Formerly Redlined Areas Are Subject To Hotter Temperatures. “While a growing body of evidence describes the intra-urban

variation of temperatures due to characteristics of the built environment, few have asked why we observe a pattern of historically-marginalized communities living in the hottest areas. Here we have presented results from an analysis of 108 US cities that aimed to examine the role of historic 'redlining' policies in mediating exposure to intra-urban heat. We found that in nearly all cases, those neighborhoods located in formerly redlined areas—that remain predominantly lower income and communities of color—are at present hotter than their non-redlined counterparts. Although the extent of differences in temperatures varies by region, the preponderance of evidence establishes that those experiencing the greatest exposure to present and potentially future extreme heat are living in neighborhoods with the least social and ecosystem services historically." [[Hoffman, J.S.; Shandas, V.; Pendleton, N. The Effects of Historical Housing Policies on Resident Exposure to Intra-Urban Heat: A Study of 108 US Urban Areas. Climate 2020](#)]

CDC: African-Americans Had Higher Death Rates From Heat Related Illness.

According to the CDC, "During 1999–2005, a total of 3,981 heat-related deaths were reported, resulting in approximately 569 heat-related deaths per year in the United States. Older adults and young children are particularly susceptible to heat-related illnesses and are at high risk for heat-related mortality. Black or African American males had a higher crude rate for heat-related deaths than any other race, across all age groups." [CDC, Preparedness and Response for Public Health Disasters, accessed [6/24/15](#)]

NYT Headline: "Climate Change Tied to Pregnancy Risks, Affecting Black Mothers Most." On June 18, 2020, the New York Times reported: "Pregnant women exposed to high temperatures or air pollution are more likely to have children who are premature, underweight or stillborn, according to a new paper looking at data from more than 32 million births in the United States, and the effects hurt African-American mothers and babies the most." [[New York Times, 6/18/2020](#)]

- **Medical Review Found "Environmental Exposures Exacerbated By Climate Change Are Significantly Associated With Serious Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes."** A review of medical studies published in JAMA Network Open (the American Medical Association's open-access medical journal) concluded: "This review suggests that increasingly common environmental exposures exacerbated by climate change are significantly associated with serious adverse pregnancy outcomes across the US. It appears that the medical community at large and women's health clinicians in particular should take note of the emerging

data and become facile in both communicating these risks with patients and integrating them into plans for care. Moreover, physicians can adopt a more active role as patient advocates to educate elected officials entrusted with public policy and insist on effective action to stop the climate crisis." [[Bruce Bekkar, MD; Susan Pacheco, MD; Rupa Basu, PhD; et al, "Association of Air Pollution and Heat Exposure With Preterm Birth, Low Birth Weight, and Stillbirth in the US" JAMA Netw Open. 2020;3\(6\):e208243, 6/18/2020](#)]

- **Medical Review Found Black Mothers At Greater Risk For Preterm Birth And Low Birth Weight Associated With Climate Change Heat And Pollution Exposure.** A review of medical studies published in JAMA Network Open (the American Medical Association's open-access medical journal) found: "This review revealed a disproportionate effect on populations defined as pregnant women with certain medical conditions or specific race/ethnicities. Women with asthma may be particularly susceptible to adverse outcomes, such as preterm birth and stillbirth, in association with PM2.5 exposure during gestation.^{24,40} Among racial/ethnic groups, our findings suggest that black mothers are at greater risk for preterm birth and low birth weight. Social determinants of health, including residence in urban areas with higher exposure to air pollutants and long-term high levels of stress, are known to contribute to adverse obstetrical outcomes.⁸² A recent study⁸³ from California suggested that PM2.5 exposure alone was associated with an equivalent amount of the racial disparity (black vs white) in preterm birth rates as did other demographic and social factors. Our research suggests that these environmental exposures further exacerbate that background risk and could be included among these social determinants." [[Bruce Bekkar, MD; Susan Pacheco, MD; Rupa Basu, PhD; et al, "Association of Air Pollution and Heat Exposure With Preterm Birth, Low Birth Weight, and Stillbirth in the US" JAMA Netw Open. 2020;3\(6\):e208243, 6/18/2020](#)]

Increased Hurricane Activity Linked To Higher Surface Temperatures Caused By Man Made Carbon Emissions. According to the National Climate Assessment, "The recent increases in activity are linked, in part, to higher sea surface temperatures in the region that Atlantic hurricanes form in and move through. Numerous factors have been shown to influence these local sea surface temperatures, including natural variability, human-induced emissions of heat-trapping gases, and particulate pollution. Quantifying the relative contributions of natural and human-caused factors is an active focus of research." [[National Climate Assessment, Extreme Weather, 2014](#)]

E&E Headline: "Flooding Disproportionately Harms Black Neighborhoods." On June 2, 2020, E&E News reported: "When Hurricane Harvey devastated Texas in 2017, the neighborhood that suffered the worst flood damage was a section of southwest Houston where 49% of the residents are nonwhite. When Hurricane Katrina hit southeast Louisiana in 2005, the damage was the most extensive in the region's African American neighborhoods. Of the seven ZIP codes that suffered the costliest flood damage from Katrina, four of them had populations that were at least 75% black, government records show. Flooding in the U.S. disproportionately harms African American neighborhoods, an E&E News analysis of federal flood insurance payments shows. [[E&E Climatewire, 6/2/2020](#)]"