



Messaging on Trump's EPA Rollbacks

Today's announcement by the EPA administrator to begin rolling back regulations designed to protect the health of all Americans is a gift to fossil fuel lobbyists at the expense to the health and well-being of our country. It is well-documented that fossil fuel pollution – especially from coal-fired industrial sources like power plants – harms our health.

The consequences are especially damaging in Pennsylvania, a state documented to have more extra deaths attributed to fossil fuel pollution than any other state. In a 2021 peer-reviewed study ([Harvard University, 2021](#)), a publication so significant because it attributes air pollution driven deaths explicitly to fossil fuel combustion, it was documented that:

- In Pennsylvania, there were over 25,380 extra deaths per year of people older than 14 years old due to exposure to PM2.5 from fossil fuels.
 - Pennsylvania has the greatest number of excess deaths due to exposure to PM2.5 from fossil fuels per 100,000 people in the United States out of any other state.
 - In Pennsylvania, there are 235 extra deaths due to exposure to PM2.5 from fossil fuels per 100,000 people over the age of 14 per year.
 - In Pennsylvania, there are 195 extra deaths due to exposure to PM2.5 from fossil fuels per 100,000 people.
- In Pennsylvania, 19% is the attributable fraction of all deaths for the population above 14 years old attributable to long term exposure to fossil-fuel related PM2.5.

These findings underline the importance of reducing air pollution further — a goal that should be set by national, regional and statewide public health agencies and air quality regulators.

This study also found that:

- **Air pollution from fossil fuels kills** an estimated **8.7 million people worldwide each year**—more than tobacco or malaria (Harvard University, 2021).
- Coal-fired power plants release **toxic pollutants** like mercury, sulfur dioxide and particulate matter, which are linked to asthma, heart disease and neurological disorders.
- Fossil fuel extraction and refining disproportionately affect **low-income and frontline communities**, creating environmental injustice and long-term health disparities.

The impact of fossil fuel pollution has severe economic consequences:

- Climate-related disasters—worsened by fossil fuel emissions—cost the U.S. **\$92 billion in 2023 alone** ([National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration NOAA](#)).
- Fossil fuel volatility, including wars and supply disruptions, creates **unstable markets and energy insecurity**.

- Clean energy is now **cheaper**: Solar and wind are the **lowest-cost sources** of new electricity in much of the world ([Lazard, 2023](#)). Continuing to invest in fossil fuels is throwing money at an outdated model.

Burning fossil fuels destabilizes the climate:

- Burning fossil fuels is the **primary driver** of climate change, responsible for **over 75% of global greenhouse gas emissions**.
- Coal is the **most carbon-intensive fuel**—and phasing it out is essential to staying below 1.5°C of warming (IPCC).
- Climate change is already disrupting agriculture, raising sea levels and increasing extreme weather—costing lives and livelihoods now, not just in the future.

We already know about better options that avoid this damage and risks:

- **Clean energy creates jobs**: Solar and wind industries employ more people than coal, oil and gas combined in the U.S. (U.S. DOE, 2023).
- Renewables are **scalable, secure and sustainable**—they don't pollute our air or water, and they reduce our reliance on unstable fuel markets.
- Energy efficiency and renewables together can provide a **just transition** that protects workers and communities while safeguarding the planet.

"Energy dominance" through fossil fuels is a false promise. True energy security and economic stability come from investing in renewable energy, resilient infrastructure, and healthy communities.

The science is clear: fossil fuels are driving the crisis. The solution is already here—we must choose it. We must also win back our government agencies that have been captured by interests beholden to fossil fuel lobbyists instead of following the law to protect our health and our communities.