

Obama Budget Would Cut Superfund by 6%: How About A New Approach?

February 14, 2012 by [Seth Jaffe](#)

According to a report in [yesterday's Greenwire](#), President Obama's proposed budget would reduce Superfund spending by 6%, from \$565 million to \$532 million. I still don't understand why Obama, particularly with Cass Sunstein still at OMB, hasn't turned this problem into an opportunity. I know I've [flogged this one before](#), but a significant part of the explanation for the size of the Superfund budget is related to CERCLA's status as the last bastion of command and control regulation. Everyone who practices in this area could provide endless examples of the almost unbelievable extent of micromanaging indulged in by EPA and its consultants. Even where EPA is recovering oversight costs, such an approach taxes the system.

(And don't we care about those unreasonable costs being passed on to PRPs? Oops. I forgot. They're the bad guys. Don't care if they incur needless costs.)

Several states have now successfully privatized their state Superfund programs, saving both private and public sector funds, without any decrease in environmental protection. Now's the time for feds to seize the opportunity presented by the budget cuts to change the way federal cleanups get done.

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