



Background

On March 26, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler announced that it will be relaxing environmental regulations during the COVID-19 pandemic. This official memorandum allows manufacturers, power plants, and other facilities to stop conducting routine tests for pollutants and mandatory reporting to the agency. This will continue to put our public health and the environment at risk. While we tackle the current pandemic, we want to make sure we come out of it stronger and more sustainable for future generations.

UPDATE: On June 30, the EPA announced that it would be rescinding the aforementioned memorandum on August 31st. This comes after continuous pressure by lawmakers on the EPA to continue regular monitoring practices and establish a definitive termination date.

Instructions

Handwritten letters are a powerful tool to persuade decisionmakers. This method of communication displays a thoughtful commitment to the cause that speaks volumes to whoever receives the letter. To write a letter, you will need two items: paper and a pen/pencil!

Step 1: Write a letter. Use these helpful tips to make your message shine!

- Effective handwritten letters include an introduction of who you are and why you are writing. They can be anywhere from half a page to two pages.
- A fun principle to keep in mind “K.I.S.S” (Keep It Short and Simple). In order to have your letter read rather than skimmed, make your point concise.
- Share a personal story of why you care.
- Be respectful. Rudeness and discourteous writing can deter the reader from reading the letter any further.
- Make sure the letter ends on our collective call to action, this means asking for something specific

Step 2: Sign your letter. Don't forget to sign your name (and age if you're too young to vote).

Step 3: Take a picture of you with your letter or of your letter and post it to social media with #StepUpEPA and tag five of your friends to write a letter.



Step 4: Send your letter to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) using this address:

Environmental Protection Agency
Attn: Andrew Wheeler
1101A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue
N.W.Washington, DC 20460

Talking points (include 1 or more in your letter)

- The increase in air pollutants can cause a rise in health disparities ex. respiratory diseases, high blood pressure, diabetes, etc.
- Companies and factories dumping pollutants into wetlands, streams, lakes, etc. can put more Floridians at risk of water contamination
- EPA did not display any current or logical explanation as to why regulations are no longer being enforced.
- In order to prevent millions of environmentally-derived illnesses from increasing nationwide, the EPA needs to maintain its requirements for company monitoring and reporting of air emissions.
- With the Trump Administration restricting significant waterways since - in their eyes - they do not count as “waters of the United States”, it completely disregards that our water system is more than what is shown on the surface and simply defies hydrologic science.
- **Call to action:** The EPA to resume overseeing pollution regulations as well as reinforce any existing environmental data collection and management programs.

Sample Post:

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has relaxed and repealed critical regulations that served to protect our public health and the environment. It is paramount that we take action to ensure that our representatives work to support the continued oversight of pollution regulations. Join me in writing a quick, yet thoughtful, handwritten letter to combat these rollbacks, and others like them!



OUR CLIMATE



Sample Letter:

Dear Andrew Wheeler,

My name is Kimberly, and I am a recent graduate of Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida. I grew up in Florida, surrounded by the beauty of the natural environment, and have always admired its resilience. No matter how strong a storm, our ecosystems always seem to find a way to rebound.

As a native Floridian, I am extremely concerned that the recent environmental rollbacks will result in unprecedented and irreversible change. While the economy can crash, the environment is not as quickly resilient. We must recognize that monitoring and regulating pollutants for the sake of our environment is essential to ensuring that it remains in good health for years to come.

I urge you to advocate for the restoration of these regulations that are so crucial to our public health. I urge the EPA to resume overseeing pollution regulations, as well as reinforce any existing environmental data collection and management programs. Our environment needs to be protected, and should not be a victim of legislators who prioritize profits over people.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Sign your Name]