

Voluntary Partnerships that Help Businesses, Governments and the Public Protect the Environment, Save Energy and Money – Face Serious Cuts

The Trump/Pruitt proposed budget could entirely jettison 14 EPA voluntary partnership programs, eliminating critical opportunities, tools and support for companies, individuals and state, local and tribal governments that choose to reduce their carbon footprint, save energy costs and reduce pollution, but need help in doing so.

Why do we need voluntary partnership programs?

Many companies, governmental units and individuals – motivated by corporate sustainability policies, customer demand or simply a desire to save money – want to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide they generate and improve their energy efficiency. But making changes requires particular forms of knowledge and some effort – resources often in short supply in any busy company. EPA's voluntary partnership programs help overcome these hurdles and make energy efficiency easier. The proof is in the large numbers of program participants.

EPA tailors voluntary partnership programs to particular industries (e.g. grocery stores) or types of activity (e.g. appliance disposal). While each offer different opportunities, the programs generally:

- Provide free training, resources, tools and assistance
- Encourage companies to develop creative solutions
- Provide opportunities for companies to share ideas and help one another
- Spotlight leadership and help American companies expand markets through greater knowledge of opportunities
- Encourage ambition beyond minimum compliance
- Engage employees as well as management in the process of pollution and cost-saving programs
- Increase public awareness and community engagement.

What is lost if the Trump/Pruitt budget slashes voluntary partnership programs?

EPA's partnership programs have eliminated millions of tons of greenhouse gasses and other pollutants and saved a great deal of money for participating companies. With EPA encouragement, companies have become more ambitious energy savers. If these programs were eliminated:

- Free tools, resources and training that have made this program so popular would be lost.
- Companies would lose opportunities to learn from and help one another that come through conferences and relationships facilitated by EPA.
- Companies might lose a competitive edge in a world in which U.S. and international customers demand attention to energy efficiency and reward companies that honor those values.
- State, local and tribal governments would no longer have support, tools and guidance to help them make the best environmental and health decisions for their residents.

How do the voluntary programs contribute to a healthier environment?

EPA's innovative Voluntary Programs help thousands of organizations and individuals reduce their carbon footprint while saving energy and money. The following are some examples from a wide range of successful voluntary partnership programs:

- Thinking about getting rid of that ancient, energy guzzling beer fridge in your garage? The **Responsible Appliance Disposal Program** works with partner companies, including many local utilities, to dispose responsibly of old refrigeration appliances. More than 50 partner organizations annually recycle hundreds of

thousands of refrigerators, stand-alone freezers, dehumidifiers and window air conditioners. Responsible disposal prevents the release of chemicals that contribute to climate change and destruction of the ozone layer, properly disposes of thousands of gallons of waste oil and thousands of components containing hazardous chemicals, and recycles millions of pounds of materials that would otherwise go to landfills.

- Inefficient and leaking refrigeration systems used by grocery stores waste money and release chemicals that are dangerous to the earth's protective ozone layer (think skin cancer) *and* contribute to climate change. The **Green Chill Partnership Program** helps food retailers transition to environmentally friendlier refrigerants, reduces the amount of refrigerant they need by eliminating leaks, and shares green refrigeration technologies and best environmental practices. More than 40 food retailers, including major companies like Kroger and Food Lion, participate, as do suppliers of up-to-date refrigeration technology. Storeowners are particularly grateful to avoid the costs of replacing expensive leaked refrigerant (the average system has a 25% leak rate).
- EPA's **Center for Corporate Climate Leadership** helps organizations that are new to these issues get started and experienced organizations improve. With tools, tips and training on how to measure, manage and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in cost-effective ways, companies find new opportunities to reduce their greenhouse gas impacts in all their operations. Achievers get recognition: The Climate Leadership Awards, presented together with the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions and the Climate Registry, honor exemplary corporate, organizational and individual leadership and provide examples for other companies.
- Solar and wind energy are the fastest growing sources of energy in the U.S. They create local jobs and produce a healthier environment than fossil-fueled electricity production. Since 2001, EPA's **Green Power Partnership** has provided technical assistance and recognition to increase use of green power. Hundreds of companies now prefer using billions of kilowatt-hours of green power annually, and the power of companies insisting on green power has helped clean energy industries become competitive with traditional, polluting fossil fuels.
- Generating electricity is notoriously inefficient. Only about 40% of the coal that is burned actually results in the production of electrons, with the rest lost to wasted heat. Technology called "combined heat and power" can capture the heat from on-site electricity generation and use it for space heating. EPA's **Combined Heat and Power Partnership** helps move the industry in that direction and works with energy users, the industry, clean air officials and others toward that end.
- EPA also works with state, tribal and local governments under the **State and Local Climate and Energy Program** to help them improve their energy efficiency, increase their renewable energy and institute climate change policies and programs. The result is reduced greenhouse gas emissions, better air quality and health and benefits to pocketbooks. Numerous useful materials have been created so governments can understand, for example, the multiple benefits and importance of clean energy. One such tool is *Assessing the Multiple Benefits of Clean Energy: A Resource for States*. Another, *AVERT* (Avoided Emissions and Generation Tool) helps state air quality planners, among others, calculate the benefits of energy efficiency, wind and solar policies and programs in terms of reduced levels of greenhouse gases and conventional pollutants, including nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide and CO₂ emissions.

For Further information

Visit our website: www.environmentalprotectionnetwork.org

Email EPN at: info@environmentalprotectionnetwork.org or Janet McCabe, janetgmccabe@gmail.com