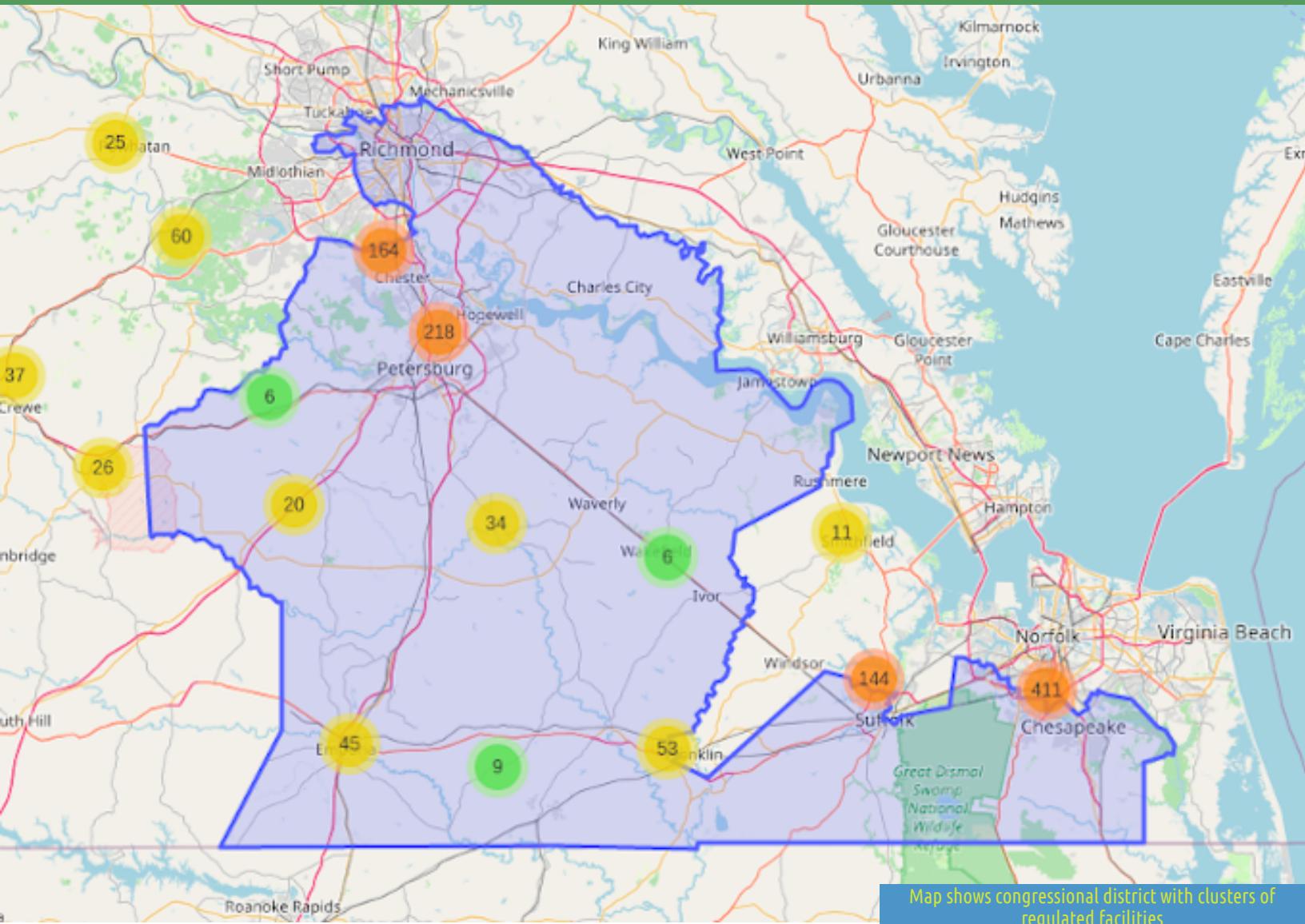


EEW CONGRESSIONAL REPORT CARD



Virginia's 4th District; Seat held by Donald McEachin since 2017

Report Generated September 16th, 2020

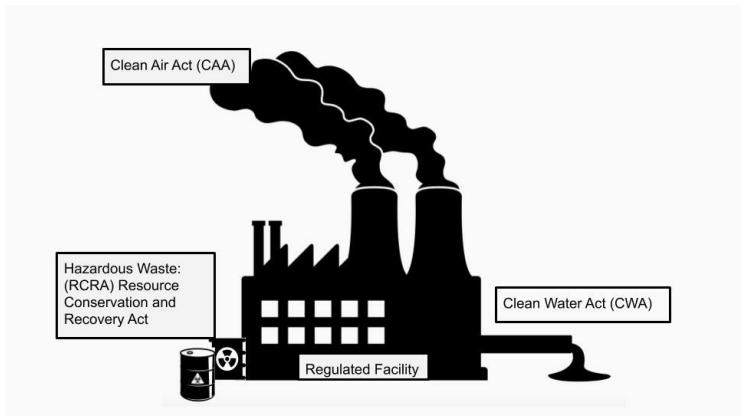
Disclaimer: Data included herein were drawn from EPA's publicly available Enforcement and Compliance History Online ECHO database on August 25, 2020. EDGI has no control over the nature, content, or sustained availability of this database. While EDGI works to assure that the information in this report is correct, that information is subject to limitations of the ECHO database, and is provided "as is." EDGI makes no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness or reliability of this information. The information and images within this report are for general information purposes only. To examine this data for yourself you can view our analysis here and re-run it here.

INTRODUCTION

Why

It is Congress's job to oversee how the laws it passes are implemented by agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Congress has charged the EPA with enforcing most of the laws that protect environmental health by controlling the release of pollution and hazardous materials into the air, water and land. Without effective enforcement, **these laws are meaningless**. Congress can strengthen EPA enforcement by increasing resources to the EPA, passing more effective laws, requiring better data collection, and general oversight. In the **House of Representatives**, the **Energy and Commerce Committee** is the main committee that oversees the EPA. In the **Senate**, the **Environment and Public Works Committee** is the main committee that oversees the EPA.

What is a “facility”?



EEW Trump Term of Office Grade

This is an example, not reflective of the actual VA4 data

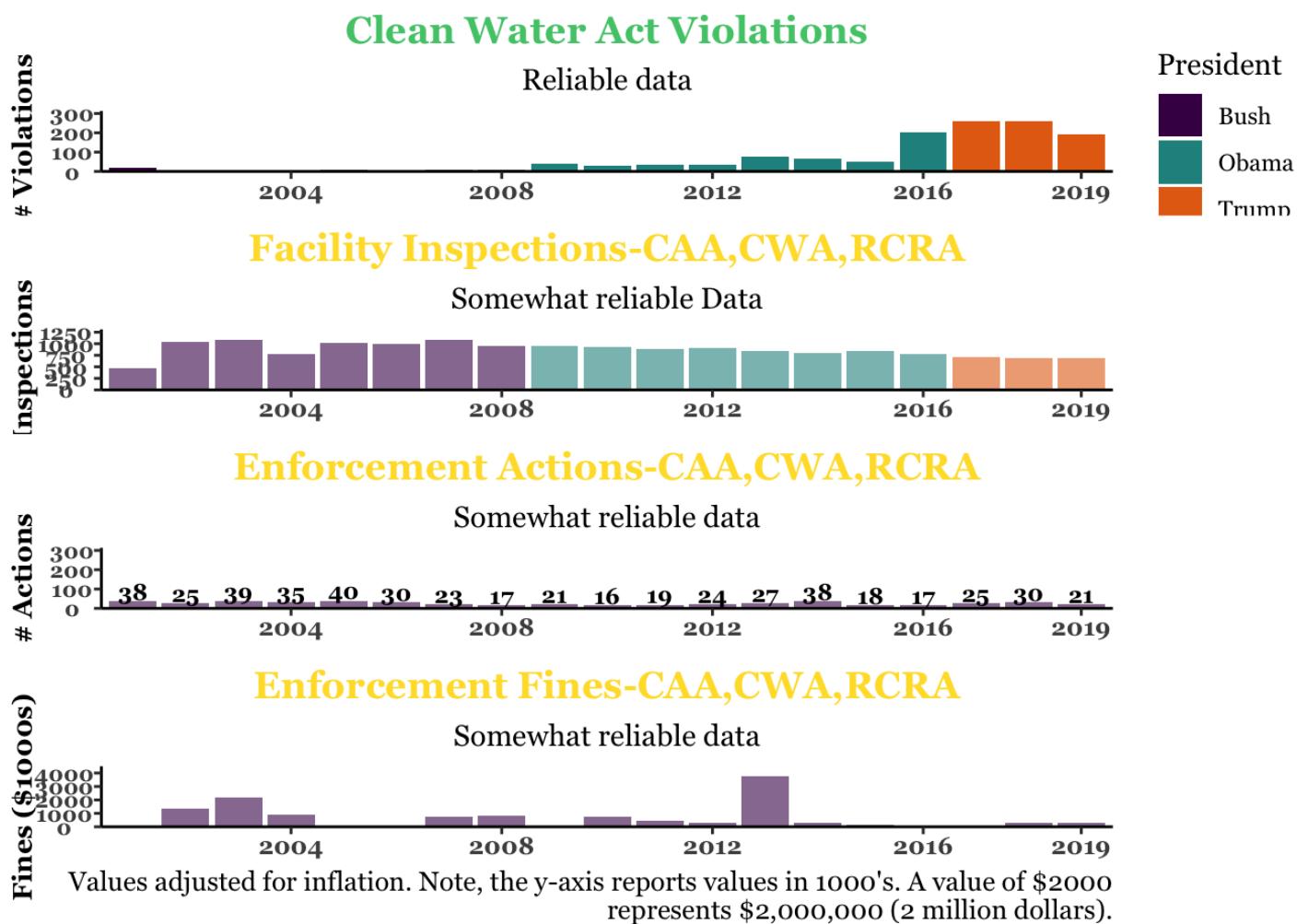
Violations: Much Worse than Average

Enforcement: Worse than Average

[Link to more thorough grade idea](#)

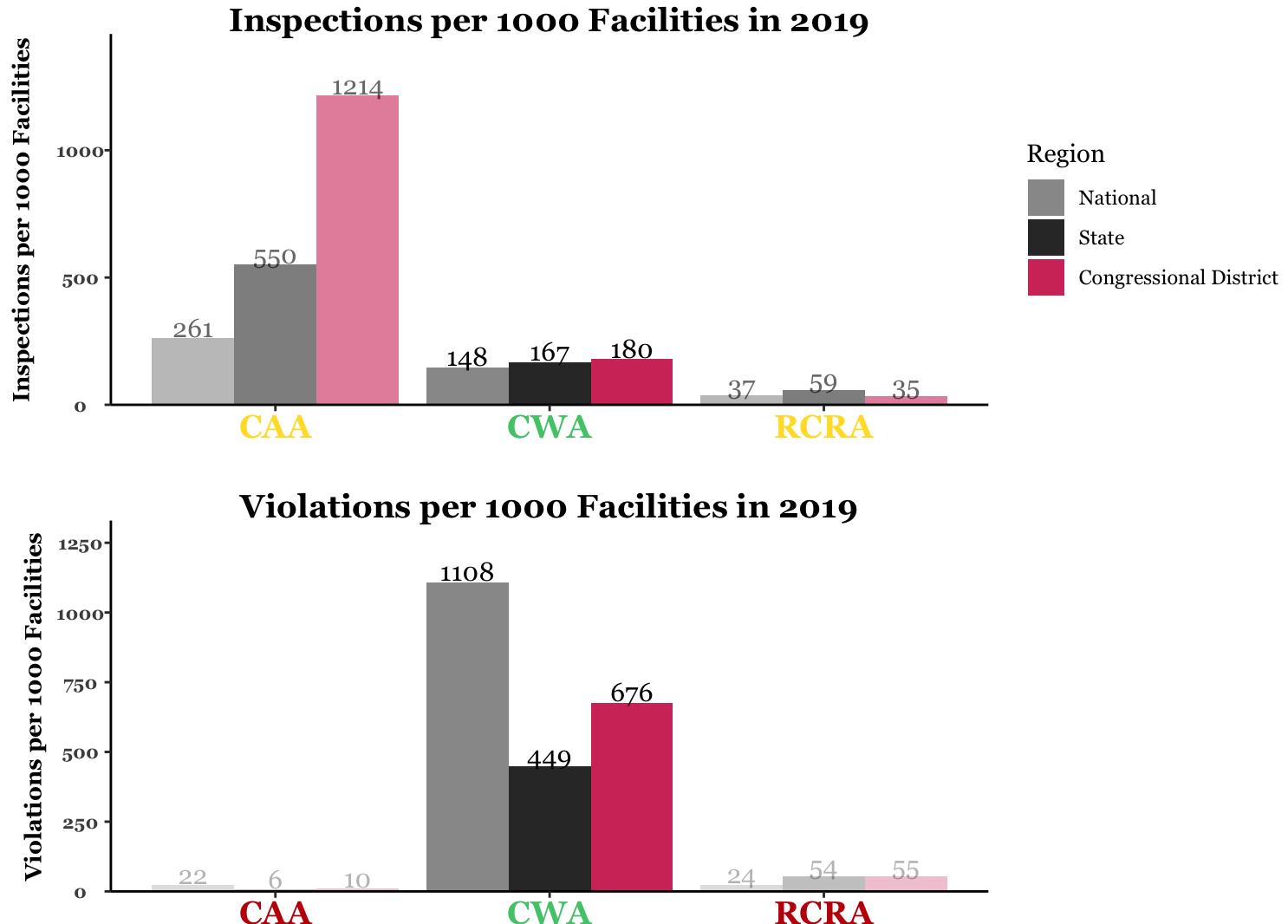
HIGHLIGHTS FOR VIRGINIA'S 4TH DISTRICT

- Comparing the first 3 years of the Obama administration to the first 3 years of the Trump administration, there has been -23.96% change in inspections, a -38.03% change in enforcement fines, and a 35.71% change in enforcement actions.
- Under the Clean Water Act, the only well-reported regulation in this report, 54 facilities, representing 19.01% of all regulated facilities in VA4, were in violation for at least 25% of the last 3 years.



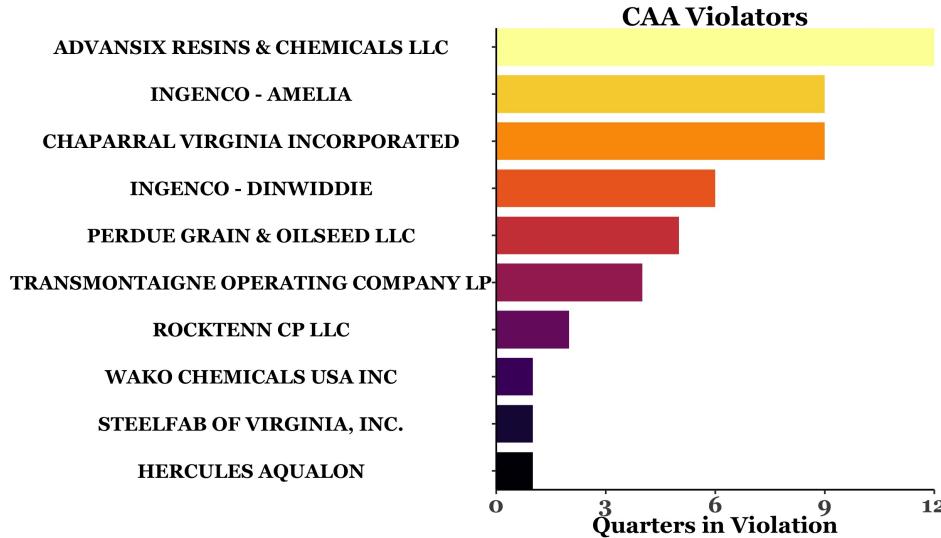
Figures throughout this report indicate reliability by the color of the title, the subtitle, and the degree of transparency of the data. See the data limitations page to view the color-coding table.

YOUR DISTRICT IN COMPARISON



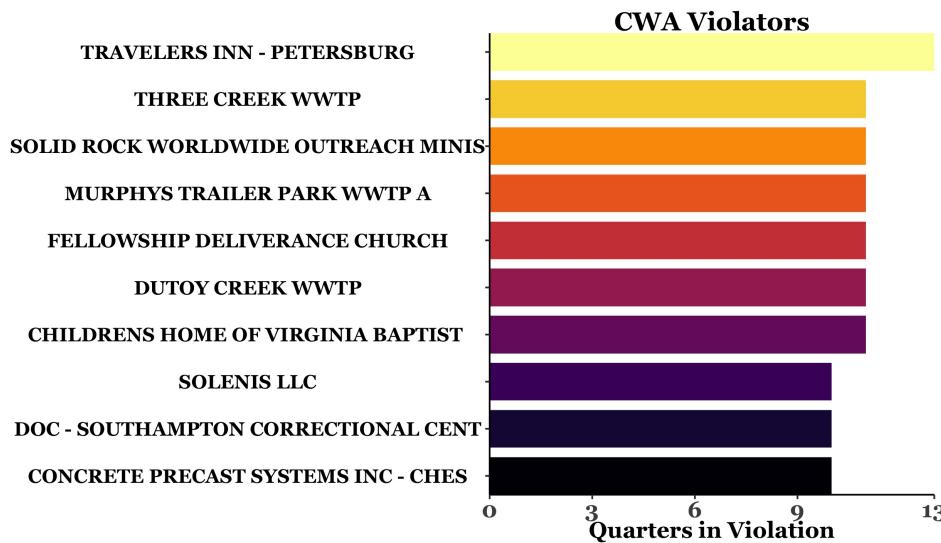
FACILITIES IN YOUR DISTRICT

These figures show the number of quarters the highest-violating facilities have been in violation over the last 3 years. These quarters are not necessarily consecutive.



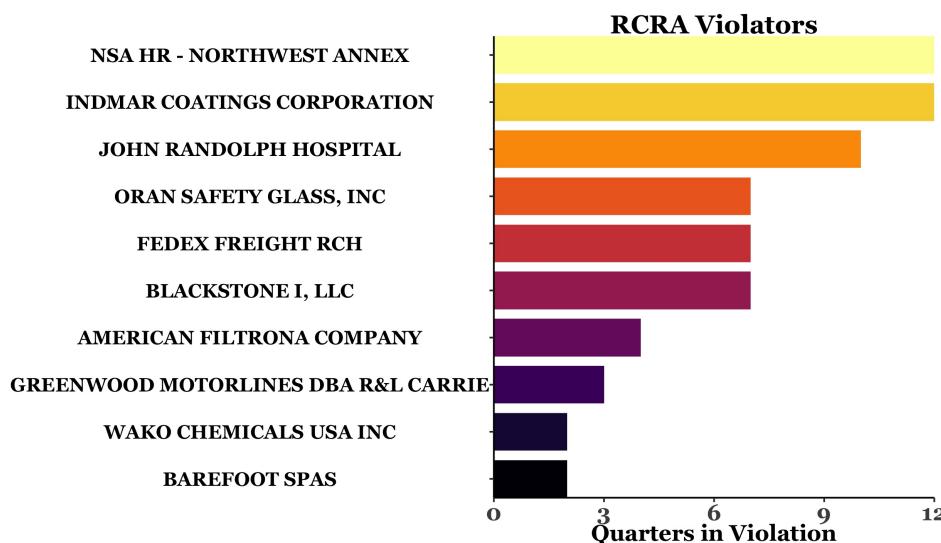
ECHO reports for these facilities:

- [ADVANSIX RESINS & CHEMICALS LLC](#)
- [CHAPARRAL VIRGINIA INCORPORATED](#)
- [INGENCO - AMELIA](#)
- [INGENCO - DINWIDDIE](#)
- [PERDUE GRAIN & OILSEED LLC](#)
- [TRANSMONTAIGNE OPERATING COMPANY LP](#)
- [ROCKTENN CP LLC](#)
- [HERCULES AQUALON](#)
- [STEELFAB OF VIRGINIA, INC.](#)
- [WAKO CHEMICALS USA INC](#)



ECHO reports for these facilities:

- [TRAVELERS INN - PETERSBURG](#)
- [DUTOY CREEK WWTP](#)
- [CHILDRENS HOME OF VIRGINIA BAPTIST](#)
- [SOLID ROCK WORLDWIDE OUTREACH MINIS](#)
- [MURPHYS TRAILER PARK WWTP A](#)
- [THREE CREEK WWTP](#)
- [FELLOWSHIP DELIVERANCE CHURCH](#)
- [DOC - SOUTHAMPTON CORRECTIONAL CENT](#)
- [CONCRETE PRECAST SYSTEMS INC - CHES](#)
- [SOLENIS LLC](#)



ECHO reports for these facilities:

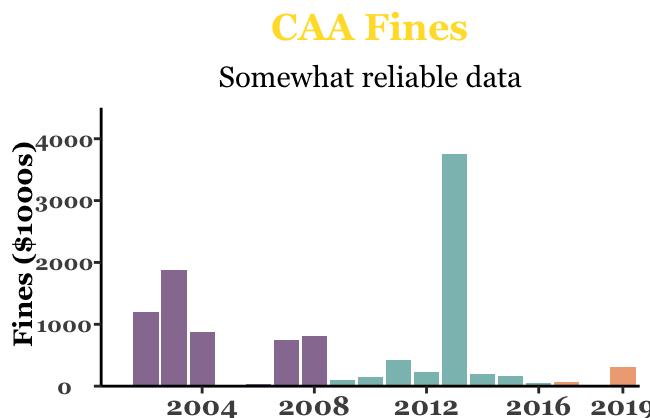
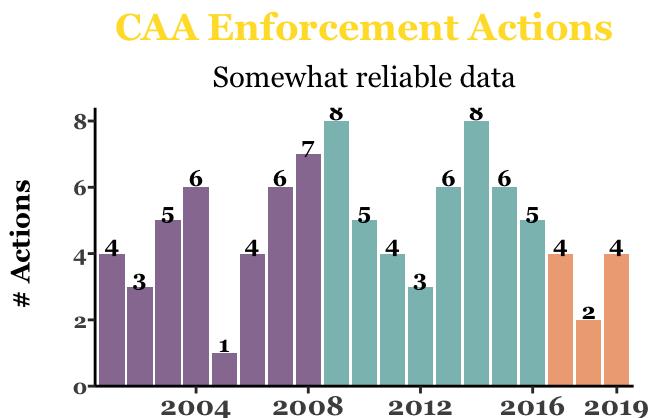
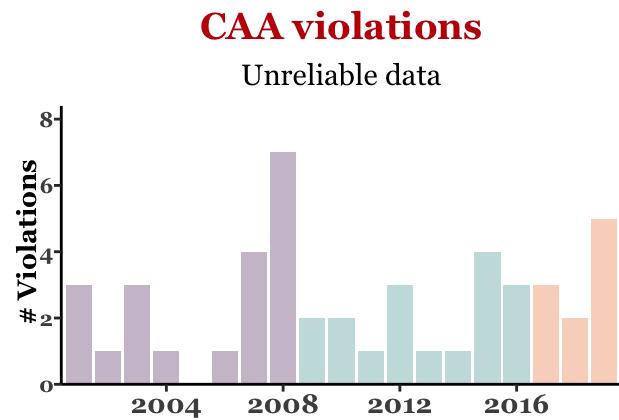
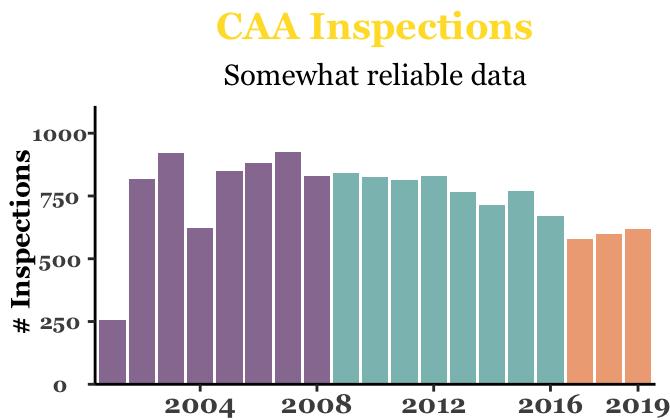
- [INDMAR COATINGS CORPORATION](#)
- [NSA HR - NORTHWEST ANNEX](#)
- [JOHN RANDOLPH HOSPITAL](#)
- [ORAN SAFETY GLASS, INC](#)
- [BLACKSTONE I, LLC](#)
- [FEDEX FREIGHT RCH](#)
- [AMERICAN FILTRONA COMPANY](#)
- [GREENWOOD MOTORLINES DBA R&L CARRIE](#)
- [WAKO CHEMICALS USA INC](#)

- [BAREFOOT SPAS](#)

CLEAN AIR ACT

The Clean Air Act (CAA) is the comprehensive federal law that regulates air emissions from stationary and mobile sources. Among other things, this law authorizes EPA to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) to protect public health and to regulate emissions of hazardous air pollutants [EPA](#). For the CAA, inspections are the most common way of identifying violations, so less violations aren't necessarily an improvement. Recent cuts in inspections is likely related to a drop in violations. [More info on CAA](#)

There are 510 facilities currently reporting under the CAA



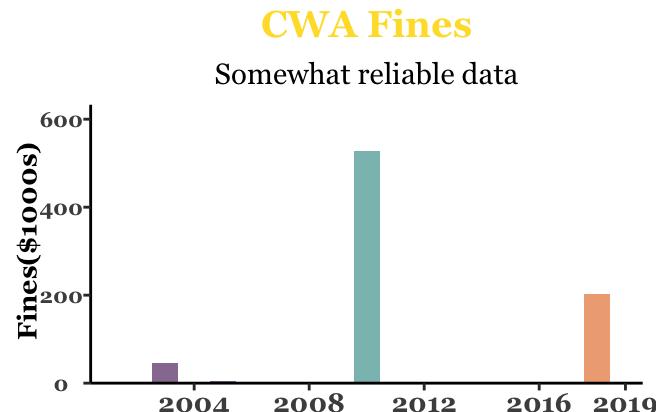
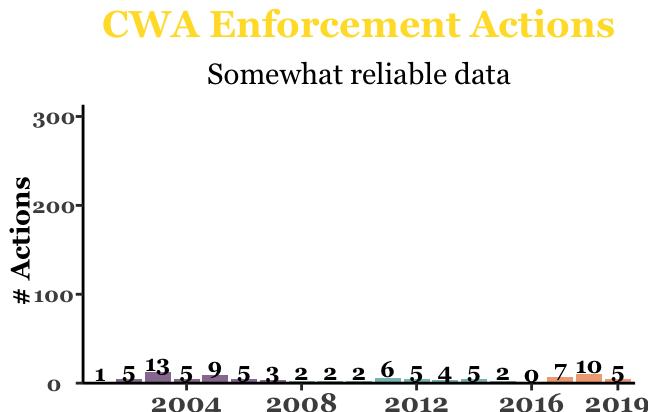
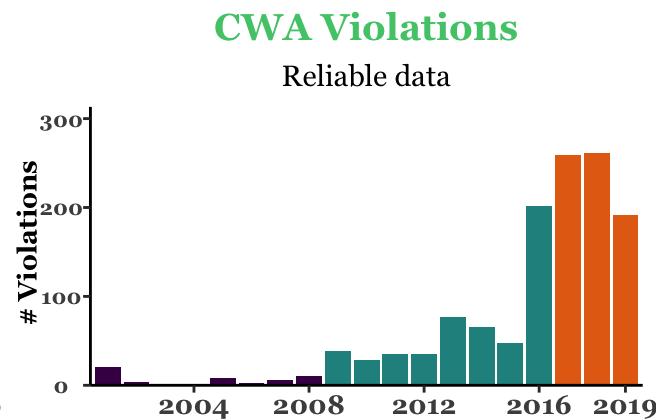
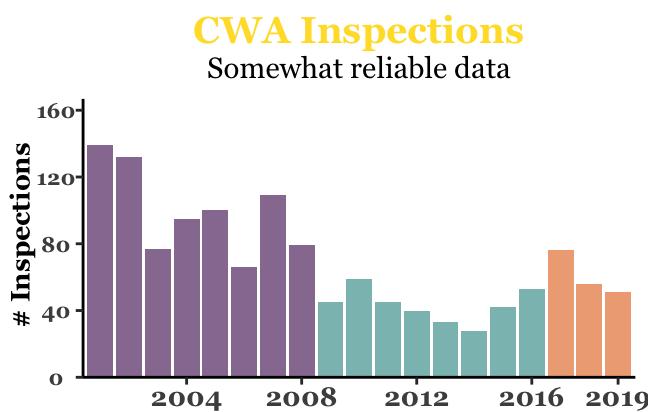
Values adjusted for inflation. Note, the y-axis reports values in 1000's. A value of \$2000 represents \$2,000,000 (2 million dollars).

President
 Bush (purple)
 Obama (teal)
 Trump (orange)

CLEAN WATER ACT

The Clean Water Act is a series of regulations that govern discharges of pollutants and regulates water quality standards for waters of the United States. The CWA established the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) which permits discharges of pollutants [EPA](#). Unlike the CAA, CWA violations are reported automatically through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), so violations are recorded independently of facility inspections. CWA inspections often occur in response to recorded violations. [More info on CWA](#)

There are 284 facilities currently reporting under the CWA



Values adjusted for inflation. Note, the y-axis reports values in 1000's. A value of \$2000 represents \$2,000,000 (2 million dollars).

President
 Bush (purple)
 Obama (teal)
 Trump (orange)

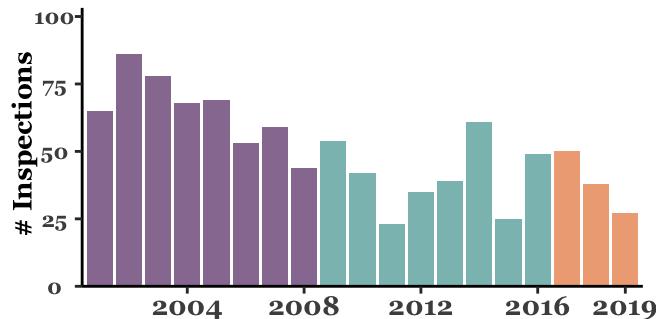
RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND RECOVERY ACT

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) gives EPA the authority to control hazardous waste from the “cradle-to-grave”, regulating the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. Although facilities self-report under RCRA, like the CAA, violations are most often found after an inspection, and a reduction in violations might mean a reduction in inspections. [EPA More info on RCRA](#)

There are 766 facilities currently reporting under RCRA

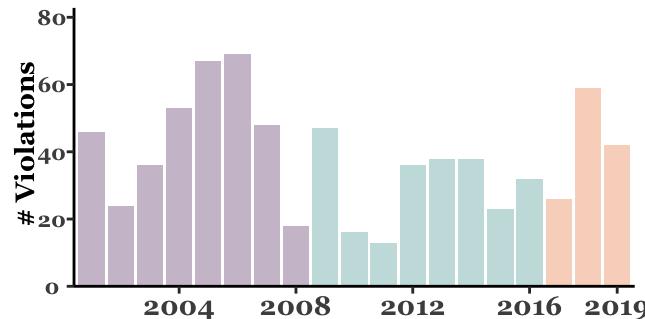
RCRA Inspections

Somewhat reliable data



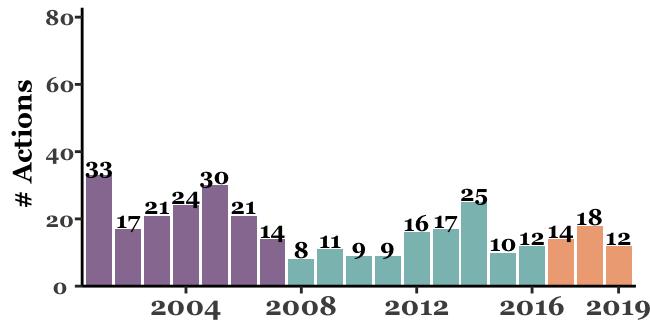
RCRA violations

Unreliable data



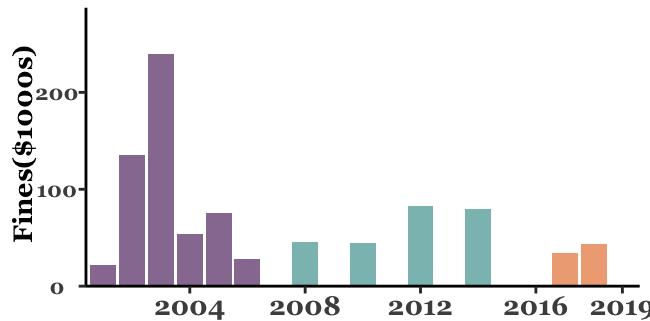
RCRA Enforcement Actions

Somewhat reliable data



RCRA Fines

Somewhat reliable data



Values adjusted for inflation. Note, the y-axis reports values in 1000's. A value of \$2000 represents \$2,000,000 (2 million dollars).

President

- Bush
- Obama
- Trump

LEGISLATOR INFORMATION

Donald McEachin



Democrat

In office since January 3rd, 2017

Relevant Committee Membership: [Energy and Commerce Committee](#)

[House Energy and Commerce Committee](#)

This Committee is the oldest house Committee with the broadest jurisdiction of aOR authorizing committee. The Committee oversees the EPA, and legislates on issues like environmental protection, clean air, climate change, safe drinking water, toxic chemicals and hazardous waste, and nuclear facilities. Currently, the Committee includes 55 members – 24 Republicans and 31 Democrats. The subcommittees of primary interest to these reports are Environment & Climate Change and Oversight & Investigations.

Relevant Subcommittees:

1. Energy
2. Environment and Climate Change

ABOUT THE DATA AND ITS LIMITATIONS

Disclaimer

On March 26, 2020, the US EPA released [a policy memo](#) suspending pollution monitoring requirements for industries that claim to have been impacted by COVID-19. Since then, as part of EDGI's ongoing Environmental Enforcement Watch (EEW) project, we have conducted original data science research using EPA's Enforcement and Compliance History Online ECHO database to investigate the effects of this policy on facility reporting of environmental data and compliance with environmental protection laws. Results show that, despite relatively few facilities claiming the COVID exemption, a much larger proportion of facilities are still failing to report. While both industry non-compliance and EPA non-enforcement reflect longer-term trends (as much as 70% of facilities were already in non-compliance with the nation's environmental laws for certain regulatory programs pre-COVID, [Giles 2020](#)), we have decided to exclude 2020 data from this analysis due to EPA's COVID-19 policy. This decision serves to provide the fairest and most accurate picture of enforcement and compliance trends, and to avoid skewing and misrepresenting the data. .

What - the Data in this report

While ECHO remains the only publicly available and comprehensive source for environmental compliance data, it is known to be extremely unreliable. According to former EPA Administrator Cynthia Giles, states often report less than 5% of violations under the regulations controlling clean air and hazardous waste, which means that ECHO data may exclude more than 95% of such violations. Therefore, other than the Clean Water Act, for which violations are reported through an automated system, violation data should not be considered accurate. It is important to note that states which might have the most violations may actually be the most responsible in terms of their reporting to EPA. Below is a color code of reliability for each data type presented in this report:

Metric	Color	Why
CWA self-reported violations	Green (relatively good data)	Mandatory electronic self-reporting
CWA, CAA, RCRA inspections; CAA, CWA, RCRA enforcement actions and penalties	Yellow (data varies by state, from somewhat reliable to somewhat unreliable)	Unreliability of state reporting on inspections and enforcement actions
CAA Violations, RCRA violations	Red (poor data that may be seriously misleading)	Problems of self-reporting and unreliability of state reporting

See part 2 of [this report](#) for more information about lack of reporting

The ECHO database compiles information from a number of distinct state and federal databases with inconsistent reporting schemes that lead to data gaps and inaccuracies such as geocoding errors (e.g. a facility in Texas is incorrectly coded as residing in Louisiana); multiple program IDs attributed to a single facility (which can cause one facility to appear as multiple, distinct facilities in the data); and an inability to know what/how major facilities operated in the past. EPA acknowledges some of these inconsistencies, and sometimes includes disclaimers on the ECHO website detailing them. The

agency's official position is that ECHO data is reliable-enough from 2001 onward, but former EPA Administrator Cynthia Giles says that states often report as little as 5% of compliance violations to ECHO for certain regulatory programs. Here are just some of the issues that prevent citizens from knowing how well pollution has been, and is, being controlled:

- Some facilities chronically or repeatedly fail to comply with pollution laws. But available EPA data only goes back X years, so you cannot tell how well facilities in your area have complied with environmental protections over time.
- No idea how maOR facilities operated in the past
- Multiple program IDs for a single facility/permit
- Geocoding errors
- Mislabeled times (e.g. the inspections that will occur in 2052)
- Data entry errors that place inspections and enforcements in the wrong year (some in the future!) and that place facilities in the wrong state or area.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

About EEW and this Project

Environmental Enforcement Watch (EEW) is a collaborative project across EDGI working groups. The EEW project builds on EDGI's 2019 [Sheep in the Closet Report](#) that documents large declines in EPA enforcement of environmental laws. This project and others used data from EPA's [ECHO](#) database, revealing how useful ECHO could be for communities to track pollution and EPA responses in their areas. However, they also revealed the inaccessibility of ECHO for non-specialists, along with major omissions, errors, and confusions present in the data itself.

A key goal of EEW is to highlight gaps and inadequacies in the enforcement of environmental laws, demonstrating EPA's failure to fulfill its congressionally mandated duty. To help bring awareness and action to the state of environmental non-compliance across the US, we are using Jupyter Notebooks that utilize ECHO data to present these congressional report cards for the 75 Senators and House Representatives that sit on the House Energy & Commerce Committee and the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee. By providing a novel and poignant look at the chronic state of non-compliance in their states and districts, we hope to provide these key representatives with the information and pressure they need to hold the EPA accountable.

About EDGI

EDGI is an international network of over 175 members from more than 80 different academic institutions and non-profits, comprised foremost by grassroots volunteer efforts. Since 2016, EDGI has served as a preeminent watchdog group for federal environmental data, generating international effort to duplicate and monitor repositories of public data that are vital to environmental health research and knowledge. EDGI's work has been widely acknowledged, leading to EDGI testifying before Congress on declines in EPA enforcement, and hundreds of mentions in leading national and international media such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, Vice News, and CNN. For more about our work, read our [2019 Annual Report](#) and [2020 Annual Report](#).

[CONTACT US](#)

