

# EPA Chief Scott Pruitt: Delete Decades Of Science In The Name Of 'Transparency'

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Trevor Nace  
Contributor

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White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer and Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency Scott Pruitt delivered the press briefing in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room of the White House, on Friday, June 2, 2017.

Scott Pruitt, the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Administrator, has systematically removed science from environmental decisions and regulations in the United States. Now, he's working on yet another rule that would eliminate decades of scientific studies from being considered

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when writing regulatory standards.

The new rule proposed today would require any data used by the EPA to set regulatory requirements to be publicly available. This new rule masks, which was proposed in the name of "transparency" in fact hides decades of scientific research.

Scott Pruitt, the EPA's Administrator, proposed a new rule that would remove decades-long landmark studies on the health impacts of air pollution, pesticides, etc. from being used in environmental regulatory decisions. This is because many of the studies which were conducted over the course of decades signed a confidentiality agreement with the subjects to not share their personal information as part of the study. Hence, the data was anonymized and reported to the EPA with the requirement that personal information on each subject not be shared with the public.

Therefore, the new rule long sought out by conservatives would eliminate any study that agreed to not release personal information from being considered in making environmental decisions.

Scott Pruitt claims the rule will make the EPA more transparent in allowing anyone the opportunity to inspect the study and

personal information that went into it.

When, in fact, it literally throws out fundamental and hallmark environmental studies the EPA paid scientists to conduct and build the foundation of many of our air and water quality guidelines.



US President Donald Trump (L) listens while Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt speaks after announcing the US will withdraw from the Paris accord in the Rose Garden of the White House June 1, 2017 in Washington, DC. (SAUL LOEB/AFP/Getty Images)

A qualified scientist can obtain access to the anonymized data from the EPA, meaning the studies can and have been investigated, peer-reviewed, and scrutinized.

The new rule is not an attempt to make environmental regulations more transparent, it is a rule to limit research on the impacts of deadly pollution and give free reign to Scott Pruitt to deregulate industries in the direct contradiction of science.

Andrew Rosenberg, the director of the

Center for Science and Democracy at UCS adds "With false claims about transparency, the political appointees at the EPA are drastically restricting the ability of the agency to rely on science. They are ordering EPA employees to put on blinders and only see the science that they want them to see. They are sacrificing the health of Americans in favor of special interests, a disturbing pattern for this Administration. It's no coincidence that the same people calling for this change have been funded by the petrochemical and tobacco industries for years. Pruitt has turned his back on the American people to stick his snout deep in the trough of corruption."

Nearly [1,000 scientists signed and sent a letter](#) to Scott Pruitt urging him not to move forward with his proposed rule. In the letter, they wrote "There are ways to improve transparency in the decisionmaking process, but restricting the use of science would improve neither transparency nor the quality of EPA decisionmaking. If fully implemented, this proposal would greatly weaken EPA's ability to comprehensively consider the scientific evidence across the full array of health effects studies. This would negatively impact EPA public protections that reduce levels of lead, harmful chemicals, and fine particle

pollution, among others."

Ever wonder if that GMO vegetable in the grocery store is safe to eat, whether your city's water contains poisonous lead like in Flint, Michigan, or if that nearby nuclear power plant is safe to live by? All of these health risks are regulated by the EPA, much of which relies on underlying studies containing personal information. After throwing out any science that contains personal information, what is left to keep Scott Pruitt from allowing industries to deregulate their commitment to operate under safe practices? I'll let Mr. Pruitt sum it up in his own words: ●

“ Science should not be something that’s just thrown about to try and dictate policy in Washington DC.

*Trevor Nace is a PhD geologist, founder of [Science Trends](#), Forbes contributor, and explorer. Follow his journey [@trevornace](#).*

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### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Trevor Nace**  
Contributor ⓘ

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