

Insights: Publications

Addressing Environmental Justice through EPA's Enforcement Tools

Kilpatrick Townsend Environmental Reg Watch Blog

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Written by **Susan H. Richardson, Alexander M. Bullock**

The Biden Administration has made environmental justice and equity a key pillar of its environmental policy, directing EPA to incorporate this concept at all levels of its decision-making process. EPA's Administrator Michael Regan announced on April 7, 2021 that "[t]oo many communities whose residents are predominantly of color, Indigenous, or low-income continue to suffer from disproportionately high pollution levels and the resulting adverse health and environmental impacts. As a result, Administrator Regan directed his staff to take "immediate and affirmative steps" to engage with communities overburdened by pollution and underserved in resources, including a command to "strengthen enforcement of violations of cornerstone environmental statutes" in those communities. To that end, on April 30, 2021, Lawrence Starfield, Acting Assistant Administrator, issued a [Memorandum – Strengthening Enforcement in Communities with Environmental Justice Concerns \(epa.gov\)](#) ("EJ Memo") identifying a number of measures that may be implemented to advance protection of these communities.

Related People



Susan H. Richardson

t 404.815.6330

srichardson@ktslaw.com



Alexander M. Bullock

t 202.824.1416

abullock@ktslaw.com