



Daily Ledger weekend

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Like Reagan, Trump is cutting environmental regulations

Barbara Kates-Garnick Tufts University | THE CONVERSATION

When the Trump administration announced it was moving to eliminate dozens of U.S. climate policies, Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lee Zeldin said he was sending “a dagger straight into the heart of the climate change religion.” • That drive – to both repeal environmental regulations and cast doubt on science – reflects the Trump administration’s approach to environment policy. • Deregulation has long been a key theme in Republican environmental policy. The conflict between the obligation to protect public health and the desire to boost markets traces back to former President Ronald Reagan’s administration. Reagan’s perspective that government is not a solution to problems, but is the problem instead, set the stage for Republican administrations that followed.

Reagan argued that the growth of government spending and business regulation had stymied economic prosperity. Environmental regulations were a prime target. Forty years later, America is seeing many of the same concepts in President Donald Trump’s administration. However, its strategy could have a greater effect than Reagan ever envisioned.

Slashing budgets and staffing

There are many ways to kneecap government agencies: Instituting massive budget cuts, cutting staff with critical

functions and appointing leadership whose goal is limiting the reach and effectiveness of the very agencies they direct are just a few. In these efforts, Reagan and Trump had similar approaches to the EPA, although with different levels of intensity. Trump’s EPA budget plan for 2026 includes a draconian 50% cut from the previous year and the lowest budget proposal, when adjusted for inflation, since Reagan. Staff cuts in just the first six months of the second Trump

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Steven Cook, a Trump appointee, once represented chemical companies that are fighting a rule that would require them to clean up PFAS pollution. He has now proposed scrapping the rule, The New York Times reports.

AT TOP: Former President Ronald Reagan and President Donald Trump have taken similar approaches to the EPA, although with different levels of intensity. PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY FERNANDO HERNANDEZ/USA TODAY NETWORK; SAUL LOEB/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Illinois EV rebate funds are going fast

Abreanna Blose
AI-assisted reporter
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency has announced the next application cycle for its Electric Vehicle Rebate Program. The application period will open Oct. 28 and run through Jan. 31, 2026, according to a community announcement. The Illinois General Assembly has appropriated \$14 million to the Illinois EPA for the current fiscal year (FY26), which ends on June 30, 2026. According to the announcement, applicants now have 180 days from the date of vehicle purchase to apply for the rebate, an increase from the previous 90-day window. Applications must be submitted during the open application period, and those postmarked before Oct. 28 will be rejected. To qualify for the rebate, the vehicle

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DRIVING ATVS ON ROADWAYS IN ILLINOIS

Know what’s legal and what’s not

Tom Ackerman
Springfield State Journal-Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

Feeling the urge to drive your four-wheeler to the gas station for a pop? Doing so would could be illegal on Illinois streets, highways, and roadways. Here’s how you might be able to get away with driving a quad to the store, depending on where you live.

What is a non-highway vehicle?

According to Illinois law, a “non-highway” vehicle is a motor vehicle that is not specifically designed to be used on a public highway, including all-terrain vehicles, golf carts, off-highway motorcycles, and recreational off-highway vehicles.

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