

EPA Chief Trumpeting 'Misleading' Superfund Metrics, Critics Say

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Attorney **Michael Blumenthal** (Cleveland) is quoted in an article in Bloomberg Law reviewing the EPA's classification of Superfund cleanup sites.

Wheeler's emphasis on site deletions as a measure of cleanup progress is "misleading," said Michael Blumenthal, of counsel at McGlinchey Stafford PLLC in Cleveland. Deleting a site is a "paperwork exercise" requiring EPA staff to document that the construction of a remedy, such as building a water treatment plant or groundwater pump, is done, he said.

But a more significant metric for cleanup progress may be sites where construction can start, McGlinchey's Blumenthal said.

The EPA was unable to start construction at 34 sites that were ready for work to begin in fiscal 2019 because of a lack of funding. That number has steadily grown under the Trump administration, from 12 in fiscal 2016, to 18 in fiscal 2017 and 20 sites in fiscal 2018.

"I question whether and how the backlog of unfunded construction projects at Superfund sites will ever get funded with this administration's cuts to the Superfund Program," he said.

Read the full article [here](#).

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