



ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT WATCH

...a project of...



**Environmental Data
& Governance Initiative**



Why develop a public Environmental Enforcement Watch now?

- ❑ Violations of federal environmental laws are chronic and routine.
- ❑ Enforcement declined under the Trump Administration.
- ❑ During the COVID-19 crisis Trump put enforcement effectively on hold
- ❑ What's next for the Biden administration?



ECHO's Data is Limited .



Enforcement and
Compliance History Online

- ❑ Visible through existing interface: last 3-5 yrs.
- ❑ Not visible, only available through downloads: records going further back.
- ❑ Contents organized based on how EPA itself works
- ❑ Not very accessible to a general audience



Environmental Enforcement Watch

A project including workshops to:



- ❑ **Inform** members of the public about industry-related pollution meaningful to them and their networks.
- ❑ Provide a **space** for people to **share their stories** and build connections with others concerned about the decline of federal environmental enforcement.
- ❑ Create compelling and informative **visualizations**
- ❑ **Analyze data** to **answer questions** posed by communities and researchers.



To address these goals, we are organizing different connected tracks based on participants' own skills and interests.



Jupyter Notebook - How it works

1. Run through Google Colaboratory links
2. The notebook is comprised of text and code cells that are run by clicking “play” 
3. Users can make selections from dropdown lists, to customize their analysis. 
4. Now let's see what one of these notebook runs looks like....

<https://colab.research.google.com/github/edgi-govdata-archiving/ECHO-Cross-Program/blob/main/ECHO-Cross-Programs.ipynb>

Thank You!


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The background is a solid light green color. On the left side, there are several decorative elements: a large, detailed green leaf with visible veins, a smaller solid green leaf, and several overlapping circles in different shades of green (light, medium, and dark).

Appendix

The background is a solid light green color. It features several decorative elements: a large, detailed green leaf with visible veins on the left side; a smaller, solid green leaf below it; and several overlapping circles in various shades of green (light, medium, and dark) scattered across the background.

For a Glossary
of ECHO -
Related Terms,
follow [this link](#)



Other potential outcomes!

- ❑ **Identify operators** in a location who are in non-compliance with their permits
- ❑ Build **company report cards**
- ❑ Analyze greenhouse gas emissions by company and location
- ❑ Analyze **compliance and enforcement by Congressional district**
- ❑ Create **widespread awareness** of the gaps in environmental enforcement
- ❑ Demonstrate **active public interest** in industrial accountability
- ❑ Demonstrate that the public can support regulators and agencies to **protect public and environmental health**

So what's the good news?



Enforcement and
Compliance History Online

- ❑ This violation data is **legally** available to you.
- ❑ EDGI has made this data **easier to access.**
- ❑ This data can be used to **inform our activism.**



EPA 101 . . .

Oversee 3 major programs* monitoring polluters based on...



Air

Clean Air Act (CAA; 1970, amended 1990)



Water

Clean Water Act (CWA; 1972)



Hazardous Waste

Resource Recovery and Conservation Act (RCRA; 1976)

*Other programs include Superfund, Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program (GHGRP), public drinking water systems, pesticides and other toxics.

EPA vocabulary of pollution monitoring and control



Permits

Standards set for every potential/actual polluting facility



Inspections

When federal or state officials visit to check compliance



Violations

When a facility exceeds a permitted standard, falling out of compliance

- CAA & RCRA generally found on inspection
- CWA (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System - NPDES): reported automatically
 - 4 kinds: “effluent”, “single-event”, “compliance schedule” or “permit schedule”



Enforcement Cases

When officials move toward informal or more formal action against a facility that is in violation, i.e., non-compliant



Environmental Data
& Governance Initiative

We are 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, it has served as a preeminent **watchdog group for federal environmental data** and created an unprecedented international effort to duplicate and monitor repositories of public data that are vital to **environmental health research and knowledge**.