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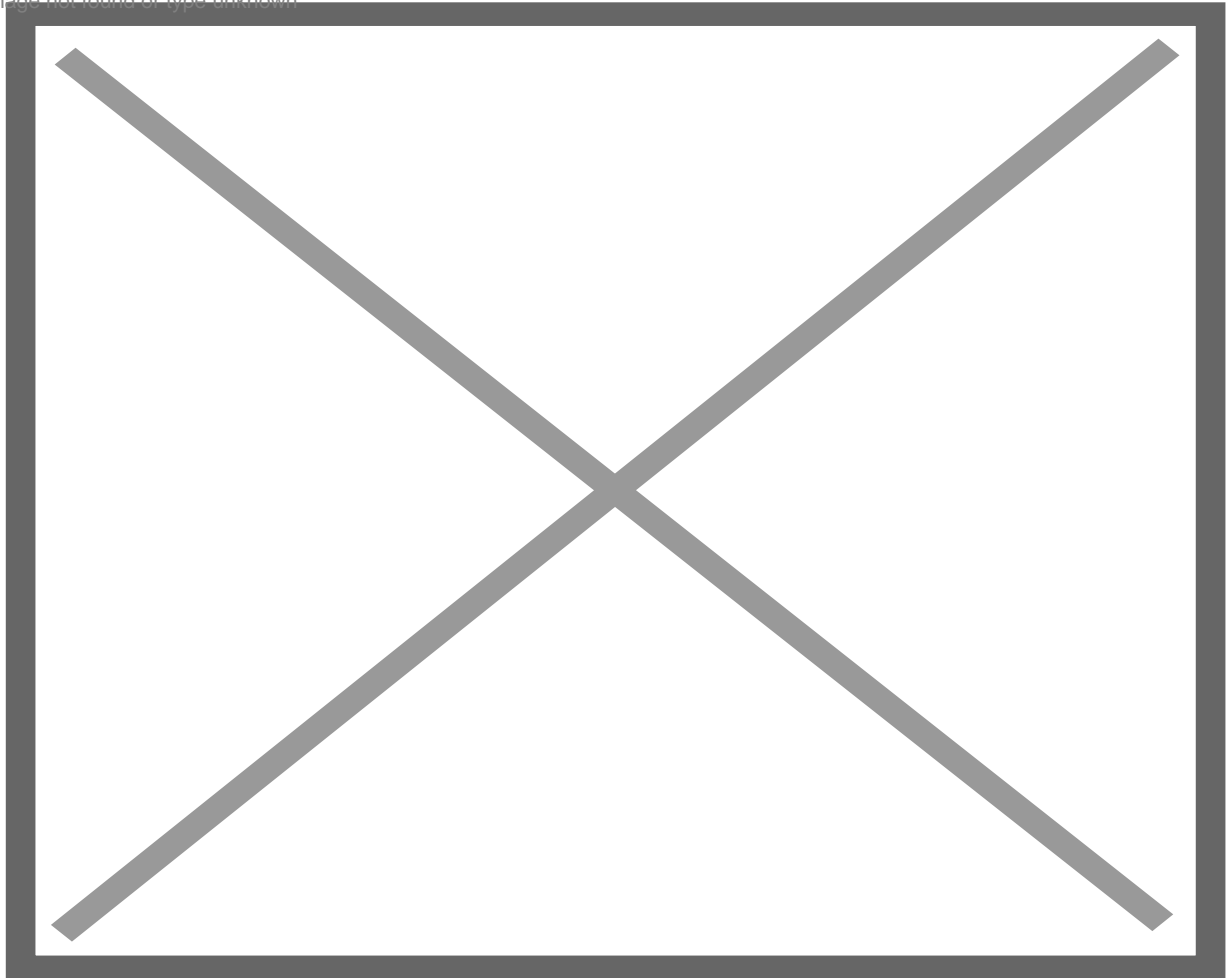
EPA Commits \$14 Million to St. Thomas for Critical Tutu Wellfield Cleanup Efforts

Federal funds aim to eradicate industrial contamination

Environment / **Published On February 27, 2024 04:36 PM /**

Staff Consortium **February 27, 2024**

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Map of Tutu Wellfield in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands. By. EPA

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency today revealed a significant funding initiative under President Biden's Investing in America agenda, earmarking over \$1 billion for the remediation of more than 100 contaminated sites nationwide, including the Tutu Wellfield in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.

This financial injection stems from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, targeting both the initiation of 25 new Superfund projects and the continuation of efforts at over 85 existing sites.

Nationwide, thousands of sites suffer from contamination due to the improper disposal and management of hazardous waste, posing significant risks to community health, particularly in areas predominantly inhabited by Black and Hispanic Americans.

Regional Administrator Lisa F. Garcia highlighted the importance of this funding for the Tutu Wellfields, aiming to tackle newly identified contaminants.

Governor Bryan celebrated the inclusion of the Tutu Wellfield in this initiative, viewing it as a critical step towards environmental restoration and public health protection. "I extend my deepest gratitude to President Biden and his administration, and all those who worked tirelessly to make this legislation a reality. Let us move forward with purpose, knowing that our actions today shape the legacy we leave behind. The U.S. Virgin Islands is ready to lead the way toward a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable future," he said.

Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett also expressed her support, acknowledging the need for ongoing environmental remediation in the Virgin Islands. "The Tutu Wellfield in St. Thomas has long posed significant environmental hazards due to its industrial contamination, and I commend the EPA for identifying it for action," she said. "We know that there are other sites like this one across our territory and it is my hope that this will be one of many EPA funding awards for much needed environmental remediation in the Virgin Islands."

The Tutu Wellfield, a site historically marred by industrial pollution from textile manufacturing and dry cleaning operations, has been the focus of EPA cleanup efforts since the construction of a groundwater treatment facility in 2004. With the new funding, approximately \$14 million will be dedicated to expanding and enhancing this system, addressing the contamination more effectively, the EPA said.

This latest financial commitment represents the culmination of the \$3.5 billion designated for Superfund cleanups under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. To date, over \$2 billion has been allocated to more than 150 National Priorities List sites.

EPA's approach to Superfund cleanups emphasizes environmental justice and equity, with a significant portion of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding directed towards areas with potential environmental justice concerns. This strategy aligns with Mr. Biden's Justice40 Initiative, aiming to ensure that 40% of the benefits from certain federal investments reach marginalized and pollution-burdened communities.

The investments under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law are poised to revitalize communities affected by long-standing pollution, underscoring the administration's commitment to health, environmental justice, and economic vitality. This initiative also enhances the Superfund program's capacity to address environmental threats comprehensively, from preliminary investigations to community engagement in the cleanup process.

The Superfund program, established by Congress in 1980 through the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), empowers the EPA to clean up contaminated sites and hold responsible parties accountable. In cases where responsible parties are absent or unable to fund cleanups, EPA utilizes Congress-appropriated funds, such as those provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, to mitigate health and environmental risks.

For more information on Superfund sites benefiting from the new cleanup projects or to explore the impact of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding over the first two years, visit the EPA's [Superfund webpage](#) and the Cleaning Up Superfund Sites: Highlights of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding website.

