

Massive Slashes in Staff, Administrator's Isolation Signal Full EPA Retreat

EPA, From A1

beginning to get off the ground: the Superfund toxic waste dump cleanup, regulations for tracking industrial waste and constructing safe disposal sites for it, and testing of new chemicals.

Suspected hazardous air pollutants like formaldehyde indoors and diesel fumes outdoors are only beginning to be studied, and those programs would appear to be in jeopardy along with many others in the research field.

Even if the Office of Management and Budget breaks all precedent and cuts Gorsuch's figures no further, an internal agency draft indicates that the 3,200 jobs could go, in addition to the normal 6 percent attrition. The draft requests \$17.6 million to pay employee severance.

"We'll have to be doing twice as much as we are now with a third fewer people," said an employee in the hazardous waste control program.

Gorsuch and her senior staff allegedly made most of the major budget decisions without consultation with the bureaucrats who must administer the programs, and there have been major struggles when protests were regarded as acts of disloyalty.

For example, Nolan Clark resigned last week as head of policy planning, the number three post at EPA and one that Gorsuch had reorganized the agency to create. Clark cited "irreconcilable differences" with Gorsuch as his reason for departing. Sources close to him blamed efforts

by Gorsuch's political aides to oust some senior staff people who had questioned whether the agency could meet its legal requirements under proposed budget cuts.

"There hadn't been a whole lot of thinking about the long-term impact," one said. "It's difficult to exaggerate the paranoia there."

Denis Prager, associate director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, confirmed that in part. He said in an interview that Gorsuch "feels an entrenched bureaucracy is fighting her at every turn" and that "there is to some degree a 'we-them' mentality, the 12th [administrative] floor and the rest of the agency."

A source who works on pesticide regulation agreed. "The 12th floor never talks to anyone down here unless it's to ask us for numbers to justify decisions they've already made," the source said.

EPA spokesman Byron Nelson rejected the charges. All 1983 budget figures are preliminary, he said, and no draft estimates of employee cuts have yet reached Gorsuch. Current and expected budget cuts will not hurt required programs, he said. "We feel we can shift our management priorities to take care of that which Congress expects of us."

Transfer of some EPA functions to the states, he said, will mean needing fewer people, while management shifts will take care of any other shortfalls. But that issue is the very one that has caused friction with some industry and state officials.



ANNE M. GORSUCH
... fighting career bureaucracy

Several governors have met with Gorsuch to protest her proposed transfer of clean air act powers, toxic waste regulation and other functions to them at a time of major budget squeezes. Members of the trucking industry asked that federal standards for emissions be maintained, while railroad industry spokesmen want noise control to stay in Washington.

"Some of them protested to Reagan that she wasn't listening," an administration insider said. "She could be in trouble if those people get down on her."

But Utah Gov. Scott M. Matheson, one of those initially unhappy with Gorsuch, has changed his mind now that he knows her better, an aide said.

"She's made some real effort and lines of communication are open now," the aide said. "She seems willing to listen."