

POST

# The Most Complicated Law in Human History

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The U.S. Clean Air Act has been found to be the most complicated law in human history.

## Most Complicated Law in Human History

**\*Clean Air Act and its attendant regulations are almost 2x more complicated than the U.S. Tax Code**

### “Measuring the Complexity of the Law: The United States Code”

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*Table 12: Normalized Ranking from Most to Least Complex*

Title	NetFlowRank	TokenRank	EntropyRank	DepthRank	CompositeScore	CompositeRank
42	2	8	2	10	5.5	1
26	7	2	29	1	9.75	2
5	1	21	23	2	11.75	3
49	25	11	9	5	12.5	4
31	4	17	18	12	12.75	5



The federal environmental statutes that Congress has addressed to EPA run to more than 2,700 pages in the two large, maroon-colored United States code volumes. The legally binding regulations issued by EPA to implement these statutes fill the 31 ocre-colored volumes of the Code of Federal Regulations. The guidance and other documents issued by EPA to explain or interpret its regulations fill around one million pages and are represented by the 1,250 grey-colored loose-leaf volumes. This does not include the millions of pages of State and local statutes, rules, and guidance that implement the millions of pages of Federal statutes, rules, and guidance.

# Comments on the Complexity of the U.S. Clean Air Act

- “Hugely complicated and very technical.” –President Obama
- “I hate that each sector has 17 to 20 rules that govern each piece of equipment and you’ve got to be a neuroscientist to figure it out.” –Gina McCarthy, Former EPA Administrator (2009-2016)

- “The Clean Air Act – one of the most complex and extensive pieces of federal environmental legislation.” –Center on Congress—Indiana University
- “The statute and its regulatory offshoots are very complicated.” —U.S. Department of Justice
- “The Clean Air Act is complicated and contentious”. —Senate Environment and Public Works Committee
- “The Clean Air Act is a lengthy and complex federal law” –Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- “The Act itself has often been called “unreadable” and “incomprehensible.” — John Quarles and Bill Lewis, Morgan & Lewis
- “The Clean Air Act is obsolete.” – David Schoenbrod, author of “Breaking the Logjam”
- “The federal Clean Air Act (CAA) alone has been referred to as the most complicated statute in history. The statutory complexity is compounded by the thousands of pages of federal regulations and the overlapping statutes and regulations adopted by each individual state.” –Erich Brich writing for the American Bar Association
- “The Clean Air Act is a model of redundancy. Virtually every type of pollutant is regulated by not one but several overlapping provisions.” – Ben Lieberman

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