



Insight

Retrospective Review Update: Disposable Wipe Exemptions

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Implementation of President Obama's Executive Order 13,563 on regulatory reform has left much to be desired. On the White House's own "Regulatory Reform" [website](#), agencies have not provided an update in more than a year. Although there have been some notable measures related to the executive order, the pace of new regulatory costs far outpaces the savings it has wrought.

On Monday, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a "common-sense" rule to reduce burdens on various industries. The final [rule](#) would exclude certain "solvent-contaminated wipes" from EPA's definition of hazardous waste. Such a redefinition will allow industries across 13 sectors to avoid complicated waste disposal procedures for wipes largely used for basic cleaning. The idea to reduce this burden has been around since a 2003 proposed [rule](#).

The rule certainly makes sense intuitively, but what is its economic impact? According to EPA's analysis, the rule would save industry, on net, \$18 million and 14,497 hours of paperwork each year. To put those figures in perspective, so far in 2013, EPA final rules have cost more than \$1.7 billion and imposed roughly 1.3 million hours of paperwork. This rule represents a mere one percent reduction in these burdens.

This rulemaking represents a step forward in reforming outdated and unnecessary regulations, but it is also a reminder of how much the White House has left to accomplish.