

# THE COLOR OF WATER: CLEAN WATER ACCESS AND REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE



## EVEN IN THE UNITED STATES, PEOPLE LACK ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER

77 MILLION people living in U.S. are exposed each day to contaminated water below Safe Drinking Water Act standards

Source: NRDC

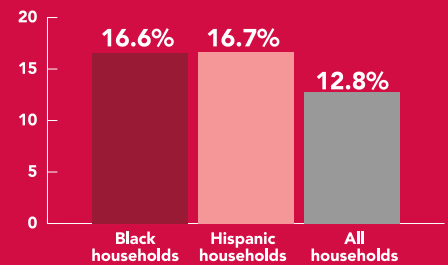
23.5 OUT OF 100



Source: Washington Post



1.6 MILLION people in U.S. live without full indoor plumbing, more likely to be people of color



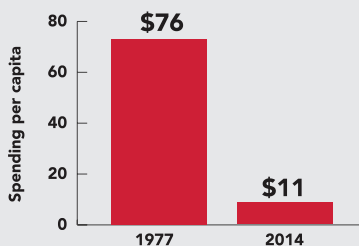
Source: CityLab

Access to clean water shapes people's ability to choose if and when to parent, as well as their right to raise children in safe and healthy communities.

## UNCLEAN WATER IS DUE TO INFRASTRUCTURE NEGLECT

**INFRASTRUCTURE NEGLECT:**  
Federal funding for water infrastructure fell from \$76 per person in 1977 to \$11 per person in 2014

### FEDERAL SPENDING ON WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

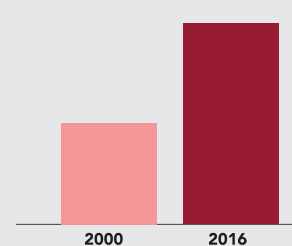


Source: Value of Water Campaign

**INCREASED EXPENSE:**  
Doubled from 2000 to 2016

Source: Circle of Blue

### WATER AND WASTEWATER COSTS



Source: Circle of Blue

# LACK OF ACCESS TO CLEAN, SAFE WATER IMPACTS WOMEN, COMMUNITIES OF COLOR, AND LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES MOSTLY DUE TO RACISM AND DISCRIMINATORY PATTERNS AND POOR REGULATION

Historical and ongoing environmental racism, particularly policies such as redlining—federally sanctioned unfair lending practices that denied home loans to families of color, especially Black families.

Racial segregation / Poor regulation: EPA penalties for polluters are up to 5 times greater in white communities than they are in communities of color for comparable violations.

Source: Christian-Smith, J., & Gleick, P.



## POLICIES AND REGULATIONS CAN BEGIN TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE:



- Ensure access to a full range of reproductive health services, including abortion care, for all people.
- Strengthen water standards for harmful toxins such as lead and nitrates.
- Ensure that water standards are based on science and evidence.
- Stop the rollback of policies that protect our water.
- Enforce federal standards on toxins in our water.
- Make polluters pay for clean-up of harmful chemicals.
- Ensure water affordability and end water shutoffs.
- Require regular water tests at all public schools.
- Federal and state governments should regulate PFAS and other newly discovered water pollutants.
- Mandate disclosure of contaminants in water.

Learn more:

[NationalPartnership.org/CleanWater](https://NationalPartnership.org/CleanWater)

[#ColorofWater](https://twitter.com/ColorofWater)