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Senior White House Enviro Aide Heads for the Exits



Guzy is credited with playing a major role in Obama administration rules that require automakers to substantially boost efficiency standards, reaching a fleetwide average of 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025 for cars and light trucks.(LUIS ROBAYO/AFP/Getty Images)

By Ben Geman

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White House Council on Environmental Quality Deputy Director Gary Guzy is leaving the Obama administration, an announcement that comes days after CEQ Chairwoman Nancy Sutley said she's [stepping down in February](#).

In fact Sutley's deputy, a longtime White House aide, will reach the exit before her.

Guzy, who is also CEQ's general counsel, will join the Washington office of the prominent law and lobbying firm Covington & Burling in January.

Guzy, who has been with CEQ since September 2009, will join the firm's environmental, clean-energy, public-policy, and government-affairs practices. His departure continues the turnover of President Obama's top energy and environment aides.

Guzy is credited with playing a major role in Obama administration rules that require automakers to substantially boost efficiency standards, reaching a fleet-wide average of 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025 for cars and light trucks.

"Gary won the trust and respect of auto companies and environmentalists alike—no mean feat—in the negotiations that produced the biggest single step any nation has taken to reduce global-warming pollution and oil use," said Dan Becker, director of the Safe Climate Campaign.

Guzy had been mentioned in some press accounts as a potential replacement for Sutley atop CEQ.

He served as EPA's general counsel and in other EPA jobs in the Clinton administration, and he was also a senior attorney with the Justice Department's environment division. After the Clinton years, Guzy held private-sector roles, including global-practice leader for climate risk and sustainability at Marsh, an insurance brokerage and risk-advisory company.

"Gary brings exceptional skill in dealing with complex environmental issues and a wealth of experience in developing strategic partnerships and working with the diverse constituencies necessary to resolve the most challenging public controversies," Lawrence Hobel, cochairman of Covington's environmental practice, said in a statement.

He'll leave CEQ at the end of December and start the new job Jan. 21.

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