

## Waste of the Day: Pentagon Is \$50 Billion Behind on Building Repairs

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**Topline:** The Department of Defense had \$50 billion worth of deferred maintenance on its buildings as of September 2020, according to backlog estimates released this August by the Congressional Budget Office.

**Key facts:** The military spends billions each year to maintain 101,500 buildings on its bases around the country, but Congress often provides less funding than the DOD says is necessary.

When maintenance is “deferred,” or not performed even though the DOD wants to, buildings degrade at a faster rate and are more expensive to repair in the future, according to the report.





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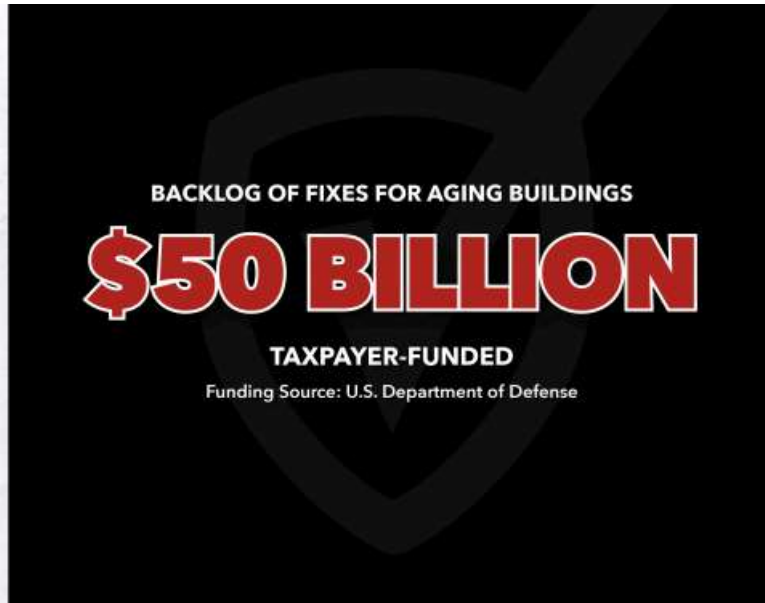
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The actual cost of the maintenance has “probably increased” since 2020 because goods and services are now more expensive, researchers wrote.



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The Army owns almost half the buildings, and accounts for \$19 billion of the backlog. Yet Congress gives the Air Force the highest annual maintenance budget by far, with \$4.1 billion.

The Marine Corps and Navy both have over \$800,000 in deferred costs per building — roughly double the cost per building for the Army and Air Force.

More than 40% of the Army and Air Force’s buildings have exceeded their lifespan — usually about 40 years — meaning they are now given a value of \$0 in accounting records.

The Marines' buildings are the newest but are depreciating at the fastest rate, according to the report.

The only military base with more than \$2 billion in deferred maintenance is Pearl Harbor. Camp Lejeune and Fort Liberty, both in North Carolina, have \$1.5 billion.

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**Background:** The buildings are a small part of the more than 1 million pieces of real property owned by the DOD, which also includes structures like piers and pipelines. Less than half of the assets are actively maintained, according to the report.

The DOD's total costs for deferred maintenance on all its property was estimated at \$137 billion in 2020 by the Government Accountability Office.

**Summary:** The Pentagon appears to have acquired more property than it can possibly maintain, but Congress is only exacerbating the issue by withholding funds and pushing costs into future years.

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