



INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

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EPA, USIBWC RELEASE QUARTERLY UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF 100% SOLUTION TO PERMANENTLY END TIJUANA RIVER SEWAGE CRISIS

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) released their second quarterly public update for 2026 detailing the implementation of two historic agreements signed with Mexico in 2025 to permanently end the years-long Tijuana River sewage crisis.

The Trump Administration has been working at a relentless pace to bring relief to the people of San Diego, who for decades have been inundated with sewage from Mexico via the Tijuana River Channel and the coast. The decades-long crisis has closed beaches, polluted water, fouled the air, and caused hopelessness. Since his first visit in April 2025, EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin has moved at “Trump Speed” to identify, secure, and implement a 100% solution to permanently and urgently end the crisis, resulting in the signing of a Memorandum with Understanding (MOU) with Secretary of the Environment and National Resources of Mexico Alicia Bárcena Ibarra in Mexico City in July 2025.

Building on that momentum, the U.S. and Mexico agreed to Minute 333 in December 2025, which laid out a host of actions, including additional projects, research, and planning for operation and maintenance of critical systems to account for future population growth in Tijuana.

Section 1(b) of the MOU requires the United States and Mexico to issue clear, coordinated, and at least quarterly updates to the public. This quarterly public update details the historic progress both nations have made towards fully and faithfully executing the MOU and Minute 333.

“At the Trump EPA, we practice what we preach. When we promise an urgent and permanent 100% solution to this crisis, we deliver one. And when we promise radical transparency along the way, that’s exactly what you get. These quarterly updates are a crucial part of delivering on that promise and ensuring Americans can be confident their government is working for them,” said Administrator Lee Zeldin. “As this update shows, we’re continuing our relentless pace in ensuring that Mexico meets its funding commitments, that projects are being built on the tightest possible timelines, and that actions are being taken to plan for future population growth in the region. Safeguarding human health and the environment is EPA's foremost responsibility, and we are committed to ensuring that every American has clean air, land, and water.”

“The USIBWC, under the leadership of President Trump, is honored to stand alongside our partners at EPA as we work together to address the Tijuana River pollution crisis,” said USIBWC Commissioner Chad McIntosh. “Whether it's expanding the treatment capacity of our South Bay plant in record time or trying innovative, safe technologies to clean up the Tijuana River and reduce

odors, we are bringing a sense of urgency to our mission of protecting Americans from exposure to Mexican sewage.”

Since the last quarterly public update in March, the Trump Administration and Mexico have taken a number of important actions to end the sewage crisis, including EPA releasing previously agreed to Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) funds to begin construction on Pump Station 1 (PB-1) and Tijuana River Gates projects. Mexico is also advancing procurement and construction of critical sewer line and pump station rehabilitations. Additionally, both the U.S. and Mexico have advanced progress on a suite of actions agreed to in Minute 333, including infrastructure projects, research studies, and planning for operation and maintenance (O&M) of critical sites and systems that will account for future population growth in Tijuana.

See the full quarterly public update below:

Recognizing Mexico’s progress in meeting MOU commitments, EPA released previously agreed to Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) funds to begin construction on Pump Station 1 (PB-1) and Tijuana River Gates projects.

PB-1: Mexico began construction on this essential project on April 27. The project will eliminate potential catastrophic discharges and increase total pumping capacity to 80 million gallons per day (MGD). Project completion is expected in November 2027.

Tijuana River Gates: This project will eliminate at least 5 MGD of sewage from entering the Tijuana River. Phase 1 project completion is expected by mid-July 2026. Phase 2 is currently in procurement. Project completion is expected at the end of January 2027.

These two projects will help improve wastewater reliability, prevent spills, manage flow, reduce pollution, and lower the risk of flooding.

USIBWC reports continued progress towards expanding the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (SBIWTP) to increase treatment capacity to 50 million gallons per day (MGD).

USIBWC is advancing early work packages that lay the groundwork for the full expansion to 50 MGD, including site preparation and procurement of long-lead equipment to keep the project on schedule.

Parallel Gravity Line: The rehabilitation of the Parallel Gravity Line will prevent future ruptures and spills from entering the U.S. through canyons along the border. Project completion is expected in August 2026.

In May, two separate sections of the Parallel Gravity Main collapsed within roughly two weeks. Mexico reported the first collapse on May 14 and completed emergency repairs on May 16.

A second collapse was reported on May 31, with emergency repairs completed on June 4, 2026. Both ruptures have been fully repaired.

For both events, SBIWTP received excessive flows, and USIBWC took preventative action by deploying additional staff and equipment to treat over 40 MGD. Because of this urgent response, USIBWC successfully prevented transboundary flow from reaching San Diego-area residents. USIBWC Commissioner Chad McIntosh contacted his Mexican counterpart, Commissioner Adriana Reséndez of the Mexican Section, to press for a 24/7 repair effort and urge Mexico to do everything possible to keep wastewater out of the Tijuana River.

Since surpassing its 2026 funding commitment, Mexico is advancing procurement and construction of critical sewer line and pump station rehabilitations, which will prevent sewage discharges into the Tijuana River:

Insurgentes Collector rehabilitation – construction to begin on June 29

Two pump stations: PB-Matadero and Laureles PB-2 – in procurement phase

Poniente Interceptor rehabilitation – in construction phase with expected completion in December 2026

Oriente Interceptor rehabilitation – in construction phase with expected completion in December 2026

Carranza Collector rehabilitation – in construction phase with expected completion in December 2026

The U.S. and Mexico have advanced progress on a suite of actions after Minute 333 was enacted in December 2025, including infrastructure projects, research studies, and planning for operation and maintenance (O&M) of critical sites and systems that will account for future population growth in Tijuana. This includes the following:

Mexico completed the sediment basin at Matadero Canyon in May 2026, meeting the pre-rainy-season construction goal and reducing sediment and debris impacts.

The binational O&M Workgroup continues developing long-term strategies to ensure critical infrastructure is maintained along the border.

The binational Minute 333 Work Group reviewed existing engineering and financial feasibility studies for an ocean outfall at the San Antonio de los Buenos Wastewater Treatment Plant and prepared a scope of work to conduct a comprehensive mass balance flow analysis of the Tijuana water system.

The Minute 333 Work Group is also advancing a scope of work for a transparent, real-time binational monitoring system to track flow inputs and outputs to the Tijuana River, strengthening accountability between both countries.

For more information:

Frank Fisher
Public Affairs Chief
frank.fisher@ibwc.gov
(915) 494-6027



The historic Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Mexico City, Mexico, on July 24, 2025, between the United States and Mexico to address and solve the decades-long Tijuana River sewage crisis. Photo courtesy of USIBWC.