

San Diego Newsline

Downtown San Diego news — the budget, public safety, business, and the civic life of America's Finest City

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COUNTY

County Distributing Information to Residents Ahead of CDC Community Health Assessment



Illustration from a photo by Ruff tuff cream puff · Wikimedia Commons, CCO

County Public Health staff and volunteers will walk door-to-door in South County neighborhoods Thursday handing out information about an upcoming community health assessment, led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to address sewage pollution along the Tijuana River Valley.

More than 6,000 households will receive information on flyers and doorhangers about the survey known as a Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response or CASPER.

People who live in the area may notice the volunteers who will be walking in pairs and wearing reflective vests.

“We know that many community members are worried about their health and the health of their families because of the sewage contamination in their beach water and the Tijuana River Valley,” said Dr. Ankita Kadakia, interim public health officer. “We are pleased to have the support of the CDC partnering with the County so that we can listen to those concerns and experiences and get a big picture snapshot of the needs in these areas.”

The CASPER survey is a tool from the CDC to quickly gather information about the needs of an affected community through a series of questions.

Households that are interviewed are picked from a bigger sample of

homes in 30 blocks or “clusters” in an affected area. From those 30 blocks, seven households from each block are picked to be interviewed for a total of 210 households.

County health officials encourage community members to share their experiences if their household is randomly selected to do the survey.

The responses from the assessment are analyzed and used by public health officials to make decisions. It can help determine what public health actions to take, find gaps in information, what resources are needed, and understand new or changing needs within the community.

While the CASPER is a point in time assessment of the south region population, the County’s public health epidemiologists are monitoring public health data regionally 365 days a year.

These disease investigators find, evaluate and respond to contagious disease cases, outbreaks and health conditions in the region. They work to figure out which areas and groups of people are being affected to help keep the community safe and healthy.

Annually, the Epidemiology and Immunization Services Branch investigates more than 15,000 high priority cases of infectious disease and more than 100,000 new reports of contagious diseases. In recent years, work has surrounded

increases in hepatitis A among people experiencing homelessness, Mpox, whooping cough, dengue and outbreaks of norovirus associated with oysters and salmonella with raw milk.

When it comes to health concerns due to impacts from sewage pollution and obnoxious odors in the Tijuana River Valley, a weekly report monitors for spikes in gastrointestinal illness and asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) symptoms in south region residents. The website is regularly updated with additional information, including links to other agencies responding to the sewage and how people and families can protect themselves.

To learn more about health concerns and impacts from sewage and pollution in the Tijuana River Valley and the upcoming CASPER survey, visit sandiegocounty.gov/southregionhealth.

County of San Diego news release · Oct 2, 2024

DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

Courts · Transit · Public safety



COUNTY
Honor Beloved Pets for Día de los Muertos and Consider Adopting a New Love

County Animal Services is honoring the lives of beloved pets who have passed as part of the Day of the Dead. This cultural tradition, which celebrates the memory of loved ones, including pets, invites the community to share a photo of departed pets and consider offering some of that love to a County shelter pet.

“Día de los Muertos offers us a special moment to remember the pets who have enriched our lives with unconditional love. By celebrating their memory, we are reminded of the joy they brought and the lasting impact they’ve had on our hearts,” said Animal Services Director Vaughn Maurice. “We also encourage the community to visit and consider adopting a new companion, so we can create more memories and love-filled homes for animals in need.”

From October 1st through November 2nd, Animal Services will feature special Día de los Muertos displays at its Carlsbad and Bonita shelters. The community is welcome to join in this heartfelt celebration by contributing photos of pets who have crossed the Rainbow Bridge. These photos will be placed on ofrendas, or Day of the Dead altars, that are beautifully decorated with flowers, candles and treats to commemorate the pets that have passed but remain in our hearts.

Bring a printed photo of your beloved pet to the lobby at either our Carlsbad or Bonita shelter during the month of October.

Your pet’s photo will be displayed on the Día de los Muertos ofrendas, where we will honor their memory. We will share a photo of the ofrenda on Día de los Muertos.

While you’re visiting, take time to meet our wonderful adoptable pets who are eager to find their forever homes.

County Animal Services set up the displays to provide comfort and connection to those grieving.

Consider opening your hearts and homes to the many pets waiting for adoption.

All animals adopted from County shelters will be spayed or neutered, have vaccinations, a microchip and a one-year license for dogs in the service area.

Please visit County Animal Services’ Adoptions page and browse the beautiful and lovable animals from cats to dogs to pigs, roosters and a chinchilla available now. Animal Services staff recommend that people pick out a second and third choice too, just in case your first choice is already chosen by another person.

Walk-in hours are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday at both the South Shelter, 5821 Sweetwater Road in Bonita, or the North Shelter, 2481 Palomar Airport Road in Carlsbad.

County Animal Services is committed to the safety and welfare of animals and the community. Through education, adoption, and compassionate care, it works to provide homes for adoptable animals while promoting responsible pet ownership.

County of San Diego news release · Oct 1, 2024

COUNTY
CARE Act Reaches One Year Anniversary

Today, October first, marks the one year anniversary of the Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Act program. It has been a successful and inspiring first year.

Through the combined efforts of the County’s Behavioral Health Services and Public Defender departments, Superior Court and other partners, there are currently 64 CARE Agreements. CARE Court has also celebrated 2 graduations.

The CARE Act gives individuals an active role in creating their own CARE agreement for mental health treatment and housing support. Eligible adults are persons with untreated schizophrenia or other psychotic disorders.

Families, clinicians, first responders, and others can file a petition with the civil court to connect people, 18 years and older, to court-ordered voluntary treatment if they meet criteria related to health and safety.

The CARE Act process relies on collaboration and promotes a voluntary, person-centered process. The County implemented the CARE Act on October 1, 2023, and by August 7, was celebrating it’s first CARE Court graduation.

County of San Diego news release · Oct 1, 2024

COUNTY
County Breaks Ground on Phase One of Bradley Avenue Road Project

County officials and community partners broke ground Tuesday to celebrate the start of phase one of the Bradley Avenue Road Improvements Project in El Cajon.

The County’s Department of Public Works (DPW) is working with the City of El Cajon and the Helix Water District to improve and beautify Bradley Avenue.

Crews will widen the street from west of Magnolia Avenue to east of Mollison Avenue and replace the bridge over State Route 67.

These improvements include the following changes:

One extra travel lane in each direction.

A new two-way left turn median to improve safety when entering and existing driveways.

A new traffic signal to improve safety where a 4-way stop currently exists at Mollison Avenue.

New irrigation and landscaping in the parkways to improve the community’s look.

New sidewalks and bike lanes to give people more ways to get around.

New storm drains and culverts to prevent roadway flooding.

These Green Street features, which help to reduce pollutants in stormwater, are also included to improve water quality.

“The County is dedicated to the continuous improvement of our public facilities and infrastructure and we are thrilled to see the project move forward,” said Chris Hanger, Project Manager, County DPW.

The County recognizes the need to provide more options for families to ride their bikes, take a walk, and step outside to enjoy their community.

“The County of San Diego is invested in improving our regions infrastructure, beautifying our neighborhoods, and creating places where families can thrive,” said Supervisor Joel Anderson. “I look forward to someday enjoying this thoroughfare with my friends and family.”

The new construction will begin later this month and be in full swing by the end of the year.

County of San Diego news release · Oct 1, 2024

COUNTY
County’s Edgemoor Ranked Among California’s Best Nursing Homes

The County of San Diego’s Edgemoor Skilled Nursing Facility has again been recognized as one of the top nursing homes in the state of California by Newsweek magazine.

Edgemoor was ranked as the No. 2 facility in California for Newsweek’s America’s Best Nursing Homes 2025 . This marks the sixth straight year that Edgemoor was among the state’s top three nursing homes.

“Critically ill and injured adult patients in need of long-term support get top-tier care at Edgemoor,” said Dr. Luke Bergmann, PhD, Director of County Behavioral Health Services (BHS). “We are honored that the dedication and commitment of our staff have been recognized as among the best in California for six consecutive years.”

The ranking was based on four key factors: performance data, medical professional recommendations, accreditations, and resident satisfaction.

Edgemoor provides patients with 24-hour skilled nursing care, physical rehabilitation, as well as recreational, occupational and speech therapy. Patients at the 192-bed facility require specialized interventions from highly trained staff.

Edgemoor is a five-star facility, having earned the top rating from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for quality services.

“We are incredibly proud of this achievement,” said Erin Chanler, Edgemoor’s Administrator. “It reflects the dedication, commitment, and hard work of our staff, as well as the invaluable support we receive from County, HHSA, and BHS leadership.”

In 2017, Edgemoor received the Gold Excellence in Quality Award presented by the American Health Care Association and the National Center for Assisted Living. Edgemoor is currently one of only 55 skilled nursing facilities in the country to be an active recipient of the honor.

County of San Diego news release · Oct 1, 2024

COUNTY
TB Exposure Reported at Mary, Star of the Sea Catholic Church in La Jolla

The County’s Tuberculosis Control Program is working with Mary, Star of the Sea

Catholic Church to notify church members and visitors potentially exposed to tuberculosis (TB).

The church is located at 7669 Girard Ave, La Jolla, CA, 92037. The dates of potential exposure are from February 17, 2024 to September 16, 2024, primarily at the 8:00 a.m. services Monday through Friday, Saturday 9:00 a.m. services, and Sunday 7:30 a.m. services. It can be difficult to diagnose tuberculosis and people with TB may be sick for many months before they are diagnosed. As such, periods of exposure can be long.

Because current evidence suggests the exposure is to drug-resistant tuberculosis, members and visitors to the church who believe they may have been exposed, or healthcare providers caring for those with known exposures, should call the County Tuberculosis Control Program at (619) 692-8621 for further guidance. Some of the medications typically used to prevent TB disease following an exposure may not be effective in this case.

This announcement follows another recent announcement of exposure to probable drug-resistant TB in the community. Drug-resistant TB is less common than drug sensitive TB. C urrently there is no evidence of an outbreak in the community.

TB is an airborne disease that is transmitted from person-to-person through inhalation of the bacteria from the air. The bacteria are spread when someone sick with TB coughs, speaks, sings or breathes. People with frequent and prolonged indoor exposure to a person who is sick with TB should get tested.

Effective treatments are available to cure people who are sick from active TB. It is especially important for people with symptoms of active TB and those who are immune compromised to see a medical provider to rule out active TB disease and to discuss treatment.

“Symptoms of active TB include persistent cough, fever, night sweats, and unexplained weight loss,” said Ankita Kadakia, M.D., County Interim Public Health Officer. “Most people who become infected after exposure to tuberculosis do not get sick right away. This is called latent TB infection. Some who become infected with tuberculosis will become ill in the future, sometimes even years later, if their latent TB infection is not treated. For people who think

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DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY (CONTINUED)

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TB Exposure Reported at Mary, Star of the Sea Catholic Church in La Jolla

they may have been exposed, blood tests and skin tests are an effective way to determine an infection.”

People who test positive for

TB but who don’t have symptoms of an active disease should get a chest x-ray and talk to a medical provider, as they most likely have a latent TB infection. People in this situation are infected with TB, but the infection is essentially dormant or “sleeping.” Taking medicines for latent TB

infection can cure the infection and keep these people from getting sick later.

The number of people diagnosed with active TB in San Diego County had decreased since the early 1990s when more than 400 cases were reported annually. After decades of declining, TB

cases have begun to rise since 2020.

In 2020, there were 193 TB cases, 201 in 2021 and 208 in 2022. In 2023, a total of 243 people were reported with active TB disease in San Diego County. The 17 percent increase in 2023 brought the County back to pre-pandemic

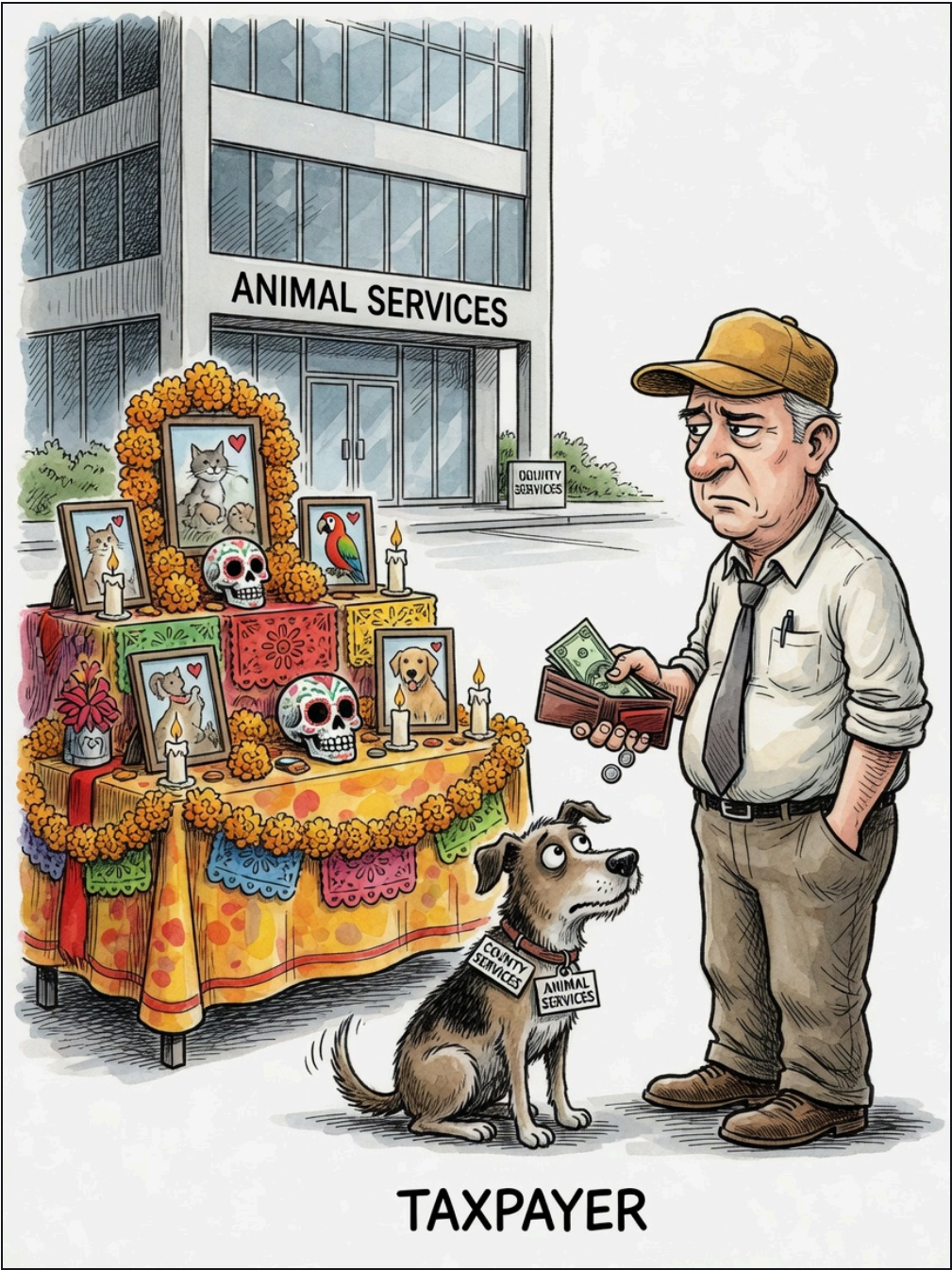
levels.

An estimated 175,000 people in San Diego County have latent TB infection. Of these, 5 to 10 percent are at risk for developing active TB disease if they go without preventive treatment.

County of San Diego news release · Sep 30, 2024

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

Opinion



Honor the pets. Adopt, don't spend.

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

Opinion — the views of the writers named, not news reporting

ABOUT THIS PAPER

San Diego Newsline covers downtown San Diego first —

City Hall, the Gaslamp Quarter, East Village, Little Italy, Barrio Logan and the

waterfront — and the county around it. Every item names its source; read the originals

and our standards at sandiegonewsline.com.

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