

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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DOWNTOWN

Pinwheels for Child Abuse Prevention



Illustration from a photo by Edward O'Connor (hober) · Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0

A garden of pinwheels was created today on the lawn of the County Waterfront Park as a tribute to children impacted by abuse and neglect.

The pinwheels are planted each April in recognition of National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time each year to raise awareness about protecting children and supporting families before a crisis situation arises.

County Supervisor Joel Anderson, Promises2Kids and the County's Child and Family Well Being Department teamed up for a presentation that encouraged everyone to get involved and be part of the solution to help protect children. Families thrive when they are surrounded by a connected community.

This past fiscal year, San Diego's Child Abuse Hotline received over 38,000 calls that led to nearly 19,000 investigations involving more than 36,000 children. Child abuse and neglect can cause long-term psychological, emotional, and physical effects that have lasting consequences for victims.

The County's Child and Family Well-Being Department is focused on lowering those numbers through early intervention and family-centered programs and services. By providing support, education and easy access to critical resources, families can stay together, and children can avoid entering the child welfare service system altogether.

Child abuse and neglect cases have decreased overall by 50 percent over the last decade while entries into foster care are down 67

percent. Both declines are a reflection of the positive impact of prevention efforts, early support and partnerships grounded in care and compassion.

Child abuse and neglect are preventable. If you believe a child you know is experiencing abuse or neglect, help is a phone call away. Contact the County's Child Abuse Hotline at 858-560-2191 or 800-344-6000. People also can call 2-1-1 San Diego.

County of San Diego news release · Apr 29, 2025

COUNTY

Postcards Sent to Registered Voters for District One Special General Election

Over 370,000 postcards are on their way to registered voters in the County of San Diego's First Supervisorial District listing their voting options for the July 1 special general election .

The person elected will fill the district's vacant seat for the remainder of the current term that ends in January 2029. Only those who live in the district can vote in the election.

District 1 spans from the Pacific Ocean on the west to the Otay and San Miguel mountains in the east, and from Barrio Logan in the north to the U.S./Mexico international border on the south. The district includes the cities of Chula Vista, Imperial Beach, National City, and some communities within the City of San Diego, including Barrio Logan, East Village, Golden Hill and more. It also includes the unincorporated areas of Bonita, East Otay Mesa, Lincoln Acres, Sunnyside and La Presa.

If you're not sure if you live in District 1, you can look it up at sdvote.com .

Early voting begins Monday, June 2 at the Registrar of Voters office in Kearny Mesa , located at 5600 Overland Ave., San Diego. Voting at the Registrar's office will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. However, the

Registrar encourages voters to take advantage of the convenience of voting by mail.

You can vote at home and return your voted ballot through the mail – no postage needed – or by dropping it off in any of the Registrar's 29 official ballot drop-boxes that will be located around the district starting Tuesday, June 3, through Election Day, July 1.

If you want to vote in person, take advantage of early voting. Starting Saturday, June 21, seven vote centers will be open daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. until the final day of voting, Tuesday, July 1, when 13 vote centers will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Learn more about voting in the District 1 special general election at sdvote.com, or call (858) 565-5800 or toll free at (800) 696-0136.

County of San Diego news release · Apr 29, 2025

DOWNTOWN

Probation Youth Showcase Artistic Creativity

Several students from the Youth Transition Campus (YTC) were invited to show their art at the Downtown Central Library in San Diego this month, and they were there to discuss their inspiration for their pieces at a special private reception.

The showcase is located on the second floor in the Pauline Foster Teen Center through April 30. The exhibition celebrates student voices through the arts.

“Watching their faces when they walked into the room at the library where their art was displayed was a really special moment,” said Kara Wilson, education specialist with the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE). “The students had been working on these art projects for a month not knowing that they were going to be displayed or that they could go talk about their art.”

Wilson said two different projects were displayed, one where students

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DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

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Probation Youth Showcase Artistic Creativity

had been asked to create an image of how they would describe their mental health and another one that focused on the Civil Rights Movement.

Probation leaders know the art and strength of collaboration to make this happen for the teens.

Officers collaborate with SDCOE which staffs the campus’ SOAR Academy that many of the students attend. Campus courses include options to join exceptional programs that allow students to try new forms of expression or vocational interests.

In this case, Probation and educators also worked with an art nonprofit organization in the community to contribute instruction, expertise and encouragement. The organization specializes in helping trauma-impacted youth and veterans find their creative voice. The organization says that art can provide therapeutic relief from stress and requires no special skills, just access to opportunities they might not otherwise experience.

The Downtown Central Library hosts the YTC Art Show with sponsorship from The Friends of the Library and the SDCOE. The library adds to the collaboration by offering a community hub for the showing.

Wilson said on that day, the library set up a magnet machine so patrons could request a miniature version of their favorite art piece to take home. The public interest and knowing their art was going out in the world as magnets was a first-time, amazing experience for them, she said.

Sometime later in the month, Wilson attended an exit interview for a girl who had completed her court commitment, and the teen was asked if there was something she was proud about that occurred while she was at the YTC. The art exhibition

at the library was her immediate response, Wilson said.

County Probation is dedicated to helping teens succeed through their rehabilitative commitment and provides YTC students training and skills necessary to transition and reintegrate into their communities.

County of San Diego news release · Apr 29, 2025

DOWNTOWN

Kindred Apartments Groundbreaking in Downtown San Diego

Kindred, a 126-unit affordable housing community on County surplus property, broke ground today at the site of the former County Family Court building in the Cortez Hill neighborhood.

The mixed-use, intergenerational housing will provide stable homes for families and seniors at risk of homelessness and provide one, two and three-bedroom options. The \$102 million development at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Beech Street in downtown San Diego will include 4,400 square feet of commercial retail space.

Centrally located, Kindred is designed to be pedestrian friendly with easy access to the San Diego Trolley and MTS bus lines, connecting residents to job centers, schools, and other amenities. Markets, restaurants, a library, post office and parks are all within walking distance. Supportive services and affordable healthcare will be provided to residents onsite by San Ysidro Health.

Kindred was made possible through a public-private partnership that includes the County, the City of San Diego and BRIDGE Housing Corporation . The County is investing \$4 million from its Innovative Housing Trust Fund, along with providing the land valued at \$6.9 million.

Construction is expected to be finished by early 2027 and the homes will remain affordable to low-income households for a minimum of 99 years.

Kindred is the fourth affordable housing development to break ground on 11 County surplus properties . Already open are Levant Street Senior Cottages in Linda Vista on a former social services building site and the Paul Downey Senior Residence which is one of four affordable housing projects being built on property in Clairemont Mesa that was home of the former County crime lab. This summer, Kettner Crossing will open in Little Italy on property adjacent to a County parking structure. The remaining seven properties are all in various stages of planning and funding.

More information about Kindred and its affordable homes is available here .

Since 2017, the County has invested more than \$325 million into affordable housing, using excess land, its Innovative Housing Trust Fund, and other state, federal, and local funding sources administered by the County. Those funds have helped open doors to over 2,588 homes, 1,593 new units for seniors and families, with 3,292 more on the way.

County of San Diego news release · Apr 29, 2025

COUNTY

County Probation Students Take on Societal Issues

Six students from the Youth Transition Campus Soar Academy received strong praise from a panel of eight scholastic judges for presenting their solutions to change a global societal issue for the better.

The YTC academy is one of the first Juvenile Court and Community Schools asked to participate in the nationwide ASPEN Challenge , a platform that empowers youth to think big and create solutions to pressing social issues. It offers mentorship and trains them how to use critical thinking, teamwork and leadership as they put together a final competitive presentation for the panel. As part of

the challenge, they were future leaders pioneering change and visionaries.

The issues they chose were substance abuse amongst the teen population and gang violence, which included sharing personal experiences.

“The ASPEN Challenge not only inspired them to dream boldly but also equipped them to turn those dreams into actionable solutions, sparking a ripple effect of positive impact on their community,” said Senior Probation Officer Pamela Guzman. “For these six students, this journey is not just an experience—it’s was a transformative adventure that redefines their potential.”

The teens prepared for the virtual competition for four months during their Math and Science class. They worked together to find compelling visuals and heartfelt anecdotes to use and demonstrated their mastery of the subject, she said.

The final presentation on April 15 showcased the depth of their research, the creativity behind their intervention solutions, and their commitment to making a difference, Guzman said.

“The judges were impressed by their teamwork, poise, and ability to articulate complex ideas with clarity,” said Guzman.

Probation remains dedicated to fostering partnerships and working closely with the community to strengthen connections and safely reintegrate the youth. As a result of their participation, Probation has been offered additional programming opportunities at the YTC by the Bezos Foundation.

County of San Diego news release · Apr 30, 2025

COUNTY

Probation Youth, Officers Sprint Over Challenging Obstacles in 5K Run

Five County Probation youth from the Youth Transition Campus, and five officers ran over rugged terrain, mud

Courts · Transit · Public safety

crawled and climbed ropes as part of the 5K Spartan Sprint recently in Valley Center.

The ten are part of the running club offered to youth who have been assigned to a structured program by a Juvenile Court judge.

The running club is a tool that Probation officers use to help the young men find a physical and mental outlet that can help with stress, mood problems, anxiety and self-esteem. It can also be a meditative time to refocus and set a positive goal.

The Spartan Race is an “ultimate obstacle course challenge” with 20 challenges designed to test a runner’s physical and mental limits.

“Most of the youth are first-time runners when they join the club. They embrace the challenge that running presents and often support and motivate one another during training sessions and races,” said Supervising Probation Officer Carlos Sanchez.

“The shared experience fosters a strong sense of camaraderie and connection among the participants.”

So that they don’t miss out on any court-mandated or school-related programming, the youth wake up at 5 a.m. to train with an officer three times a week. The training focuses on long-distance running and speed workouts at the Youth Transition Campus track.

The event was held in honor of military service members and first responders.

After completing the race, which they all completed in over an hour – a few did it in 1 hour and 5 minutes – the exhausted and exhilarated youth grabbed lunch with the officers. The running club program has a small budget to register students for races and buy lunch. Several staff members accompany the runners when they participate in the community events.

County of San Diego news release · Apr 29, 2025

BUSINESS

Member Spotlight: Brain Treatment Center & Braincare Performance Center, clinically powered by Wave Neuro technology

You invest in your business – when was the last time you invested in your brain?

Running a business, managing teams, and staying on top of everything takes mental clarity, focus, and

resilience. But stress, anxiety, and burnout can make it harder to perform at your best. What if there was a way to reset and optimize your brain function?

At Brain Treatment Center (BTC) in San Diego and Brain Performance Center (BPC) in Cardiff, we use MeRT (Magnetic e-Resonance Therapy) – a groundbreaking, drug-free treatment designed to help your brain work at its best. MeRT helps improve

mental clarity, focus, and overall brain function by encouraging healthier brainwave activity. It’s personalized to your unique brain, making it more precise and effective than traditional approaches.

Business owners, professionals, and athletes looking to boost focus, energy, and performance

Individuals struggling with stress, anxiety, depression, or PTSD

Those recovering from concussions, brain injuries, or neurological conditions

Anyone who wants to feel sharper, more balanced, and in control

If you’ve been feeling mentally drained or not at your peak, now is the time to take action. Visit BTC or BPC’s website or call today to see how this technology could help you think clearer, feel better, and perform at your best.

Brain Treatment Center – San Diego
braintreatmentcenter.com
619-255-2101

Brain Performance Center – Cardiff
braincarecardiff.com
858-306-1070

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Apr 30, 2025

BUSINESS

Trade and Tariffs Update

President Trump declared

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BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

San Diego commerce & the regional economy

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Trade and Tariffs Update

April 2nd as Liberation Day with an executive order declaring a national emergency arising from U.S. goods trade deficits. The executive order imposed a 10% baseline tariff that went into effect on April 5th and reciprocal tariffs to over 180 countries while exempting Canda and Mexico due to USMCA provisions. However, our North American partners were not exempt from 25% tariffs on imported vehicles and auto parts that went into effect April 3rd.

Some countries retaliated to reciprocal tariffs including

China, imposing tariffs to U.S. imports, and prompting President Trump to respond with an increase effective immediately. The trade war with China has led to multiple increase in tariffs, now standing at China being subjected to 245% levies and the U.S. subjected to 125%. The Administration later announced a 90 day pause on all other reciprocal tariffs and conveyed it is looking into separate tariffs on semiconductor chips and certain electronics. Effective July 14, the Administration also plans to impose 20.91% tariffs on tomatoes imported from Mexico, as the U.S. withdrew from a bilateral agreement aiming to protect domestic

tomato growers.

In the latest efforts to prevent tariffs, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni visited the White House where President Trump assured there will be 100% be a European Union tariff deal and is working his way to make other deals with other countries. On the other hand, Governor Newsom is also holding conversations with trade partners around the world to encourage them to invest in California and maintain stable trading relationships. His latest action is suing the Trump administration, challenging the president's constitutional authority to enact tariffs.

This month, the Chamber led its annual binational delegation trip to Washington, D.C., where trade and economic development were a top priority. On our meeting with Mexican Ambassador Esteban Moctezuma, he expressed optimism due to strong bilateral ties and ongoing communication between economic, foreign affairs, and public safety authorities. In our meetings with Department of State, Small Business Administration, and Department of Commerce, top-level officials underlined the importance of business delegations which continue to be a powerful mechanism to educate decision makers on our region's contribution

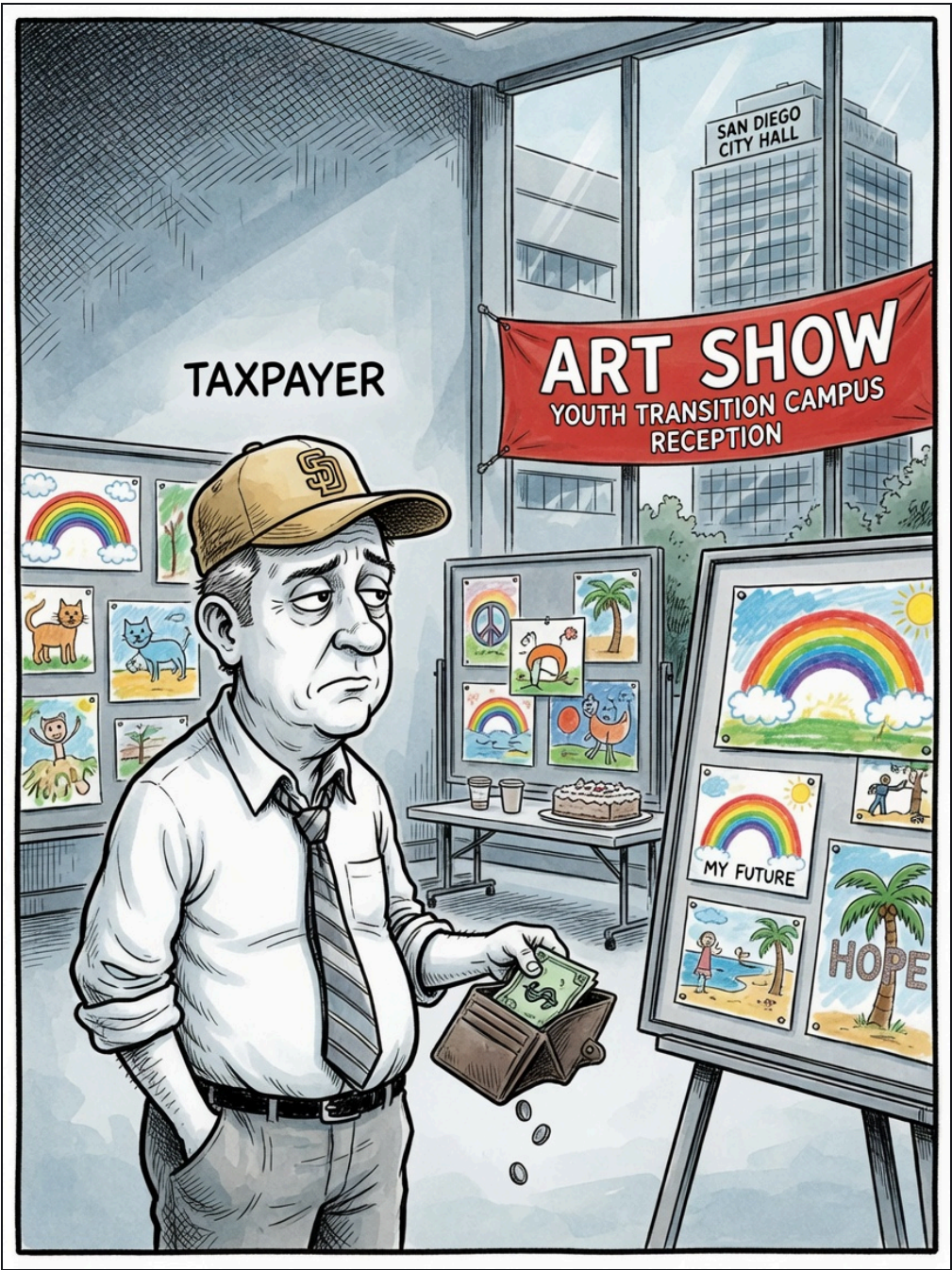
to national economy and elevate regional priorities such as infrastructure and policies that our businesses need to thrive.

The Chamber continues to actively voice opposition on tariffs in partnership with state and nationwide partners including the U.S. Chamber who has shared an online tool to highlight how trade helps boost growth in the U.S. We welcome your input on how tariffs and/or the uncertainty of tariffs has impacted your business – please reach out to kzamarripa@sdchamber.org to share your story.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Apr 22, 2025

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

Opinion



Probation youth showcase their creativity
THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

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

COMMENTARY
California Risks Repeating Costly Pension Mistakes With New Bill, Op-Ed Warns
Marc Joffe argues that Assembly Bill 1383 would deepen the state's pension funding crisis by expanding benefits for public safety workers without a plan to pay for them.
California's state and local

governments already face severe challenges in meeting their obligations to fund retirement benefits for public employees, Marc Joffe writes.

Many municipalities report that these expenses have climbed to unsustainable levels, he notes, citing the League of California Cities.

Despite this strain, state lawmakers appear poised to worsen the situation by

approving additional unfunded promises, according to Joffe.

He points to Assembly Bill 1383, which has drawn support from legislators in both major parties. The measure would introduce more generous retirement calculations specifically for public safety personnel.

It would also permit local governments to bargain away

the existing 50% employee contribution requirement at the bargaining table, he explains.

Further, the legislation would enable many of these workers to begin drawing benefits at age 55 while receiving 90% of their final average salary (their average salary for the 36 months during which they received their highest base pay), on top of

existing health coverage for retirees.

Joffe predicts that these enhancements will force agencies to direct larger sums into the California Public Employees' Retirement System, leaving less cash for government services.

Budget pressures would likely lead officials to trim payrolls and curtail services,

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COMMENTARY (CONTINUED)

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

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California Risks Repeating Costly Pension Mistakes With New Bill, Op-Ed Warns

triggering strong opposition from organized labor, he forecasts.

This pattern, he warns, could spark protests, work stoppages and short-term closures of government operations.

The commentary highlights ongoing difficulties in Los Angeles, where Mayor Karen Bass seeks to close a \$1 billion shortfall partly by eliminating about 1,600 positions.

During the 2023-24 fiscal year, the city alone contributed more than \$1.6 billion to its three retirement systems.

Union president David Green responded to the proposed cuts by saying, “I’m going to push back and fight against every single one of these layoffs.”

Joffe recalls that CalPERS once stood in strong financial shape, reaching a funded ratio of 120.5 percent in the late 1990s after favorable market returns.

That surplus prompted officials to expand benefits through Senate Bill 400 in 1999, expecting investment gains and small added

contributions would cover the expense.

Subsequent market declines in 2001 and the 2008 crash, combined with the higher payouts, drove the funded ratio down to 75 percent by 2013, where it has largely remained despite later market recoveries and increased employer payments.

Joffe credits former Governor Jerry Brown with enacting the Public Employee Pension Reform Act in 2012, which scaled back benefits for newer hires and enforced the 50 percent employee share of normal costs.

Even without the pending

legislation, pension reserves face added threats from anticipated market volatility tied to federal tariff policies, he cautions.

The bill cleared its initial Assembly committee on a unanimous vote and draws strong backing from unionized firefighters, many of whom already receive total compensation packages reaching \$600,000 or higher.

Before advancing further, the measure requires far more thorough review of its effects on CalPERS and other retirement plans, Joffe insists.

Joffe concludes by noting that even Gray Davis, who approved the 1999 benefit

expansion, now realizes that law was a mistake. He urges lawmakers to avoid repeating that misstep with AB 1383 or similar proposals.

San Diego Newsline · Based on commentary published by the California Policy Center · Apr 30, 2025

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.

MORE NEWS

Downtown, City & County

COUNTY

East County Community Resource Fair Offers Help to Hundreds

The County of San Diego’s Probation Department recently hosted its second annual East County Community Resource Fair, bringing together more than 90 service providers to support community members and people on probation.

More than 300 people attended the free event at the El Cajon Courthouse on April 23. Youth and adults connected with services, including employment resources, medical and dental care, mental health support, help finding housing, substance use treatment program information, CalFresh assistance, access to food, clothing and more.

The day began with a session led by probation staff, highlighting the many service providers in attendance and the resources available countywide to help support and rehabilitate people on probation.

The second part of the event focused on connecting attendees with services to meet their varied needs in one convenient location.

Youth and adults in attendance explored resources such as:

The fair also featured a special recognition ceremony honoring five people for their commitment to personal growth, positive change, building a support system and meeting the conditions of their probation.

The ceremony not only recognized their achievements but also served as inspiration for others on their paths to rehabilitation and success.

To learn more, visit the Probation Department’s website .

County of San Diego news release · Apr 28, 2025

COUNTY

New Dashboard Tracks South County Water and Odor Pollution

An interactive online dashboard and map has gone live displaying current environmental conditions in South County including beach water quality and sewage odor data.

The dashboard draws data from multiple websites to provide a one-stop digital summary of current conditions for people to view and plan their South Bay visits and activity accordingly.

The page includes beach water closure information from the County with the previous week’s information for comparison. Odor complaints and hydrogen sulfide levels

for communities near the river valley are provided by the regional San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD). Sewage spill information from the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission can also be found here. Links to original sources are also provided so users can find out more about specific topics.

Other dashboard highlights include information about “What We Know,” “What We’re Doing” and “What You Can Do.” It also features a link to surveillance data from South County emergency departments that tracks patient health complaints related to pollution related breathing problems and potentially infectious stomach issues.

The dashboard was developed by the County in partnership with UC San Diego’s Resilient Shield , a multidisciplinary team collaborating to integrate advanced computing techniques like forecast modeling to facilitate informed decision making.

“This new dashboard reaffirms our commitment to the South Bay communities most impacted by the sewage pollution by providing pertinent information all in one place that they can take action on or be informed about,” said Dr. Ankita Kadakia, the County’s interim public

health officer. “I want to thank our partners with UCSD and APCD for their help in making this happen.”

Beach and bay water closures from sewage contamination of the river valley have plagued South County for decades. Since 2018, the County has funded daily beach water quality monitoring in the South County, including Imperial Beach, Silver Strand and Coronado.

More recently, the County also has been monitoring reports of an elevation in primarily overnight hydrogen sulfide (H2S) readings in the Tijuana River Valley, creating odor issues for nearby communities.

The hydrogen sulfide readings are provided by the SD APCD which operates a specialized H2S analyzer network. In addition, the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Comhttps://www.sdapcd.org/ mission (USIBWC) operates a sewage treatment plant and works directly with wastewater officials in Mexico to provide data on flows into the river valley. The County also works with state and federal agency partners.

In a multi-agency partnership last year, County public health experts advised SD APCD on hydrogen sulfide guidance . The guidance

recommends that people who live in affected areas and smell the odors limit outdoor activities when they are bothersome, keep doors closed, increase air circulation with indoor fans and use air purifiers indoors.

APCD also offers free purifiers for those in the three principally effected ZIP codes . These high quality purifiers are effective for odors and gases like hydrogen sulfide particularly when equipped with permanganate filters.

People with asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or other chronic lung conditions should have emergency medications such as rescue inhalers readily available. If symptoms from a strong odor persist, are worrisome or worsen, seek medical care.

The County of San Diego urges federal officials to continue working with their counterparts in Mexico on stopping the flow of raw sewage and bringing an ultimate resolution to this long-time source of water and air pollution.

A link to the new dashboard will be located on the County website dedicated to the South Region’s health concerns related to the border sewage crisis.

County of San Diego news release · Apr 28, 2025

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