

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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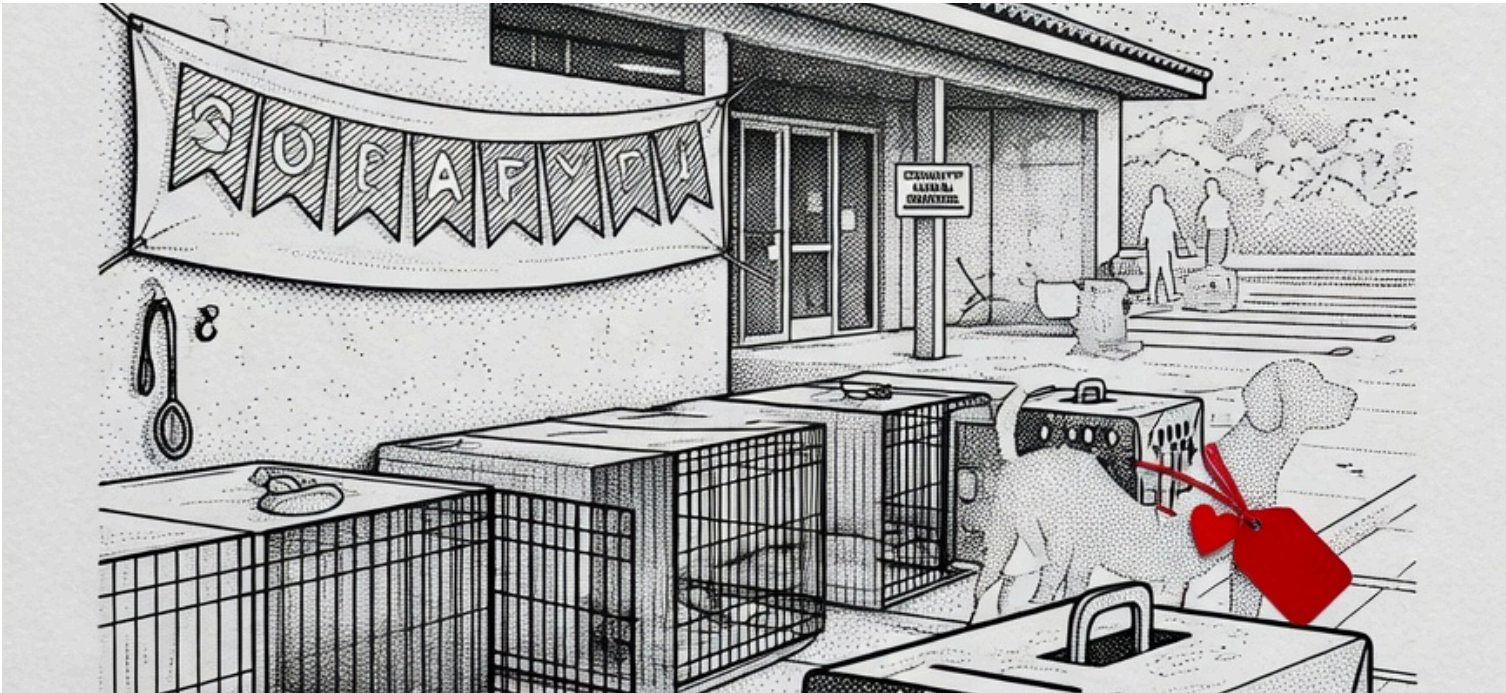
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COUNTY

County Offering Free Pet Adoptions All August for Clear the Shelters



Illustration

Every animal deserves a loving home. This August, you can help make that happen.

County Animal Services is waiving all pet adoption fees at the Bonita and Carlsbad animal shelters during the month of August for Clear the Shelters.

Clear the Shelters is a nationwide initiative led by NBC and Telemundo-owned television stations to connect shelter animals with families ready to provide love, comfort and care. Since 2015, the campaign has helped more than 1 million pets across the country find permanent homes.

With shelters near capacity, this year’s goal is to find a home for every adoptable animal in our care.

All pets adopted from County shelters come spayed or neutered, vaccinated, microchipped and include a one-year license for dogs living in the department’s service area—free of charge during August.

From cats and dogs to guinea pigs and turtles, many animals are waiting to meet their match. Visit the Animal Services adoptions page to browse available pets.

In-person adoption interactions are available Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Shelters are open at both County locations:

South Shelter — 5821 Sweetwater Road, Bonita, CA 91902

North Shelter — 2481 Palomar Airport Road, Carlsbad, CA 92011

Staff recommend choosing a second or third pet option in case

your first choice is adopted before your visit.

County Animal Services promotes the humane and responsible care of pets and works every day to find foster and forever homes for every healthy and adoptable animal. The department partners with more than 300 rescue organizations and provides daily care for animals in need.

If you’re not ready to adopt, fostering is another way to help . It gives animals time to adjust to a home environment and prepares them for adoption by socializing them with people and other pets.

You can support local animals in need by donating to the Spirit Fund , which provides free, often life-saving veterinary care for injured and sick pets at County shelters. You can also help by donating items from the County Animal Services wish list or volunteering your time to support the animals in our care.

This August, help us Clear the Shelters — and give a homeless pet the second chance they deserve.

County of San Diego news release · Aug 1, 2025



Illustration from a photo by Tuxyso · Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0

COUNTY

County Animal Services Investigating Rancho Santa Fe Horse Case

County Animal Services and the District Attorney’s Office are working on an animal welfare case that involves horses in Rancho Santa Fe.

On Tuesday evening, the County Animal Services received a report, including a photograph of an emaciated horse at a property in the 7600 block of Artesian Road in Rancho Santa Fe. An Animal Services Officer was immediately dispatched and confirmed that the horse pictured was on the property.

Animal Services contacted the veterinarian responsible for the health of the animals on that property. The veterinarian informed staff that she intended to euthanize two elderly horses the previous day but lacked the equipment necessary to remove the remains and was concerned about potential wildlife disturbance. She reported that she would return to the property Wednesday morning to perform the euthanasia and agreed to meet County Animal Services at 9 a.m.

Animal Services Officers arrived at the property at approximately 8:10 a.m. to ensure they were able to witness the scheduled euthanasia. At approximately 9:15 a.m., the veterinarian called Animal Services to report she had an emergency and had the horse removed before the officers had arrived.

When Animal Services Officers requested documentation confirming

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DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

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County Animal Services Investigating Rancho Santa Fe Horse Case

the horse had been euthanized, the veterinarian declined to provide it.

County Animal Services has since issued a formal 121 Notice of Pre-Impoundment to the owner, requiring verifiable proof of veterinary care or humane euthanasia within 48 hours or risk facing criminal charges.

In addition, County Animal Services is working with the District Attorney’s Office to investigate the current location and condition of the removed horse, determine whether humane care was provided, and assess the welfare of the second horse that remains on the property.

This is an open and ongoing investigation.

County of San Diego news release · Aug 6, 2025

COUNTY Summer Temperatures are Rising, Follow These Tips To Stay Safe

Summer and even the fall months in San Diego County can bring extremely high temperatures that can be dangerous to people and pets.

People need to remember that extreme heat can spike body temperatures that can cause heatstroke, exhaustion, dizziness, nausea, confusion, headache and even death. People who are particularly at risk are children, older adults, people with chronic medical conditions, pregnant people and outdoor workers.

So, here are tips that can help keep you, your friends and loved ones safe.

The County’s Cool Zones, including the County’s 33 branch libraries , community centers and other locations, offer people safe, air-conditioned sanctuaries from the heat. Here is a complete list of County Cool Zone sites , their hours and locations.

You can also use the County’s interactive link that lets you search for Cool Zone sites by location, ZIP code, organization and what animals are allowed.

Responding to Signs of Heatstroke or Heat Exhaustion

First and foremost, if you find someone who is suffering from symptoms of heatstroke or heat exhaustion —dizziness, nausea, confusion, headache—call 9-1-1 and start cooling them. But DO NOT give them fluids to drink. A person with heatstroke may not be able to swallow. Fluids could run

down their tracheas into their lungs and make it hard for them to breathe.

After calling 9-1-1, start cooling the person by moving them into the shade, spraying them with cool water and fanning. Place them in a cool shower if they are alert, monitor their body temperatures and continue cooling them.

Tips to Help People Avoid Heat-Related Problems

Stay in an air-conditioned area during the hottest hours of the day. Even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler. Do not rely on electric fans for cooling if temperatures exceed 90 degrees.

Drink plenty of water (avoid alcohol and sugary drinks) and don’t wait until you are thirsty.

Never leave a child, elderly person, or pet unattended in a car.

Avoid unnecessary hard work or activities outside during the hottest part of the day.

Avoid unnecessary sun exposure and wear a wide-brim hat if you need to be in the sun.

Tips to Keep Your pets cool in hot weather

Keep your pets indoors if the temperature is lower inside.

Exercise pets in early morning hours or early evening to avoid prolonged exposure to the heat. Avoid strenuous runs or hikes.

Keep your pets’ water supply in a tip-proof container, always topped off, and be sure it stays cool (pets will not drink water that is too hot).

Consider a misting system to keep the outdoor areas cooler.

Be sure your pet has shade ALL DAY, if they are outside. Remember, the sun’s position changes during the day.

Do not take your pets for car trips unless absolutely necessary. A car can heat up very quickly. On an 85-degree day, a car can reach 102 degrees in 10 minutes and soar upward even with the windows down an inch or two.

Don’t take your dogs for walks on the hot pavement. If it is too hot for you to walk barefooted, then don’t make your dogs do it either.

Consider adding a child’s wading pool for your dog. Many dogs will keep cool by “taking a dip.”

Watch for signs of heat stress, including excessive panting, lethargy, drooling, vomiting, or stumbling. Seek

veterinary help immediately if you notice these.

So, remember, the sun is beautiful, but it can be dangerous. Stay cool; be cool!

County of San Diego news release · Aug 5, 2025

COUNTY New Health Lab Achieves Top Green Building Certification

The County has done it again. The newly opened Public Health Lab recently achieved the highest Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification possible – platinum.

The U.S. Green Building Council operates the LEED certification program and calls it the most widely recognized green building rating system in the world.

General Services says this is the 34th County facility to win this rating. The others are the San Pasqual Academy (30 buildings), San Elijo Nature Center, County Operations Center Conference Center and the North Coastal Live Well Center. In all, the County now boasts 70 buildings with silver, gold or platinum LEED certifications.

“The new Public Health Lab sets a powerful example of climate-conscious design and innovation in a critical public facility,” said General Services Director Marko Medved. “This building reflects the County’s deep commitment to sustainability across every facet of design and construction.”

Designed to be all-electric, the Public Health Lab maximizes onsite roof top solar panels and uses additional renewable energy from the solar panels atop the newly built parking structure nearby.

Together, the two systems are expected to generate 805,000 kWh of energy that offsets roughly 44% of the building’s annual energy need. A 30kW energy storage system shifts solar energy to periods of peak demand, reducing energy costs and easing stress on the local grid.

Additional numbers show the impact of other environmentally friendly features.

Drought-tolerant landscaping and smart irrigation cut outdoor water use by a dramatic 67%. Low-flow fixtures reduce indoor water use by more than 40%.

The project reduced 88% of its construction waste across six categories: concrete, asphalt, wood, metal, drywall and mixed debris.

Lastly, the project reduced embodied carbon by 23% by using low-carbon construction materials.

“Altogether, the Public Health Lab reflects San Diego County’s leadership in advancing sustainable public buildings, demonstrating that even demanding, energy-intensive buildings can be designed with climate resilience and innovation at the forefront.” said General Services Capital Construction and Sustainability Chief Charles Marchesano.

For more information about County sustainability efforts, visit General Services .

County of San Diego news release · Aug 4, 2025

COUNTY Cultivating a Passion for Careers in the Food Industry: From Garden to Kitchen

Even before their first class, a small group of Youth Transition Campus youth wake up early twice a week to tend the campus’ container garden.

They check to see how the plants are growing, and harvest vegetables and fruits that will later be used in a culinary class where some of the same young people who harvested will learn how to create entrees, desserts and side dishes with the daily bounty.

Even before their first class, a small group of Youth Transition Campus youth wake up early twice a week to tend the campus’ container garden.

They check to see how the plants are growing, and harvest vegetables and fruits that will later be used in a culinary class where some of the same young people who harvested will learn how to create entrees, desserts and side dishes with the daily bounty.

Both classes are part of the vocational program classes offered by the San Diego County Office of Education in partnership with County Probation.

The youth are learning the principles of horticulture and growing vegetables and fruit from seed to harvest with Master Gardener April Lowe. The majority of the harvest is gathered up and delivered to an afternoon culinary class taught by a real chef, Nathan Shelby.

“It’s not that always the same students will have a chance to do both but at least we can show that there is a good partnership between that farm and table,” Shelby

said. “You know the farm sends us the food, we send them back the compost and scraps so that they can make the soil better. They talk a lot about soil science and growing techniques over there beyond just learning how to harvest plants.”

Probation and the County Office of Education offer career technical education for the students that are at this campus who need to have a career pathway so when they are released, they have an opportunity to get an entry-level job somewhere. Shelby said the goal is to try to get them ready to work in any type of basic food service operation.

“This is a fun class for me. We cook delicious food and learn how to cook like so many recipes. It helps me do my time and this is something I want to do when I get out,” said one student. I want to go to culinary school, real school, to learn how to cook. I like what he does, he can just whips up anything he wants.”

Another culinary student said, “I love this class it’s amazing. I’m really grateful for this opportunity to be in this classroom. It’s really fun learning a lot of new things.”

Culinary program students who complete 80 hours of instruction can take part in the first pre-apprenticeship program at a high school level. Some students can be hired as apprentices with Kitchens for Good, a program partner, or into other jobs in the hospitality industry.

All the students must obtain their food handlers’ license by taking the County Board of Health test to ensure they understand how to handle food safely. They are taught cooking basics and techniques, how to safely use commercial kitchen equipment, and how to open and close a kitchen like they do in restaurants, Shelby said.

“I’ve had students tell me that they want to go home and start a garden or that they can remember gardening with their grandmother or their father,” said Lowe. “Most of them really enjoy the space as well as gardening, it’s very peaceful.”

Shelby said, “I feel like when the students are locked in and they want to learn, there is an absolute ton they can learn, if either of these things interest them then they have a career pathway.”

County of San Diego news release · Aug 1, 2025

BUSINESS

San Diego commerce & the regional economy



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BUSINESS
City of San Diego Budget

This year’s budget discussions for the City of San Diego focused on how to balance City needs and priorities with the City’s current financial restraints. Mayor Todd Gloria has

emphasized producing a budget that maintains core services without further jeopardizing the City’s long-term financial stability.

The San Diego City Council passed its \$6 billion FY2026 budget on June 23 rd by a vote of 6-3. Earlier in the process, the Council approved the proposed budget, with a handful of modifications that increased the City’s spending for the upcoming fiscal year on various programs and services. Mayor Gloria utilized his ability to line-item veto a number of these modifications, which came back to the Council on the 23 rd . Opinions on Council were

mixed when it came to a full override of the proposed vetoes. Ultimately, the Council passed a budget that restored funding to select priorities, including City lakes, brush management, and other community services, by overriding some, but not all, of the Mayor’s vetoes.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Jul 18, 2025

BUSINESS
2025 North American Forum

VP Kenia Zamarripa participated in the North American Forum, a trilateral effort founded in 2004 to

bring together business, government, and academia leaders from Canada, Mexico, and the United States to advance a shared North American vision. The NAF helps promote policy agendas in each country to encourage trinational cooperation and respond to shared priorities to boost economic competitiveness; energy, the environment, and climate change; and regional security. Key topics included manufacturing uncertainty, Chinese transshipments, resource sharing, and the importance of resilient supply chains. In addition, delegates recognized the

challenges presented by having new political leadership in each country which requires engagement from a variety of stakeholders, and how the unstable trade dynamic has taken a toll on diplomatic relationships.

Following the NAF, a joint statement was released by Co-Chairs Ambassador Thomas Shannon (U.S.), Dr. Jaime Zabudovsky (Mexico), and Goldy Hyder (Canada) to memorialize key discussion points and conclusions from this year’s conversations.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Jul 18, 2025

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

Opinion



Clear the shelters, but never the budget

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

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

COMMENTARY
Iowa Senator’s Report Highlights Waste in California’s Rail Projects, Argues Policy Center Fellow

Senator Joni Ernst’s critique of federally funded transit initiatives could ultimately help Bay Area taxpayers by exposing massive cost overruns and misplaced priorities, according to Marc Joffe of the California Policy Center.

A new report from Iowa Sen. Joni Ernst sharply criticizes several California rail and transit projects for their excessive costs and delays, with the California Policy Center arguing that her findings could benefit local taxpayers despite coming from an out-of-state Republican.

In her “Off the Rails” report, Ernst identifies wasteful federally funded construction projects across

the nation. California’s high-speed rail effort is prominently featured, but the document also spotlights three major Northern California transit initiatives, according to the Center.

The report draws on an updated list of cost overruns compiled by the Department of Transportation under new Secretary Sean Duffy. The previous secretary, Pete Buttigieg, had failed to meet a congressional requirement to

annually disclose projects that are at least \$1 billion over budget or five years behind schedule, the California Policy Center writes.

One project flagged by the DOT is San Francisco BART’s Core Capacity initiative. Its estimated cost has climbed from \$2.7 billion at the time of federal approval to \$4 billion today, according to the report cited by the Center. The effort aims to boost

capacity in BART’s transbay tunnel from 23 to 28 trains per hour.

That added capacity is no longer needed after ridership plunged during the COVID-19 pandemic, the California Policy Center argues. The project is also more than three years behind schedule, largely because of difficulties securing additional storage yards for new subway cars.

BART is purchasing a total

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COMMENTARY (CONTINUED)

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Iowa Senator’s Report Highlights Waste in California’s Rail Projects, Argues Policy Center Fellow

of 1,129 cars as part of its “Fleet of the Future.” Yet the system requires a maximum of only about 500 cars at peak service times, the Center notes. Although a buffer is necessary for maintenance, the current order far exceeds what is required, creating excess storage demands.

Additional cars might be justified for a planned extension through downtown San Jose, but that project itself appears on Ernst’s list of concerns. As the Center’s Ed Ring and Marc Joffe previously wrote in National

Review, even some transit supporters concede the BART San Jose extension is poorly conceived.

The six-mile extension has ballooned to \$12.8 billion, with completion now pushed into the late 2030s. This timeline raises questions about whether BART should be acquiring and storing extra rail cars years in advance, according to the Center.

Ernst also criticizes the plan to extend Caltrain service an additional 1.3 miles into San Francisco’s Salesforce Transit Center. The project carries an \$8.3 billion price tag, making it the most expensive per mile in history, the California Policy Center writes.

While canceling or reducing federal support for these BART and Caltrain extensions might disappoint the limited number of future riders, it could prove advantageous for Bay Area taxpayers, the Center contends. Local transit systems are running massive operating deficits.

The state legislature has already approved up to \$750 million in emergency loans for Bay Area transit agencies while they await a proposed half-cent sales tax increase slated for the November 2026 ballot. If the costly extension projects were halted, sales tax revenue could instead be redirected to cover day-to-day operations, potentially avoiding further loans and

tax increases, according to the Center.

Shifting capital dollars to operating expenses involves legal hurdles, but a partial precedent exists: Senate Bill 125, passed in 2023, permitted transit agencies to use certain state capital funds for operations, the California Policy Center notes.

Many Californians may be inclined to ignore the critique because it comes from an Iowa senator representing a “donor state” that receives more in federal funds than it contributes in taxes. Yet California sends vast sums to Washington and often spends the returned grants carelessly, Marc Joffe argues.

Joffe, a visiting fellow at the California Policy Center and

president of the Contra Costa Taxpayers Association, concludes that if an out-of-state senator can help terminate wasteful programs burdening both federal and local budgets, Californians should welcome the assistance.

San Diego Newsline · Based on commentary published by the California Policy Center · Jul 31, 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

COUNTY

County Closes Three Parks in August to Protect Hikers from Heat

As summer temperatures rise, the County of San Diego has closed three parks that it shuts down every year for the month of August to protect residents during what is often the hottest time of the year.

Parks officials announced that El Capitan Preserve near Lakeside, Hellhole Canyon Preserve in Valley Center and Mt. Gower Preserve in Ramona are closed for the month.

The County also closed Agua Caliente Regional Park and Vallecito County Park , which are in or near Anza Borrego desert, after Memorial Day in May for the summer, to reopen Labor Day weekend.

In addition to protecting the public from extreme temperatures, the closures give Department of Parks and Recreation staff the opportunity to conduct maintenance such as trail restoration.

Parks officials urged the public to be safe and protect themselves from the heat if they do go out to hike in summer months.

Below are some safety tips hikers should consider before hitting the trails:

The following are safety tips to help people prepare for hiking in warm weather:

Choose hikes that are appropriate for your skills and physical condition. Go with the safest option trail if heat may be an issue for part of the hike.

Stay hydrated. Drink water before, during and after hiking.

Check weather forecasts and be familiar with the terrain for your trail.

Let someone know where you will be and when you plan to return. Don’t just rely on your cell phone because it can lose reception in remote areas.

Bring a backpack or bag with food and water, extra sunscreen to reapply and a flashlight, first aid kit, multipurpose tool or knife and a whistle.

Park rangers recommend carrying one liter, about one quart, for every 2 to 3 miles. Bring more water than you think you’ll need—and even more water on longer or strenuous trails.

Non-perishable items like dried fruit, energy bars, trail mix, peanut butter, canned tuna, whole grain crackers and jerky are a perfect, healthy snack. They provide fuel to boost your energy levels and to make up for lost calories.

Don’t forget your hat and sunglasses and apply sunscreen.

Dress in layers of breathable, light-colored, loose-fitting clothes that you

can take on and off, based on the temperature and can prevent sunburn.

Good boots provide grip in rocky and slippery areas, but they also provide a thick layer of protection from the hot earth.

One last suggestion for hikers is to leave your dog or dogs at home. Dogs get overheated easily. Never leave your pet in the car. On an 85-degree day, a car can reach 102 degrees in 10 minutes and soar upward to 120 degrees—even with the windows down an inch or two. If you do take your dog, bring plenty of water for your pet and please don’t walk your dog on hot pavement, asphalt or sand in the heat, it will burn their paws.

For additional information on visiting County Parks, visit sdparcs.org .

County of San Diego news release · Aug 1, 2025

COUNTY

Tuberculosis Exposure Reported at Southwest High School

The County’s Tuberculosis Control Program , in collaboration with Sweetwater Union School District (SUHSD), are working to notify students and staff who were potentially exposed to tuberculosis (TB) at Southwest High School from Feb. 1, 2025, to May 22, 2025.

The school district and County have notified

individuals at highest risk of infection. No-cost TB screening is being arranged for students and staff who are at increased risk of infection.

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 or prolonged indoor exposure to a person who is sick with TB should get tested. Brief interactions with a person with contagious tuberculosis are less likely to lead to TB infection than are prolonged or repeated exposures.

“Symptoms of active TB include persistent cough, fever, night sweats and unexplained weight loss,” said Sayone Thihalolipavan, M.D., MPH, County 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 they may have been exposed, blood tests and skin tests are an effective way to determine an infection. ”

Effective treatments are available to cure people who are sick from active TB.

People who test positive for

Downtown, City & County

TB but who don’t have symptoms of active TB 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.

It is especially important for individuals with symptoms of active TB and those who are immune compromised to see a medical provider to rule out active TB and to discuss preventive treatment.

Individuals who would like more information on this potential exposure should call the County TB Control Program at 619-692-8621.

The number of people diagnosed with active TB in San Diego County has decreased since the early 1990s and has stabilized in recent years. In 2020, there were 193 TB cases, 201 in 2021, 208 in 2022 and 242 in 2023. In 2024, a total of 247 people were reported with active TB disease in San Diego County. An estimated 175,000 people in San Diego County have latent TB infection and are at risk for developing active TB without preventive treatment.

County of San Diego news release · Jul 31, 2025

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