



January 7, 2025

The Honorable Alex Padilla
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Padilla:

I am writing to provide an update on your May 9, 2024, petition request to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). In this request, you asked CDC/ATSDR to investigate the public health impacts of wastewater contamination in the Tijuana River and the surrounding communities of Imperial Beach, Coronado, and San Diego, California.

ATSDR has gathered the available environmental sampling data for chemical contaminants in air, surface water, sediment, and biota. Based on our preliminary review of the air data, we have determined that there are sufficient data to accept your petition and conduct a public health assessment of hydrogen sulfide in the air. ATSDR will further analyze these data to determine whether exposure to measured levels of hydrogen sulfide in air near the Tijuana River could harm people's health. As we move forward, we will also determine whether surface water, sediment, and biota data are sufficient for public health assessment activities.

As our evaluation progresses, we may discover limitations in the data that preclude us from making public health determinations for each pathway. If we determine that critical data gaps exist, we will recommend additional sampling and provide technical assistance, as needed, to fill the data gap. Our public health evaluation findings will be documented in a written report, along with the recommendations for further actions, if warranted, to protect public health. The report will be released to the public and other key partners.

If you have any questions regarding our evaluation of your request or the public health assessment process, please contact Jeff Reczek in our CDC Washington Office at (202) 245-0600 or JReczek@cdc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mandy K. Cohen".

Mandy K. Cohen, MD, MPH
Director, CDC and
Administrator, Agency for Toxic Substances
and Disease Registry

cc:

The Honorable Sara Jacobs

The Honorable Mike Levin

The Honorable Scott H. Peters

The Honorable Juan Vargas