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## News Flash

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Office of Public  
Affairs

### MOVING FAST AND FIXING THINGS: USIBWC FOCUSED ON INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS AND TIJUANA RIVER POLLUTION



*USIBWC senior leadership, alongside partners from U.S. EPA, U.S. Consulate, and Mexico, visited the San Antonio de los Buenos wastewater treatment plant recently to check on its operations.*

The U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC), working closely with U.S. EPA and other partners, has been busy keeping as much sewage as possible out of the Tijuana River, embarking on an accelerated increase of its San Diego wastewater treatment plant's capacity, and holding Mexico accountable for their Minute 328 projects.

USIBWC recently saved U.S. taxpayers millions of dollars - and kept millions of gallons of sewage out of the Tijuana River - by insisting Mexico use a bypass to the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (SBIWTP) during the final phase of Tijuana's International Collector project. This diversion preserved the plant's valuable biological processes.

During the entire three-month International Collector replacement project, USIBWC, working with EPA and Department of State, kept 1.2 billion gallons of sewage out of the Tijuana River by insisting Mexico use alternative methods to divert wastewater during construction.

Last month, Mexico announced a planned electrical outage at its PB-1 pumping station that could have sent a surge of millions of gallons of sewage to SBIWTP and jeopardized the plant's permit compliance. USIBWC intervened to work out a solution with Mexico that avoided this negative impact.

On the U.S. side of the border, USIBWC and EPA recently announced the South Bay plant would increase its permitted treatment capacity from 25 million gallons a day (MGD) to 35 MGD in only 100 days - not in two years, as originally planned.

This incremental increase should help remove more flow from the Tijuana River and cut down on the odors that have long plagued San Diego residents.

USIBWC is also examining the possibility of accelerating the timeline for the plant's overall expansion to 50 MGD.

After a site visit to verify operations at the newly constructed San Antonio de los Buenos wastewater treatment plant near Tijuana on May 29, USIBWC, EPA, and U.S. Consulate representatives held a binational meeting with Mexican agencies.

USIBWC leadership pressed Mexico for a comprehensive and regular review of the schedule and progress of its Minute 328 projects. The U.S. and Mexican IBWC Sections are preparing a communication plan to address any complications, delays, or funding issues that may be identified regarding these projects.