



INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

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**EPA ADMINISTRATOR OP-ED: QUICK PROGRESS IN REPAIRS TO ADDRESS
TIJUANA RIVER SEWAGE CRISIS**

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WASHINGTON – Yesterday, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Lee Zeldin published an op-ed in the San Diego Union-Tribune announcing the Trump Administration's significant milestone to ensure a permanent 100% solution to the Tijuana River Sewage crisis that has long plagued Southern California residents.

The U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) has completed the 10 million-gallons-per-day (mgd) expansion of the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (SBIWTP) in San Diego, bringing the total treatment capacity from 25 mgd to 35 mgd.

This is a 40 percent increase that will significantly reduce wastewater flowing into the Tijuana River and eliminate the foul smells that have disrupted lives of Americans on the perimeters for decades.

In April, Administrator Zeldin traveled to San Diego to witness firsthand the raw sewage that has traveled from Mexico into the United States. Just a few months later, in July, Administrator Zeldin signed a Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the U.S. and the Trump administration with Mexico to bring relief to the people of San Diego on the shortest possible timeline.

Here is the op-ed:

“When I visited San Diego back in April to personally survey the environmental destruction being wrought by the decades-long Tijuana sewage crisis, I promised the millions of Americans living there the Trump administration would do everything in our power to identify and implement a 100% solution to end it once and for all.

“Today, I’m pleased to announce the Trump administration has achieved a major milestone in delivering on that promise.

“The U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission has completed construction on a 10 million-gallon-per-day capacity expansion to the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant in San Diego. The plant will be able to pull 35 million gallons per day of tainted water out of the Tijuana River, preventing even more pollution from reaching our waterways and reducing the foul odors that come along with it.

“What’s truly incredible about the treatment plant’s expansion is how quickly we got it done. It was initially expected to take two years, or 730 days. International Boundary and Water Commissioner Chad McIntosh and his team got it done in an astonishing 100 days.

“Using expedited contracting and procurement, top-notch engineering expertise, and innovative design and construction techniques, the Trump administration was able to complete this massive undertaking in a fraction of the time it was originally slated to take.

“Americans can expect this same relentless efficiency from the Trump administration as we take on all the challenges that matter most.

“And we’re just getting started.

“The International Boundary and Water Commission is currently looking at expanding the South Bay plant’s treatment capacity to 50 million gallons per day or more on an expedited basis, recreating the efficient approach that’s already yielded incredible results.

“Likewise, the Memorandum of Understanding I signed on behalf of the U.S. and the Trump administration with Mexico back in July will bring even more relief to the people of San Diego on the shortest possible timeline.

“For starters, several key Mexican-side projects will prevent millions of gallons per day of wastewater from entering the Tijuana River through expanded treatment capacity or enhanced diversion efforts. Mexico has agreed to appropriate funds for and begin at least four of these projects by the end of the year.

“In addition, the memorandum requires the U.S. and Mexico to, within 100 days of signing, pressure test every single project under development to make sure they are being completed as fast and efficiently as possible.

“The U.S. and Mexico will also enter into a new ‘Minute’ by the end of the year to agree to a minimum of a dozen new actions and projects that take into account the future infrastructure needs of Tijuana, ensuring this crisis doesn’t repeat itself five, 10 or 20 years from now.

“When fully and faithfully implemented, the 100% solution laid out in the memorandum will permanently end incessant beach closures, foul-smelling air, degradation of our land and water, and incalculable lost economic opportunities this crisis has inflicted on the people of San Diego.

“Anyone looking for proof this administration is treating this crisis with the sense of urgency it deserves, look no further. This is what President Donald Trump has asked of us and what the millions of Americans living in the region deserve.

“I wish I could simply end the crisis with the snap of my fingers, but today marks the beginning of the inexorable march toward permanently ending the Tijuana River sewage crisis. President Trump, Commissioner McIntosh and I will never lose focus on how incredibly important this effort is to the people of Southern California.

“Protecting human health and the environment is our first priority at EPA. No American should have to worry if the air they breathe, the water they drink or the beach where they swim is safe. We will solve this crisis, and we will make America great again.”

EPA Press Release: <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/icymi-san-diego-union-tribune-quick-progress-repairs-address-tijuana-river-sewage>

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