



San Diego County
**Air Pollution
Control District**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tijuana River Valley Gets Odor Monitors After Resident Concerns

SAN DIEGO (October 4, 2023) — The San Diego County Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) is installing AQMesh sensors near the Tijuana River Valley and in the surrounding community after hearing concerns from nearby residents regarding odor impacts from sewage spills into the Tijuana River.

The wireless sensors measure air quality by quantifying the levels of various compounds that are being emitted into the ambient air. The sensors will measure hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), total volatile organic compounds (TVOCs), carbon monoxide (CO), and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). All these compounds contribute to poor air quality. However, the gasses that are of most concern in the Tijuana River Valley are sulfur dioxide and hydrogen sulfide, with hydrogen sulfide being the main culprit that causes the pungent odor associated with sewage and wastewater. Sulfur dioxide typically does not produce odor at ambient levels but can provide additional information on hydrogen sulfide levels.

Ambient odors are contributing to the diminished quality of life that residents are experiencing. In low quantities these compounds pose minimal health risks but when they exist in higher quantities, they can cause health impacts. According to National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, exposure to these compounds in high quantities can cause dizziness, headaches, insomnia, nausea, eye irritation, asthma, and other health issues, making the collection of this data even more important.

These sensors will measure the quantities of these compounds that are being emitted into the air. While SDAPCD doesn't have jurisdiction over water quality, the data collected will aid in determining if the issue is becoming worse or being improved through measures being implemented by the appropriate jurisdictions.

Nora Vargas, Chairwoman of the County of San Diego, and a member of the SDAPCD Governing Board emphasized, "The persistent sewage issue in the Tijuana River Valley

has been a long-standing concern, affecting our southern County beaches and the air our community breathes. The deployment of these sensors will help gather crucial data on its impact on our residents' air quality, ensuring that clean air is accessible to all, regardless of their zip code."

More information about SDAPCD's air quality monitoring program can be found on our [website](#).

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About the San Diego County Air Pollution Control District

The San Diego County Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) is a government agency guided by its Governing Board that regulates stationary sources of air pollution within San Diego County. For more information, visit sdapcd.org.