

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SURVEILLANCE

**HEARING TITLED, "THE FENTANYL CRISIS IN AMERICA:
INACTION IS NO LONGER AN OPTION."**

STATEMENT OF DEREK S. MALTZ

MARCH 01, 2023

INTRODUCTION:

Chairman Jim Jordan, Ranking Member Jerrold Nadler, Chair Andy Biggs, Ranking Member Sheila Jackson Lee and distinguished members of the committee, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to speak today about America's devastating and escalating fentanyl poisoning crisis. I am grateful for the opportunity to share my experience and thoughts as America faces complex challenges with this unprecedented national security and public health disaster. I had a long rewarding 28-year career as a Special Agent in the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). I retired from the DEA in July 2014 but remain actively involved in the private sector supporting law enforcement agencies around the world as they aggressively target Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs). I'm also very engaged in supporting families around the country who have lost loved ones to the devastating substance fentanyl entering America at historic levels.

During the last 10 years of my career, I was the Agent in Charge of the DEA's Special Operations Division (SOD) in Northern Virginia. In that capacity, I ran the SOD operational coordination center with 30 participating agencies, to include representatives from Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. SOD's primary mission is to support and synchronize the investigative efforts of federal, state, local and international law enforcement agencies. Since the Mexican cartels are one of the biggest threats to the United States, SOD focused substantial resources on the Mexican cartels. SOD was instrumental in supporting the Mexican government and the U.S. agencies to capture the former leader of the Sinaloa Cartel, El Chapo Guzman, on two occasions, and coordinating the worldwide investigations against the cartel. SOD also has a long history of coordinating the efforts of agencies around the world disrupting and dismantling major criminal networks.

Unfortunately, I watched the threat of the Mexican cartels grow over the years from drug cartels to transnational organized criminals to currently narco-terrorists. In my view they remain the greatest daily threat to the citizens of this country. They control the importation and distribution of heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and now deadly fentanyl. They work closely with Chinese Criminal Networks (CCN) and together they are destroying communities and families throughout the United States and are killing historic numbers of our future generation. I remain committed to work with Congress, my colleagues in the government agencies and

fellow citizens who have lost their loved ones to the drug crisis to help develop recommendations and solutions to build more effective approaches to eliminate the current threats. Too many Americans are dying from fentanyl poisoning and citizens all over the United States are impacted by the Mexican cartels and the CCN. It is time to work together and put politics aside. **“The current unprecedented fentanyl poisoning crisis that’s killing our kids at record levels is not a Red or Blue Issue. It’s a Red, White and Blue issue. We need all Americans to work together now to save lives”**.

We must utilize the best and brightest patriots serving the country and combine the arsenal of capabilities and authorities to decimate the cartel’s deadly production operations in Mexico. We must simultaneously dismantle their importation and distribution networks to eliminate the growing threat to the United States. The U.S. agencies must also work harder and smarter to shut down the flow of precursor chemicals shipped to Mexico from China, India and other countries around the globe that are used in the production of dangerous synthetic drugs. The evolving sophisticated money laundering schemes offered by the CCN to the cartels must also be shut down. Law enforcement has the important responsibility to enforce the laws of America to keep our citizens safe and needs the full support of Congress. However, this national security threat requires a true “whole of America approach” While we must continue to treat those with mental illness and drug addiction, the Mexican cartels and the CCN must be held accountable for their devastation and damages. **They can no longer operate with impunity, and we need Congress and government leadership to step up their efforts.**

According to the recent provisional overdose data published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), it reflects approximately 106,840 predicted drug overdose deaths in the 12-month period ending September 2022. This alarming amount equates to losing almost 293 people per day (CDC, 2023). When you look at the death statistics in San Diego, California, there was a 2375% increase in fentanyl related deaths in the 5-year period 2016-2021. (Galindo, 2022). In King County, Washington, according to the Prosecutor there were 35 fentanyl-related overdose deaths in the county in the first 21 days of the year. (Swaby, 2023). There are so many stories around the country that highlight the unprecedented nature of the fentanyl poisoning crisis so **please see the attached PDF document.** (Walters, 2023) (Hocker, 2023)

*“The King County is experiencing a grim indicator of how bad the opioid crisis has become. Dr. Faisal Khan, director of Public Health – Seattle & King County, laid out one of the issues stemming from rising overdose deaths during a county Board of Health meeting last week. **“The Medical Examiner's office is now struggling with the issue of storing bodies because the fentanyl-related death toll continues to climb,”** Khan said. The examiner's office has finite space in the coolers they use, and that space is being exceeded on a regular basis. **The number of overdose deaths in King County involving fentanyl have skyrocketed in the past few years.”** King County Public Health Director Dr. Faisal Khan also stated **that many major metro areas across the country are dealing with a lack of space in morgue coolers.***

According to the Families against Fentanyl who have analyzed CDC statistics and have done a tremendous job educating the public on the troubling trends involving fentanyl, they revealed the following in the recent report “The Changing Faces of Fentanyl Deaths” (The Changing Faces of Fentanyl Deaths, 2023):

- Synthetic opioid (fentanyl) poisoning was still the leading cause of death among Americans 18 to 45 in 2021.
- Synthetic opioid (fentanyl) fatalities among children are rising faster than any other age group.
- In just two years, synthetic opioid (fentanyl) deaths among children ages 1 to 4 more than tripled, and increased fourfold among infants less than one, and children ages 5 to 14.
- Since 2015, deaths among infants increased nearly 10-fold; among children ages 1 to 14 deaths increased 15-fold: an increase of more than 1400%.

These are staggering statistics, and all Americans should be alarmed and demanding accountability from the leaders.

Over the last few years while actively supporting law enforcement in the private sector, I participated in the production of documentaries, national media segments, congressional, think tank and educational sessions, and rallies with grieving families and non-profits from around America to help educate the public and bring needed awareness to the dangerous and evolving synthetic drug crisis. As a patriotic American who lost his brother Michael, fighting for America during Operation Enduring Freedom in the U.S. Air Force, I am familiar with the pain and suffering of losing a loved one. However, nothing is more difficult in life than losing a child and I remain committed to this fight.

I will continue to engage with families who lost children from these poisonous substances hitting our communities like a tsunami. It's hard to imagine the lack of engagement and action from our national leaders in Washington especially on the education for young Americans. I have worked tirelessly with families to recruit celebrities, professional athletes, role models and social media influencers to help create a movement to get specific messages to the kids. Sadly, these efforts to date haven't been very successful. I believe if the right celebrity pushed out short social media videos and reels, the kids would get the important messages. We must all accept that most children are not watching congressional hearings, mainstream media, cable news or listening to podcasts so it's critical to have role models step up in a big way to fill the educational void.

In addition to the troubling news on the fentanyl poisoning crisis, there are also dangerous connections between the criminal activity of the Mexican cartels and terrorist groups like Hezbollah. The cartels are also working in close partnership with CCN, operating with impunity and killing our citizens at historic levels. The threats posed by the cartels is growing rapidly as they make billions of dollars, especially benefiting from human smuggling with the porous Southern Border. The topic of narco-terrorism has been a priority of mine for many years, and the United States Government must use all tools of national power to combat and decimate these complex threats.

As the former Special Agent in Charge of SOD in Northern Virginia, the Chief of the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force in New York City and DEA Special Agent working investigations around the globe, I had the privilege of collaborating with numerous local, state, federal and international law enforcement agencies. I have witnessed the incredible results and positive impact to communities when law enforcement works together in a professional

manner enforcing the controlled substances act of the United States. It's very impressive when you look at the seizure statistics of the Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the DEA and law enforcement agencies around the country, but also rather alarming.

The DEA Administrator Anne Milgram last week testified at a Senate hearing and told the committee that DEA seized in 2022 over **57,000,000** fake prescription pills, over **13,000** pounds of illicit fentanyl which is equivalent to **410 million** deadly dosage units. Ms. Milgram advised that according to the CDC, the majority of the drug poisoning deaths in the United States involve synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl. In many instances, the fentanyl is being hidden in and being mixed with other illicit drugs such as cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine. Drug traffickers are also flooding our communities with fentanyl disguised in the form of fake prescription pills. These fake pills are made and marketed by drug traffickers to deceive Americans into thinking that they are real, diverted prescription medications. **DEA lab testing revealed that 6 out of 10 of these fentanyl-laced fake prescription pills contain a potentially lethal dose.**

Ms. Milgram was very clear that the **Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels pose the greatest criminal drug threat the United States has ever faced.** These ruthless, violent, criminal organizations have associates, facilitators, and brokers in all 50 states in the United States, as well as in more than 40 countries around the world. The DEA Administrator also provided testimony that the Sinaloa Cartel and the Jalisco Cartel and their affiliates control the vast majority of the fentanyl global supply chain, from manufacturing to distribution. The cartels are buying precursor chemicals in the People's Republic of China (PRC); transporting the precursor chemicals from the PRC to Mexico; using the precursor chemicals to mass produce fentanyl; pressing the fentanyl into fake prescription pills; and using cars, trucks, and other routes to transport the drugs from Mexico into the United States for distribution. The Administrator further indicated that drugs manufactured by the cartels often end up being marketed by dealers using social media platforms to relentlessly expand their business and deceptively sell fake prescription pills directly to young people and teenagers. Drug traffickers operate on multiple platforms simultaneously, and often drive traffic between platforms. (FULL COMMITTEE HEARING, 2023).

CBP reports the staggering seizure statistics on their website, and they reported in fiscal year 2022 CBP seized **14,700** pounds of fentanyl and **175,000** pounds of methamphetamine. (US Customs and Border Protection, 2023) Although, I appreciate the incredible work and I'm totally impressed with the dedication of the men and women on the front lines, these large seizures of deadly drugs should be a "wake up call" for all Americans. It's obvious and alarming to anyone who works in drug enforcement or border security that if this is what agencies are seizing, then everyone should be concerned on how much is imported, and now on the streets in America.

To be clear, the drug crisis can't be solved with law enforcement alone. This complex and emerging problem requires that all Americans unite. The U.S. needs more focus and resources on drug education, treatment and rehabilitation in addition to law enforcement. This is an unprecedented public health, national security and community safety matter that also has huge mental health ramifications for the addicted as well as their families. There are many great American patriots working in the medical, education, addiction, science, technology, financial, and other private sector industries that can help develop comprehensive strategies and plans to

deal with this matter. **The status quo is an unacceptable option as too many lives are on the line.** There must be accountability on all resources provided to these initiatives since it's not good enough to just provide funding. We need to see the death rates decline across the country.

OVERVIEW:

Over the last 37 years, I have been honored to be an active participant as a Special Agent in the DEA and now in the private sector to work with some of the best and brightest public servants. I have been committed to DEA's mission focusing enforcement efforts on the entire criminal organization. I remain very concerned that our collective efforts have many significant challenges. The Mexican cartels are taking total advantage of our current border polices, weaknesses and vulnerabilities. I have watched the cartels evolve from drug cartels to transnational criminals to substantial narco-terrorists.

Based on the growing and devastating fentanyl poisoning disaster in the United States caused by the Mexican cartels and their partners from China, I am pleased to be here at this important national security and public health hearing to discuss the historic threats to the United States. The Mexican "terror" cartels are a tremendous threat to public health, safety and national security and way more aggressive action is needed. In my view based on experience, the Mexican syndicates are one of the greatest current threats to America and we need bold leadership to combat this very dangerous threat causing devastation to communities and families across the country.

Former Attorney General William Barr articulated correctly in my view during an interview on Newsmax in July 2022 when he stated, *"The United States has been relegated to working through Mexico to try to deal with the cartels, and I think that's a losing proposition. **We have to be more active against the cartels. In my mind, we have to approach the cartels more like ISIS and less like the mafia.**" Barr compared the current policy of attempting to prosecute Mexican drug gangs and affiliated organizations as about as ridiculous as "going after ISIS in Syria on the same basis." **"They are effectively terrorist organizations. They are increasingly building their connections with terrorists. Their paramilitary can take on the Mexican military, and they have so much money they can corrupt any system,"** the former attorney general further emphasized that with the ongoing fentanyl and migrant crisis, **"the United States cannot have these cartels operating on our border, poisoning our country — over 100,000" deaths.** Barr condemned the Biden administration's response to the cartels, proclaiming they **"have essentially abandoned the border to them."** (Cacciatore, 2022)*

America has outdated technology and laws, limited resources directed at these national security threats, deceptive political leadership and huge morale issues across the agencies who are responsible for keeping the country safe. There is a concerning movement involving experienced law enforcement personnel retiring rapidly. This is happening as the cartels are building up their capabilities, enhancing their weapons systems, expanding their product line and unfortunately after forming a lethal partnership with CCN. Sadly, this has resulted in increased violence and escalating deaths in the United States.

As a DEA supervisor for many years, the Agent in Charge of SOD for almost ten years and as an huge supporter of law enforcement and grieving families since retirement, I learned so much about the evolution of the opioid addiction crisis, the “bombing of America” from synthetic drugs coming from China and Mexico, the growing role of CCN in drug trafficking and money laundering and the increased threats posed to our country from the Mexican “terror” cartels.

From 2006- 2014, as reported in a comprehensive Washington Post investigative story, more than 100 billion opioids were provided to Americans (Steven Rich, 2020) by the “corporate cartels” with no significant accountability despite the widespread and lasting impacts throughout the United States. Starting in the early 1990’s, the Colombian cartels and then later the Mexican cartels, sold very pure white heroin all over America to maximize profits and take advantage of the addicted population. In my opinion, it was all about the money and greed that was driving the business opportunities. The American public didn’t receive adequate education about the consequences of using and abusing these powerful and addictive opioids.

From my perspective as a new Director of SOD commencing my senior leadership assignment in 2005, I was alarmed to hear about hundreds of deaths in the Midwest, Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions of the United States during late 2005 and 2006 from clandestinely produced illicit fentanyl. This was a new drug trend to me as the leader of SOD. The Department of Justice, National Drug Intelligence Center, produced a valuable intelligence report at that time. It was later determined from great work by DEA in Chicago, working with their U.S. law enforcement partners along with counterparts in Mexico, that the Mexican cartels had a deadly fentanyl laboratory in Toluca, Mexico. Thanks to the outstanding work, in May 2006 the Mexican authorities seized the lab and many lives were saved. (Fentanyl: Situation Report, 2006).

Former Drug Czar John Walters made a very astute comment about this matter when he stated, *“In effect, to be quite clear, the drug traffickers have substantially poisoned the drug supply in the United States.”* (News Drug Lab Shut Down, 2006).

In my opinion and based on the investigative developments at that time, the Mexican cartels recognized the profit potential of producing illicit fentanyl for distribution to the robust opioid addicted market in America. Since they were greedy and ran a growing global business enterprise, they were looking to maximize profits by producing this powerful synthetic drug.

**CHICAGO TRIBUNE NEWS ARTICLE BELOW ON HUGE FENTANYL LAB
SEIZED IN TOLUCA, MEXICO IN 2006.**

Drug lab shut down

By Chicago Tribune
CHICAGO TRIBUNE



JUNE 8, 2008

A clandestine laboratory in Mexico capable of producing millions of doses of the potent, sometimes lethal, drug fentanyl has been shut down, the U.S. drug czar announced Monday in Chicago, but not before it may have contaminated supplies of street drugs here and across the country.

Heroin mixed with the powerful painkiller has been blamed for hundreds of deaths across the U.S. in the last year, including at least 60 in Chicago. The synthetic narcotic is being added to heroin to give a more powerful high to users, authorities have said.

Just over the weekend in Cook County, there were 13 fatal overdoses that now are being investigated for connections to fentanyl, the county's chief medical examiner said Monday.

John Walters, director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, said it is too soon to know if the Mexican lab was the biggest source of the illicit drug.

But authorities believe it may have been running long enough to push a major amount of fentanyl, used legally for pain management, into the illegal drug market.

"In effect, to be quite clear, the drug traffickers have substantially poisoned the drug supply in the United States," Walters said.

The U.S. Embassy in Mexico City reported the lab was located May 21 by Mexican authorities in Toluca. Federal investigators said five Mexican nationals were arrested.

Investigators are working to determine how much fentanyl could have been made at the production site before it was discovered. Agents are seeking records on the site that might provide clues as to its production capacity and distribution channels.

An epidemic of illicit fentanyl deaths in Cook County, Illinois: September 2005 through April 2007

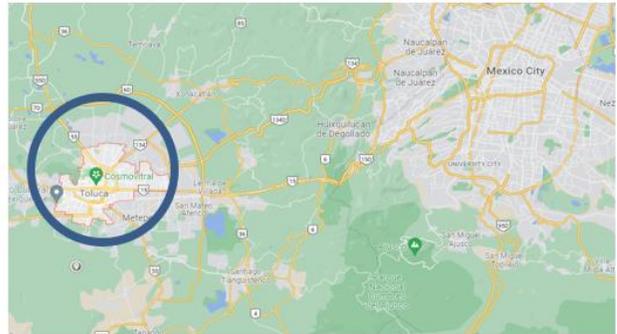
Deaths have been reported in Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Missouri, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland.

Testing is under way to find a common chemical signature in samples from those states that might link them to the Mexican lab, Walters said.

Investigators said they are working to determine if Chicago street gangs are moving the drug locally. Walters said no clear national picture had emerged that would explain which criminal networks are transporting fentanyl around the country.

Cook County Medical Examiner Edmund Donoghue said blood from 13 victims of fatal overdoses in the county over the weekend would be tested for fentanyl.

Fentanyl-associated fatalities among illicit drug users in Wayne County, Michigan (July 2005-May 2006)



Keep in mind that for more than 30 years, the Mexican cartels had a long standing partnership with Chinese chemical brokers. They benefited in a huge way as their production and distribution of methamphetamine skyrocketed throughout the years of doing business together. To illustrate the magnitude of the methamphetamine business, look at the seizure of **\$207 million** dollars in Mexico City in 2007. This record-breaking money seizure was reported as the largest ever in the world. The subject in Mexico related to the seizure was identified as a wealthy Chinese national chemical broker who was providing precursor chemicals to the Mexican cartels as they manufactured methamphetamine in Mexico for importation into the U.S. (dea.gov, 2007)

There was another game changer for U.S. drug law enforcement commencing around 2008 and 2009 when the Chinese chemical companies started producing synthetic cannabinoids and cathinones in China. These drugs were commonly called K2, Spice and Bath Salts on the streets and were surfacing around the country. The CCN initiated a very profitable business on the internet and were selling these dangerous chemicals on websites to U.S. consumers. This trend exploded rapidly causing SOD and law enforcement partners in the Department of Homeland Security and other countries to unite and attack this developing problem. As the head of SOD, I received intelligence about the increased emergency room visits and Poison Control hotline contacts. As a result, SOD synchronized several successful enforcement operations under the

names Operation Log Jam and Project Synergy to address this emerging public health threat. There were many successful law enforcement investigations around the country which exposed the global nature of this threat emanating from China that was harming and killing Americans. (Operation Log Jam Press Conference, 2012) (DEA News Huge Synthetic Drug Take Down, 2014) (Press Release Top China-Based Global Designer Drug Trafficker Arrested In U.S, 2015)

During 2012, DEA and other law enforcement agencies had investigations in America resulting in drug overdose deaths. Initially, they were reported as heroin overdoses. However, in many of these instances, specifically in the Northeast and Southeast, the medical examiner reports revealed that fentanyl was the actual cause of death. While at SOD, to address this deadly trend, we subsequently initiated a focused intelligence and enforcement program named Operation Deadly Merchant. The DEA offices in West Palm Beach (Palmer, 2019) and Gulfport Mississippi (Press Release First in the Nation Criminal Indictment of a Chinese National for Manufacturing and Distributing Fentanyl and Other Opiates, 2017) and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement in North Dakota (Chinese manufacturers indicted in deadly Fentanyl case, 2017) had very productive operations exposing the role of Chinese criminal networks and their deadly new endeavor to manufacture fentanyl analogues in Chinese labs for distribution in the United States. As the deaths started to drastically increase, DEA leadership became very concerned and briefed the former Attorney General Eric Holder in 2014 about this deadly and concerning trend emanating from China and involving Mexican and Dominican drug trafficking groups in the United States.

During the initial years of the illicit fentanyl crisis, most of the deadly substance was being shipped to the country via mail services after Chinese websites received the orders from America. The DEA produced a “Fentanyl Threat Overview” pamphlet and distributed it to federal, state and local law enforcement around the country. The law enforcement community and first responders started to become overwhelmed because of this escalating threat. CBP, DEA, ICE, FBI and foreign partners worked collaboratively to further identify the extent of the threat. There were massive amounts of these synthetic drugs being seized at the ports of entry and throughout the country.

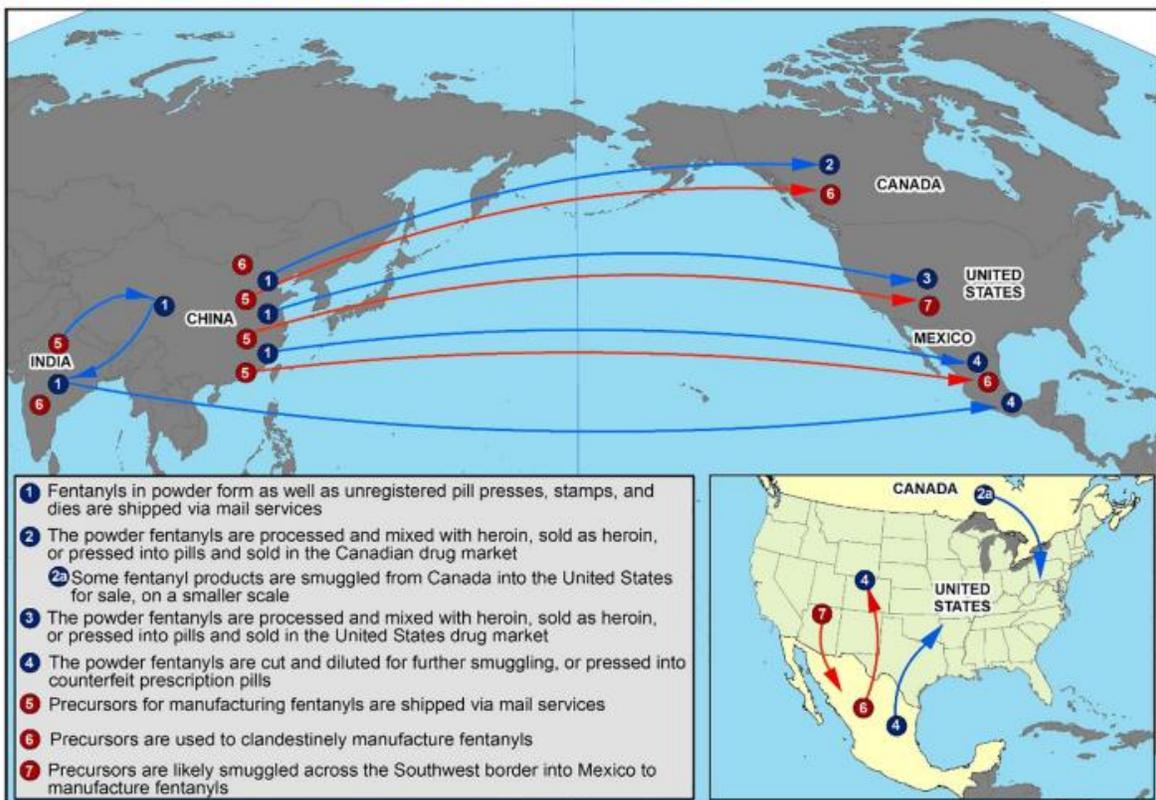
Around 2019, officials from the United States Government applied significant pressure on the Chinese government regarding the fentanyl analogue exports killing Americans at alarming rates. As a result of U.S.G. engagement, on May 1, 2019, China officially controlled all forms of fentanyl as a class of drugs. This fulfilled the commitment that President Xi made during the G-20 Summit. The implementation of the new measure included investigations of known fentanyl manufacturing areas, stricter control of internet sites advertising fentanyl, stricter enforcement of shipping regulations, and the creation of special teams to investigate leads on fentanyl trafficking. The hope was that the new restrictions would severely limit fentanyl production and trafficking from China. (Fentanyl Flow to the United States, 2020). DEA further reported at that time that the Mexican organizations were producing increased quantities of fentanyl and illicit fentanyl-containing tablets, with some cartels using increasingly sophisticated clandestine laboratories and processing methods.

DEA, working in conjunction with Mexican officials, seized and dismantled numerous fentanyl pill pressing operations and fentanyl synthesis laboratories in 2018 and 2019, highlighting the role cartels started to play in supplying the US fentanyl market. Fentanyl was being smuggled

across the U.S.-Mexico border. In December 2018, Mexican officials in combination with DEA authorities seized an illicit pill mill in Azcapotzalco, Mexico City. Law enforcement officials seized illicit fentanyl-laced oxycodone M-30 pills, suspected fentanyl powder, precursor chemicals and multiple other items related to the production of fentanyl-laced illicit pills. DEA reported during this critical time frame that the Sinaloa and the *Cártel de Jalisco Nueva Generación* (CJNG) cartels were likely the primary trafficking groups responsible for smuggling fentanyl into the United States from Mexico.

It was very apparent that the Chinese criminal networks changed their primary method of operation and turned over most of the illicit fentanyl production to the Mexican cartels. The cartels leveraged their existing relationships they had for years with the chemical brokers in China and increased their orders of critical precursor chemicals to make the fentanyl in clandestine laboratories in Mexico. The cartels dominate the country of Mexico and had the existing infrastructure to add fentanyl to their ongoing methamphetamine production operations. From their perspective this was another cost-effective way to generate massive amounts of profits.

(U) FIGURE 1. FENTANYL FLOW TO THE UNITED STATES 2019



Source: DEA

Unfortunately, many Americans got addicted to the powerful pharmaceutical opioids and the Mexican cartels took advantage of this greater business opportunity with a larger customer base throughout America. The cartels are now working closely with companies in China and

India to acquire massive amounts of precursor chemicals to make fentanyl in large scale operations in Mexico. In a recent trip to Texas, Congressman Latta Ohio learned that it cost less than 10 cents to make a fake pill in Mexico and the pills are being distributed for \$30.00 each. (Jr., 2023). Based on my discussions with DEA officials, in places like Montana on the Indian reservation, a pill is being sold for as high as \$150.00. The profit potential for not only the Mexican cartels is so significant that we are also seeing pill pressing operations inside the United States. As an example, in October 2022, the York County South Carolina Sheriff's Office made a record-breaking drug bust and seized around 30 kilograms of fentanyl and 7 pill presses after a highly successful investigation into a drug trafficking organization responsible for the manufacture and trafficking of fentanyl-based pills and powder. (Snipes, 2022).

Most recently, law enforcement in Houston, Texas seized a fentanyl lab which was disguised as a car rental. Texas Department of Public Safety raided a building on Jan 30, 2023 finding pill press machines, more than 17lbs of possible fentanyl precursors from China, over 1 kilogram of suspected counterfeit Xanax pills laced with fentanyl and 0.3 lbs fentanyl-laced Oxycodone. The authorities also found cocaine, ecstasy, methamphetamine pills, a stolen vehicle, three pistols and a rifle. (Adam Shaw, 2023).

There was also a disturbing report from South Texas revealing a Nueces County traffic stop turned into the largest liquid fentanyl drug bust in U.S. history. It was reported that law enforcement located a compartment built in the gas tank of the vehicle, and inside the gas tank was a modified tank, which contained approximately 25 pounds or 3 gallons of liquid fentanyl. In my view, this is another serious trend to see the cartels importing liquid fentanyl into America. This could result in the cartels following their successful model of establishing conversion labs in the U.S. for fentanyl just like they have done successfully for years with methamphetamine. (Wes Wilson, 2022)

CHINESE MONEY LAUNDERING SCHEMES SUPPORTING THE CARTELS

During the recent testimony of DEA Administrator Milgram referenced above, she explained that the Sinaloa and Jalisco Cartels utilize U.S.-based Chinese Money Laundering Organizations around the world to facilitate laundering drug proceeds. These networks use trade-based money laundering and bulk cash movement to facilitate the exchange of foreign currency. The use of Chinese networks by the cartels simplifies the money laundering process and streamlines the purchase of precursor chemicals utilized in manufacturing drugs.

Based on my discussions with law enforcement officials, the Chinese money laundering activities with the Mexican cartels started to really expand around 2015. The innovative and complex schemes established a very efficient way to move money effectively reducing the risk of losing proceeds. The wealthy Chinese businessmen benefit big time by having the ability to receive huge amounts of cash in America. This enables them to bypass the restrictions related to China's capital flight laws of transferring large sums of money held in Chinese bank accounts for use abroad. The Chinese targets in the United States, in many cases, use the cash they receive from the cartel operatives inside America to buy, real estate, land, property and make other investments.

I have received significant intelligence that the CCN's often use young Chinese nationals in America here on student visas to pick up large amounts of currency from the cartels. The cash

is then turned over by the couriers throughout the country to wealthy Chinese businessmen. Subsequently, the businessmen frequently transfer the exact amount of money using their Chinese banking apps and other encrypted apps to China. In many cases they then use the traditional trade-based money laundering schemes to buy consumer goods in China and ship them to Mexico for huge profits. This is a very effective way for the cartel leadership to get paid. In many cases, they use the funds in China to make purchases of massive quantities of precursor chemicals to keep the deadly cycle of production of their synthetic drugs moving quickly.

One important point to highlight knowing this growing partnership between the CCN's and the cartels, is there are numerous press reports about the very large purchases of land and real estate in the U.S. by Chinese nationals. According to the Washington Examiner release in July 2022, China is the top foreign buyer of US housing at \$6.1 billion last year from April 2021 to March 2022, which the report said was up 30% from the prior year. The article further states, "Chinese buyers flooded the American housing market with more than \$6 billion last year, more than purchasers from any other foreign country and 58% of Chinese buyers made all-cash purchases."

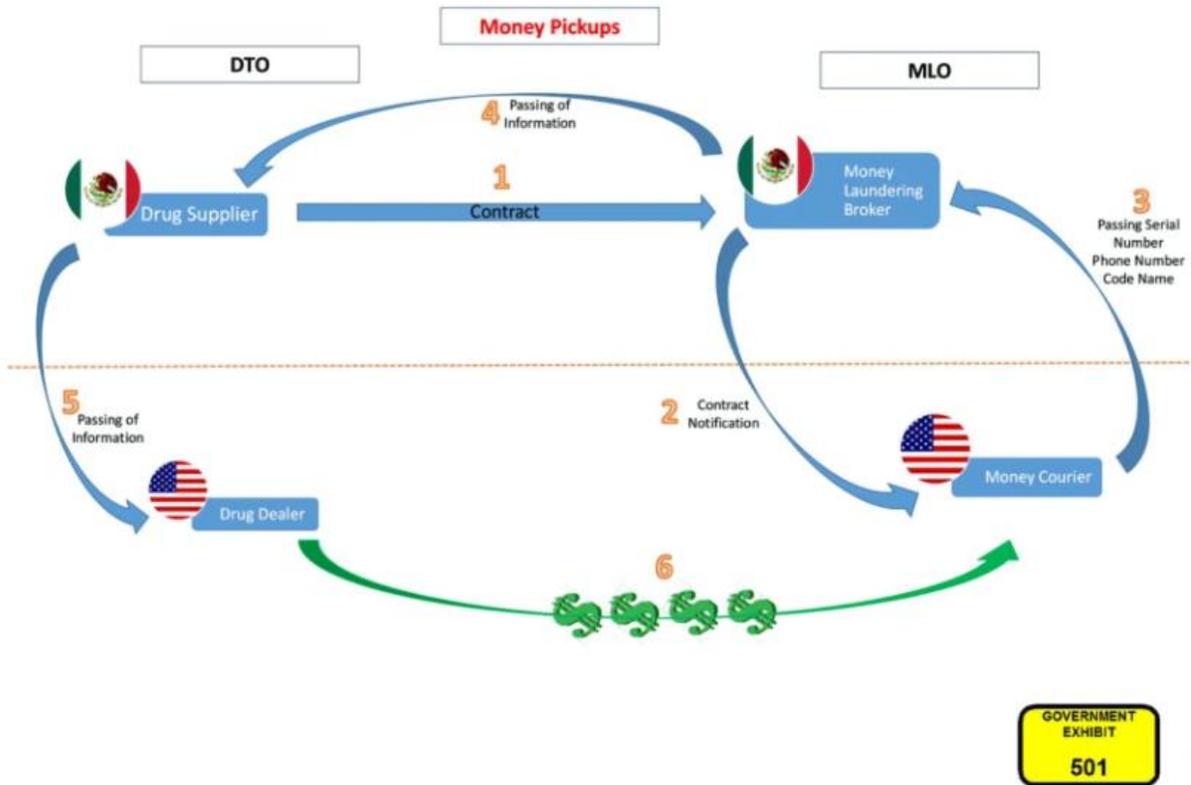
In my view, the United States must examine this alarming national security trend of the cartels working with the CCN since there is so much cash being transferred in America from the drug business. This is even more critical when you look at the totality of the intelligence and evidence to include FBI Director Christopher Wray's statement that "**we consistently see that it's the Chinese government that poses the biggest long-term threat to our economic and national security.**" (Dunleavy, July)

The Chicago Sun Times on April 30, 2021, did a comprehensive analysis, based on law enforcement sources and court files, on one of the popular and elaborate money laundering schemes used by the Mexican cartels and the CCN to move millions of drug proceeds in a very efficient manner. (Seidel, 2021). The Chinese criminals brilliantly offered these services to the cartels and undercut the other traditional money launderers by charging much less in commissions.

The latest scheme depicted below avoids a traceable paper trail and presents a huge obstacle for U.S. law enforcement infiltration. **They also capitalize on the use of advanced technology to beat law enforcement who's forced to deal with antiquated laws and policies to overcome encrypted communications.** The below chart was introduced in U.S. District Court and was marked as a government exhibit. The chart depicts how the cash was moved from the cartels to the Chinese money laundering organization. Based on information from law enforcement, this advanced and complex scheme is extremely difficult to penetrate and provides the cartels and the Chinese criminals a huge advantage to beat the system of Justice in America. This creative scheme also enables the cartels to produce more deadly drugs and build their business enterprise.

SEE THE BELOW MIRROR TRANSACTION SCHEME PUBLISHED IN THE THE CHICAGO SUN TIMES ARTICLE REFERENCED ABOVE.

HOW A MIRROR SWAP WORKS



This chart, introduced in court, shows how cash from Mexican drug cartels was moved to Chinese money-laundering organizations. Xianbing Gan, a money-laundering broker in Mexico, had a bank account in China. An associate in the United States collected cash from cartel drug sales, removed an equal amount from a bank account in China and deposited it in Gan's Chinese account to get around the U.S. banking system and try to avoid detection, according to prosecutors, in what's called a mirror swap. A second swap was then done in Mexico to complete the money-laundering and try to make the illegal drug proceeds look like a legitimate business transaction. | U.S District Court trial exhibit

A great illustration of the substantial money laundering involving the Mexican cartels and their Chinese partners was documented in a New York Post article dated April 3, 2022, titled **“How a crew laundered millions in cartel cash across New York City”** (Feuerherd, 2022). The DEA in Atlanta, working with their law enforcement partners, were targeting a known and significant Mexican drug trafficker. During a court authorized intercept investigation, the

agents established surveillance to watch a money transfer from the cartel operative. They observed the transfer of \$350,000.00 in cash made to two Asian males, who were members of a large-scale money laundering network based in New York. The money was seized in August 2018 and the investigation continued. During the sentencing process in November 2021 the federal prosecutor wrote in a memo about one of the Asian targets, “By engaging in this conduct, the defendant and others played a critical role in laundering millions of dollars in drug money.”

NARCO-TERRORISM AND SYSTEMIC CORRUPTION

Another disturbing aspect involving the Mexican cartels is their role as narco-terrorists and their advancement with the use of technology and weapon systems to enhance their deadly business enterprise. They are not typical crime groups as they conduct acts of terrorism not solely in furtherance of drug trafficking but for the purpose of instilling fear in the public and influencing. They are responsible for utilizing terror tactics to silence, torture and kill civilians, government officials, Catholic priests, and news reporters, who publicly speak out against the violence inflicted by the cartels. The Mexican cartels have become Mexico’s insurgency’s and have utilized terror tactics. They have corrupted the system and undermine the Mexican government and the rule of law. The Mexican cartels have recruited hundreds of trained law enforcement and military personnel who now carry out executions and assassinations on behalf of the cartels. The cartels routinely conduct beheadings, in which corpses and heads are hung on public display. The cartels also indiscriminately killing to scare the general population into submission and subservience.

The recent conviction of Genaro Garcia-Luna, former Director of Mexico’s Public Security, in federal court in New York and the DEA arrest of Salvador Cienfuegos, former Defense Secretary of Mexico, reflects the level of corruption at the highest level of the Mexican government. (Eastern District of New York Press, 2023) (Justice News, 2020). Having the top government officials on the Mexican cartel’s payroll, help the cartels operate with impunity moving tons of drugs around the world and make billions. One of the biggest obstacles for U.S. law enforcement is overcoming the presence of high-level corruption in Mexico.

In my view, the United States Government mistakenly views the Mexican cartels as only transnational crime organization, and its current strategy and policies are insufficient to end the Mexican cartels chaos and massive deaths to Americans. Look at the amounts of young Americans dying daily from their poisonous substances. The production is on the rise and the supply of these poisonous drugs are vast. The United States must accept and come to the realization that the cartels are terrorist organizations. As far as I know, there has never been a terrorist organization like Al Qaeda, Hezbollah or ISIS, that has killed this many Americans. There must be a great sense of urgency to decimate the cartels and hold them responsible for the havoc they are causing communities and families around the country. The U.S. government assessment of the cartels must be updated.

The U.S. and Mexico efforts and strategy against the Mexican cartels have been proven to be ineffective in its ability to curtail and significantly reduce the level of drug trafficking and violence inflicted by the cartels. The purpose of reclassifying Mexican drug cartels as terrorist organizations is to not only address the problem of drug trafficking, but to ultimately confront the level violence and terror carried out by the cartels. A designation would also provide the

U.S. government with additional options when combating the Mexican “terror” cartels that would not be limited to the capabilities of law enforcement. Instead, it would help bridge the gap between the law enforcement, military, and intelligence community, thus providing more resources and capabilities to combat the Mexican drug cartels. The cartels utilize military grade weapons and C4 explosives and have been found to be in possession of weapons such as assault rifles, pistols, grenades, RPG rocket launchers, claymore anti-personnel mines and man portable air defense systems. The Mexican cartels have taken control of Mexico through active means of terrorism. During my recent trip to the Rio Grande Valle, Texas, I was extremely concerned to learn about the 9000 drones used by the cartels for surveillance inside America especially knowing how the cartels are now dropping C4 explosives on their adversaries in Mexico. It’s a threat growing daily on our Southern border and the use of drones and explosives is a huge risk to our brave men and women of CBP who are fighting daily to keep us safe.

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS CURRENT CRISIS:

(This is certainly not a complete list)**

- Immediately declare a national health and security emergency from the White House based on the historic number of deaths from fentanyl and the escalating growing lethal relationship between the Mexican “terror” cartels and the CCN.
- Declare fentanyl a weapon of mass destruction.
- Declare the Sinaloa and CJNG cartel’s terrorist organizations and apply the appropriate U.S. authorities, resources and capabilities to this growing threat.
 - Work with Mexico to provide support to decimate the production labs in Mexico.
 - Hold high level security meetings with the Mexican counterparts to accurately assess their commitment to shut down the cartel’s ability to kill at record levels.
 - Increase U.S. Treasury designations and sanctions to target people and businesses facilitating the deadly criminal enterprises and flooding America with poisonous drugs.
 - Develop task forces to target the supply of precursor chemicals from China and other countries to the Mexican cartels.
 - Strengthen border security with the polices that work and always place the interest of American citizens first.
 - Need additional scanning resources at border.
 - Implement border walls with appropriate technology where necessary based on Homeland Security expertise not based on political motives.
 - Develop robust strategies to attack the money laundering schemes and networks as well as seize the assets derived from criminal activity.
 - Apply pressure on Mexico for increased information sharing and bilateral investigations.
 - Increase operations to arrest and extradite the highest members of the

- cartels to face justice in the U.S.
 - Increase operations in Mexico to identify and destroy fentanyl and methamphetamine manufacturing labs.
- Mandate the U.S. Department of Education to commence drug education in the schools throughout the country about the increased threats from the illicit drug supply.
 - As part of the education campaign, must develop partnerships with celebrities, role models, social media influencers and professional athletes, (NFL, MLB, NHL, NBA, WNBA, MLS, WMLS as examples) to develop videos and reels to push all over social media platforms to hit the target audience of young Americans.
- Have the Department of Education work with the Office of National Drug Control Policy of U.S. to develop Public Service Announcements immediately and establish close partnerships with grieving families and nonprofits who are fighting daily to spread awareness and save lives.
- Hold social media companies accountable for facilitating the movement of deadly drugs and other serious criminal activity like “sextortion” on their platforms.
- Increase resources for mental health, treatment and rehabilitation for drug addiction and apply strict accountability for the resources. Need to articulate the results and progress.
- Demand that the CDC provide updated and timely reporting on the synthetic drug deaths across the country.
 - Provide resources for lab analysis and medical examiners to expedite the process.
- Set up fentanyl death task forces like Task Force 10 in San Diego to aggressively prosecute fentanyl dealers who are killing citizens.
 - Increase resources and prosecutions of synthetic drug violators.
- Create an Operation Warp Speed for Fentanyl like we had for COVID and apply the best practices and lessons learned for the current fentanyl poisoning crisis.
- We need a “real opioid/ Fentanyl/ task force” set up to operate with a multi-agency SOD like model using existing resources at the National Targeting Center at DOD, National Targeting Center at CBP, DOJ OCDETF Fusion Center, DEA’s Special Intelligence, HIDTAs, HHS, FDA, USPS, Treasury and other key elements.
- Must address the outdated laws and polices especially related to criminal communications.
 - Work with technology companies and law enforcement to collaborate on the growing concern of encrypted communications and the impacts to national security.
 - Must address the DOJ policy regarding the December 16, 2022, memorandum to all federal prosecutors on charging, pleas and sentencing on drug crimes.
 - The perception from law enforcement around America is their own DOJ is way to “soft on criminals”. The dedicated law enforcement is working hard to keep citizens safe are feel strongly they are being undermined. There are huge moral issues developing.
- Must engage with mail services companies like UPS, FEDEX, DHL and others to

address the movement of deadly substances into America.

- Need updated technology at mail facilities to screen and identify contraband moving around the country.

CONCLUSION:

Mexican cartels, Sinaloa, and CJNG, currently operate throughout the U.S. and around the globe. They are working with CCN and are flooding America with deadly synthetic drugs. They are operating with impunity and the current enforcement focus alone is not enough to stop the death and destruction. The United States must enhance the strategies to shut down the cartel's ability to operate. We must use all authorities and capabilities of not only law enforcement but the Intelligence Community, the Department of Defense and Treasury Department as one force to decimate the cartels. They are taking advantage of the porous Southern and Northern borders and overwhelming our CBP daily. The country is inundated with crime, drugs and violence fueled by the Mexican cartels. The cartels are taking advantage of the massive addiction and the demand for opioids and methamphetamines all over the United States.

During his Senate testimony on February 15, 2023, Dr. Rahul Gupta, Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy of U.S., stated the following related to the current drug situation:

- “Worst drug crisis we have ever seen.”
- “Unacceptable to me”
- “Unacceptable to the President”
- “Direct threat to public health and national security”
- “New era of drug trafficking”

Based on these statements, the American public and specifically the families who have lost loved ones to poisonous fentanyl, deserve full transparency and way more action. Solving this unprecedented national security and public health crisis won't go away from just words. We need new strategies and way more action. We must recognize this is something America has never faced before and we are losing the future generation rapidly.

Terrorists will continue to tap into the incredible amounts of money generated from drug trafficking and many other criminal activities such as human trafficking, counterfeiting, weapon sales and sex trafficking so it's imperative that our hard-working law enforcement and other U.S. government personnel get the resources and support to enforce the laws and keep Americans safe.

We need the leadership of the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, Executives from the Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community to unite and battle these growing adversaries. We also need to work closely with our state and local counterparts who are under resourced trying to deal with this crisis on the front lines. We need to unite our agencies as the complexity of the threats continues to grow. The threats to this great country are moving at lightning speed and we need a sense of urgency at this point. It's evident that the Mexican cartels are moving extremely fast while our investigators and assets are getting “stuck in the mud” of politics, bureaucracy, and antiquated laws. **In my view, fentanyl is a chemical weapon and the narco-terrorists' Mexican cartels are destroying**

our country as their work closely with the CCN.

Thanks to the relentless efforts of the Families against Fentanyl and others around the country, we now have congressional and a multi-state movement to declare fentanyl a weapon of mass destruction, and “21 states call on Biden to label Mexican drug cartels terrorist organizations.” (Gans, 2023) (Paxton Signs Multistate Letter Urging Joe Biden to Declare Fentanyl a Weapon of Mass Destruction, 2022)

We need to step up the game with a sense of urgency. Law enforcement will continue to do their best in enforcing the laws, but America needs congress to further engage on these growing issues. The death rates are spiking and impacting Republicans, Democrats and Independents. We must come together and develop updated strategies to combat these threats.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on these important topics impacting our national security and public safety.



(Chart made by Derek Maltz to depict the complexity of crime in America. The gap between “good and evil” is growing rapidly resulting in a more dangerous America)

SEE PDF ATTACHMENT WHICH HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THE MASS POISONINGS AROUND THE COUNTRY SINCE DEA ADMINISTRATOR ANNE MILGRAM’S ANNOUNCEMENT IN APRIL 2002 TO WARN AMERICA ON THIS ESCALATING CRISIS.

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**SOME SIGNIFICANT MASS
POISONINGS IN AMERICA
HIGHLIGHTING THE
SEVERITY OF THE THREAT**

DEA WARNING APRIL 6, 2022

April 06, 2022

Contact: Media Relations

Phone Number: (571) 776-2508



For Immediate Release

DEA Warns of Increase in Mass-Overdose Events Involving Deadly Fentanyl

WASHINGTON – Today, the Drug Enforcement Administration sent a letter to federal, state, and local law enforcement partners warning of a nationwide spike in fentanyl-related mass-overdose events. Administrator Anne Milgram outlined the current threat and offered DEA support to law enforcement officers responding to these tragic incidents.

“Fentanyl is killing Americans at an unprecedented rate,” said DEA Administrator Anne Milgram. “Already this year, numerous mass-overdose events have resulted in dozens of overdoses and deaths. Drug traffickers are driving addiction, and increasing their profits, by mixing fentanyl with other illicit drugs. Tragically, many overdose victims have no idea they are ingesting deadly fentanyl, until it’s too late.”

Fentanyl-related mass-overdose events, characterized as three or more overdoses occurring close in time and at the same location, have happened in at least seven American cities in recent months, resulting in 58 overdoses and 29 deaths. Cities impacted include Wilton Manors, Florida; Austin, Texas; Cortez, Colorado; Commerce City, Colorado; Omaha, Nebraska; St. Louis, Missouri; and Washington, D.C.

Tragic events like these are being driven by fentanyl. Fentanyl is highly-addictive, found in all 50 states, and drug traffickers are increasingly mixing it with other illicit drugs — in powder and pill form — in an effort to drive addiction and attract repeat buyers. These mass-overdose events typically occur in one of the following recurring scenarios: when drug dealers sell their product as “cocaine,” when it actually contains fentanyl; or when drug dealers sell pills designed to appear nearly identical to legitimate prescriptions, but are actually fake prescription pills containing fentanyl. This is creating a frightening nationwide trend where many overdose victims are dying after unknowingly ingesting fentanyl.

Police say 10 people died in fatal fentanyl overdoses in Northeast D.C.

Authorities have tied lethal drugs to a single batch sold in Trinidad and Ivy City

By Peter Hermann

April 12, 2022 at 5:21 p.m. EDT

The Washington Post



Ten people in two neighborhoods in Northeast Washington have now died from a lethal batch of fentanyl, police said, the second mass-casualty incident involving the deadly opioid in the District this year.

Police said at least 17 people overdosed on cocaine laced with fentanyl in Trinidad and Ivy City from Saturday morning through Monday evening, and seven of them survived.

In January, **nine people died** after taking a similar concoction in a neighborhood near Nationals Park.

On March 10, 2022, 6 individuals overdosed at a rental property in Wilton Manors, Florida after being exposed to a substance that they believed was cocaine, but contained fentanyl.

On March 4, 2022, 21 individuals overdosed, 3 of whom died, at a homeless shelter in downtown Austin, Texas after ingesting crack-cocaine and methamphetamine laced with fentanyl.

On March 3, 2022, 3 individuals overdosed and died in a hotel room in Cortez, Colorado after ingesting what that they believed were 30mg oxycodone pills, but which were in fact fake prescription pills containing fentanyl.

On February 20, 2022, 6 individuals overdosed, 5 of whom died, in the same apartment in Commerce City, Colorado after ingesting a substance that they believed was pure cocaine but was in fact pure fentanyl.

On February 6, 2022, 4 individuals overdosed, 2 of whom died, in the same apartment complex in Omaha, Nebraska after ingesting a substance that they believed was cocaine, but contained fentanyl.

Between February 5-7, 2022, 8 individuals overdosed, 7 of whom died, at an apartment complex in St. Louis, Missouri after ingesting crack-cocaine laced with fentanyl.

On January 28, 2022, 10 individuals overdosed, 9 of whom died, within the same city block in Washington, D.C. after ingesting crack-cocaine laced with fentanyl.

DSM 030123



Ohio State Issues Warning About 'Fake Adderall' Pills Laced with Fentanyl After 2 Students Die

“While we strongly discourage any kind of drug misuse, if you, or someone you know, may choose to experiment with drugs,” the OSU statement continued, “...consider confidentially picking up a free Naloxone kit or fentanyl test strips...”





El Paso DEA warns of an opioid epidemic after 9 overdoses in 36 hours a total of nine patients were taken to local hospitals after they experienced signs of drug overdose. Additionally, El Paso Police officials said two people died of an accidental overdose.

May 30, 2022



Police warn public after 9 opioid overdoses in St. Paul over 24 hours

June 9, 2022

Police are warning members of the public after they've responded to nine suspected opioid overdoses over the course of the past 24 hours.

The St. Paul Police Department issued an "OD Alert" due to the incidents. Officers say all nine recent overdose patients survived. However, over the past five days, the city has reported five overdose deaths.

The alert is a reminder of the dangers of using street drugs. If you have access to naloxone, the opioid antidote, police say you should carry it with you.



10 dead from fentanyl: Number of fatal overdoses in Will County growing



June 10, 2022

WILL COUNTY, Ill. — The Will County Coroner's Office says 10 deaths in 24 hours could be tied to overdoses, prompting a new warning about deadly drugs in the suburbs.

Will County Coroner Laurie Summers said a recent spike in drug overdose deaths linked to heroin on the market laced with lethal doses of fentanyl, a synthetic opioid up to 100 times more potent than morphine.

Coroner Laurie Summers is urging family members and friends of suspected abusers to READ this alert and to understand that there is likely street drugs that contain lethal doses of fentanyl.



Crime & Safety

Drugs Kill 3 More Joliet Residents: Coroner

Jun 13, 2022

Last week, Will County's Coroner reported at least 10 known probable drug overdose deaths that her office was called to investigate.





1 dead, 4 hospitalized after overdosing at Grand Rapids-area hotel

The Kent County Sheriff's Office says having five people overdose in one room together is "unique" and a very big concern.

June 21, 2022





Jun 28, 2022

One of 5 overdoses at Tryon International Equestrian Center was linked to fentanyl-laced lollipop

FIVE OVERDOSES REPORTED
NORTH CAROLINA



-One of the five overdoses was linked to Fentanyl-laced lollipop
-Happened at Tryon Equestrian Center





Gadsden County sees a deadly spike in fentanyl overdoses



Jul. 4, 2022

Death toll climbs to 9 from drug overdoses in Gadsden County

"We suspect that this was due to some type of opioid poisoning such as Fentanyl,"

Sheriff Morris Young.

Drug Enforcement Administration

"Today we learned of another potential mass fentanyl poisoning event in Gadsden County, Florida. We send our deepest condolences to the multiple families involved. This tragedy demonstrates yet again the extreme danger of fentanyl, which we continue to seize in all 50 states, often hidden in other drugs or made into fake pills. The men and women of the DEA are committed to bringing to justice the criminal drug networks and dealers that are killing Americans by deliberately distributing fentanyl and deceptively mixing it into other substances and into fake pills."

DEA ADMINISTRATOR ANNE MILGRAM



#DEA

www.facebook.com/DEAHQ/ / Facebook

DEA Administrator Anne Milgram's statement about the Gadsden County fentanyl overdoses.

Preliminary findings suggest the deaths are due to drugs like cocaine and marijuana being laced with fentanyl, according to investigators.



7 people found unresponsive after taking bad drugs laced with Fentanyl, Tampa police say



When officers arrived, they found six people on the ground, all of whom were having a difficult time breathing.

Several were unresponsive, police said.

Several of the victims needed to be revived with Narcan.

Seven people have been hospitalized due to consuming drugs laced with Fentanyl





July 18, 2022

41 overdoses in 18 days: Metro Atlanta county is warning of a sudden overdose spike



**Gwinnett County
Police are
warning of an
overdose spike**



HUNTSVILLE

Fentanyl suspected in at least 6 overdose deaths in Madison County



“We had literally 6 overdose deaths in less than 48 hours,” said Executive Director of the Partnership for a Drug-Free Community, Wendy Reeves. She said those deaths were reported between 3:00 am on Sunday and 2:00 pm on Tuesday afternoon.

Madison County Coroner, Dr. Tyler Berryhill, said since then, two more overdose deaths have been reported. He said Fentanyl is suspected in those deaths, however, they are waiting on the results from a toxicology report.

“Nobody ever took these drugs this week with the intention to harm themselves or to cause death,”

Aug. 03, 2022

Onondaga County sees 14 opioid overdoses in one day. Spike linked to fentanyl



ongovhealth
Onondaga County
Health Department
ongov.net/health · facebook.com/ongovhealth



Onondaga County is seeing a significant spike in opioid overdoses, including at least 14 overdoses that occurred over a 24-hour period Monday, according to the county Health Department.

The department reported its overdose tracking system shows there **has been a rise in overdose activity over the past two months.** The tracking system gathers data about overdoses from first responders.



August 8, 2022

*Fentanyl
accounted for
89% of 2021
overdose deaths
in Franklin
County*



Franklin County experienced a significant number of overdose deaths for yet another year. During the past few years, the county has seen a dramatic increase in overdose deaths, which mirrors what is seen in several other counties across the United States.



Eight drug overdoses reported in Kankakee County



KANKAKEE — Kankakee County Coroner Bob Gessner said there were eight fentanyl overdoses reported during the weekend.

Of those eight, two victims died and a third is in critical condition in a local hospital

It is the second time there have been mass overdoses in the county this year.

In January, seven people overdosed with two dying





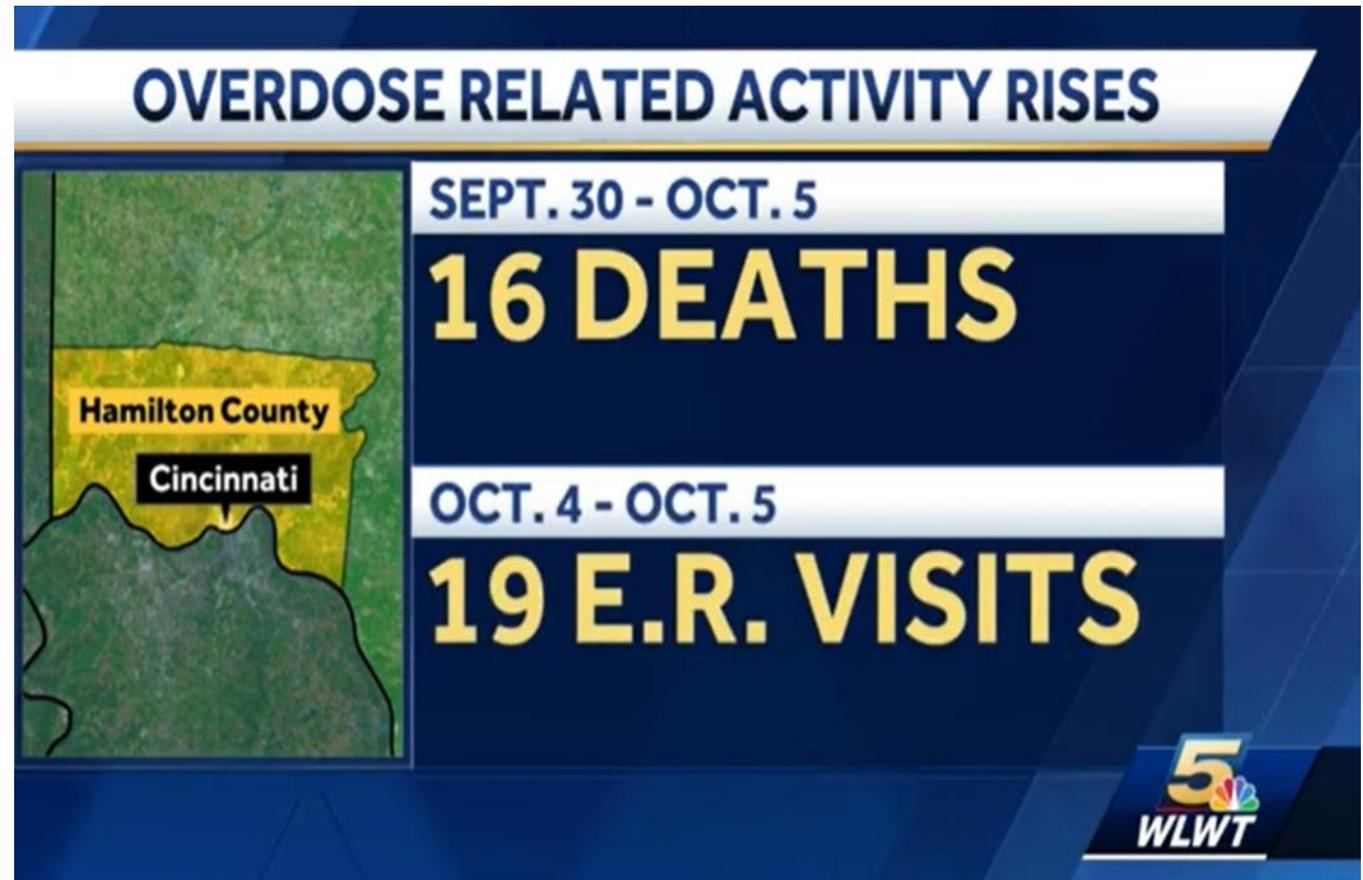
Oct. 6, 2022

16 possible fentanyl-related deaths in short span prompt public health alert

CINCINNATI (WXIX) - Hamilton County health officials are issuing a public health alert due to a possibly high level of fentanyl in drugs causing 16 overdose deaths in the span of a few days.

From Sept. 30 through Oct. 5, Hamilton County Public Health says there has been “abnormal changes in overdose-related activity.”

During that six-day period, health officials say there were 16 preliminary overdose deaths.



3 dead from apparent fentanyl overdose in Stamford

Oct 13, 2022



Oct. 23, 2022

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.



Three New Yorkers Ordered Cocaine From the Same Delivery Service. All Died From Fentanyl. Cocaine, long popular among New York professionals, is now often tainted with fentanyl, catching users unprepared and driving drug fatalities

November 1, 2022

3 men who died in suspected drug overdose in Denver were brothers



DENVER — The three men who were found dead in Denver on Sunday after a suspected drug overdose were related, according to family.

Police were called to an apartment on Kittredge Street in northeast Denver around 5:30 p.m. Sunday. On Tuesday, the coroner's office identified the three men who died there as 28-year-old Darren King Jr., 30-year-old Terrance King and 31-year-old Jairon Jackson.

2 dead, 2 hospitalized in possible overdose in University Heights

—
First responders revived two of them with Narcan -- a drug used to counteract the effects of fentanyl -- and transported them to a hospital, SDPD said.



First responders revived two of them with Narcan -- a drug used to counteract the effects of fentanyl -- and transported them to a hospital, SDPD said.

San Diego Police Chief David Nisleit told CBS 8 that a man and a woman in their 30s were found dead in the home after someone called 911 about their roommates not waking up. He also said drugs were found in the home.

During a joint news conference Thursday with Mayor Todd Gloria on the fight against fentanyl, Chief Nisleit spoke about the overdose.

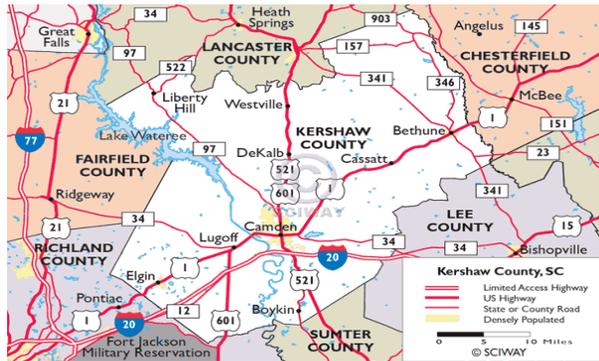
5 possible overdose victims rushed to hospital in Granada Hills

NOVEMBER 13, 2022



Four overdose deaths in 24 hours in Kershaw County

November 17, 2022



KERSHAW COUNTY, S.C. — Kershaw County Sheriff Lee Boan says his county is on pace to have the worst year on record of drug overdose deaths.

On Thursday the department posted an update that in a 24 hour stretch, 11 overdoses were called in, with four resulting in deaths.

2 students possibly overdose at Dekaney High School in Harris Co., officials say

By FOX 26 Digital and Gabby Hart | Published November 17, 2022 12:55PM | Updated November 18, 2022 1:26PM | Spring | FOX 26 Houston

HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS - On Thursday, FOX 26 received reports about a drug overdose at a local high school, videos circulating on social media show two students passed out at Dekaney High School



The scare happened on Thursday morning when two female students passed out in the cafeteria, one video shows school personnel and EMTs giving them CPR.

Coroner: Investigation underway after 2 dead, 2 hurt in Anderson County following overdose



ANDERSON, S.C. (FOX Carolina) - The Anderson County Sheriff's Office is investigating after two people were found dead and one person was injured on Jones Street.

The Anderson County Coroner's Office said officials responded at around 2 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 20 to a report of drug overdose. Deputies said at that time one person was taken to AnMed for treatment.

At around 6:44 a.m., the coroner said another call came and once on scene officials found two individuals were found dead outside a house and one person was found inside suffering from an overdose.

Montgomery County issues alert after 14 overdose deaths in week

Dayton Daily News

November 21, 2022

An overdose surge alert was issued Monday by Public Health - Dayton & Montgomery County after 14 people died in one week by suspected accidental overdoses.

The deaths occurred between Nov. 13 and Nov. 19, health department spokesman Dan Suffoletto said.

“Fourteen deaths in one week is a huge number, even taking into consideration what we’ve been through over the last couple of years,” said Dawn Schwartz, project manager for the Montgomery County Community Overdose Action Team.

“You have to think about if we have that many deaths, think about how many overdoses we had both reported and not reported that didn’t result in death in that same week. It’s important for us to get out into the community that apparently there is some really, really bad stuff going on.”

Broome overdose spike: 7 deaths in 11 days

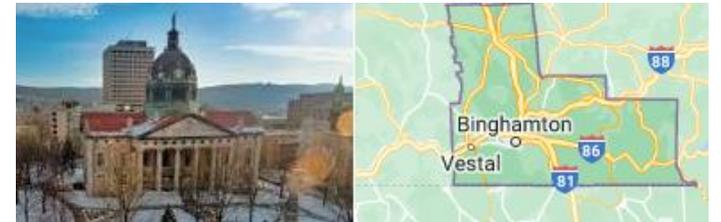


Dec 9, 2022

BROOME COUNTY, NY – Broome County is once again experiencing a significant spike in drug overdose deaths.

According to the Broome County Health Department, there have been a suspected **7 deaths over the course of the past 11 days.**

The total number of deaths this year is already 75 compared to 54 last year.



BAY AREA

Six people treated in possible mass overdose on Christmas Day

by: [Tori Gaines](#)

Posted: Dec 26, 2022 / 12:56 PM PST

Updated: Dec 26, 2022 / 01:20 PM PST

SAN FRANCISCO (KRON) — Six people were treated for possible drug overdoses on Christmas Day, according to the San Francisco Fire Department. At 2:30 p.m., fire crews responded to the 1700 block of Post Street where they found six adult patients suffering from possible drug overdoses inside of a residence.



Onondaga County reports 25 fentanyl-related overdoses in last 24 hours

CNYCENTRAL

by Emma Misiaszek | Thursday, January 12th 2023

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — The Onondaga County Health Department reported at 4:30 p.m. Thursday that in the last 24 hours, approximately 25 overdoses have been reported in Onondaga County.

Initial information is showing a possible link to fentanyl-laced spike/spice, an illegal synthetic drug. Other substances that can potentially be laced with fentanyl include cocaine, molly, MDMA and other illicit drugs.

[Crime & Safety](#)

Onondaga County reporting 14 fentanyl overdoses in just 36 hours

Updated: Dec. 22, 2022, 5:30 p.m. | Published: Dec. 22, 2022, 1:35 p.m.



6 hospitalized after fentanyl overdoses at Mount Greenwood bar in Chicago

CBS NEWS
CHICAGO

BY CBS CHICAGO TEAM

UPDATED ON: JANUARY 24, 2023 / 8:20 AM / CBS CHICAGO



CHICAGO (CBS) -- **Six people** were hospitalized after overdosing on fentanyl at a bar in Chicago's Mount Greenwood neighborhood.

The Chicago Fire Department was called to Lawlor's Bar in the 3600 block of West 111th Street Sunday afternoon.

According to CFD, two victims were transported to Advocate Christ Medical Center where they were stabilized. Three others were transported to Little Company of Mary Medical Center, where they were also stabilized.



Montana Department of Justice

on Monday



Drug Overdose Alert There appears to be a spike in Fentanyl-related overdoses in Cascade, Custer, Flathead, Gallatin, Lake, Lewis and Clark, Missoula, Ravalli, Silver Bow, and Yellowstone counties. Since January 11, there have been at least 28 opioid overdoses identified and at least eight fatalities. Please, do not use any pill or prescription drug you haven't been prescribed. Click the link for signs that indicate an overdose and call 9-1-1 if you suspect someone is experiencing a drug overdose.

<https://nbcmontana.com/.../10-montana-counties-see-uptick-in-...>

Fentanyl has been found locally in these substances:

M30 pills

These are the most common pills containing fentanyl in our area.



V48 & A215 pills

These pills, although less common, may also contain fentanyl.



Powders

Fentanyl can also be found in white powders.



28 fentanyl overdoses, 8 deaths reported in Montana over 10 day period

Jan 24, 2023

MISSOULA - State health officials are again warning residents about fentanyl after nearly 30 overdoses were reported in a 10-day time frame this past month.

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) reports **28 overdoses, including eight deaths**, occurred between Jan. 11 and Jan. 21.

Overdoses have been reported in 11 counties, including in Flathead, Lake, Missoula and Ravalli



Fentanyl Deaths Per Year

United States



Source: Families Against Fentanyl

SOME SIGNIFICANT DRUG
SEIZURES IN AMERICA
HIGHLIGHTING THE
SEVERITY OF THE THREAT

Federal Charges Filed following Record-breaking Seizure of Fentanyl and Meth

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY – November 19, 2021

SAN DIEGO – Acting U.S. Attorney Randy Grossman announced federal drug charges today against Carlos Martin Quintana-Arias of Mexico, following the seizure yesterday of 17,584 pounds of methamphetamine and 388.93 pounds of fentanyl from a commercial trailer attempting entry at the Otay Mesa, California, Commercial Port of Entry. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) confirmed that both drug seizures would be the largest in each drug category, for both this year and last year, in the entire United States.

The Complaint alleges that on November 18, 2021, at approximately 8:18 p.m., Quintana-Arias, a Mexican citizen, applied for entry into the U.S. as the driver and sole occupant of a 2009 Kenworth Tractor pulling a 1996 Stoug trailer. Quintana-Arias' manifest reflected the trailer contained automotive body parts. However, according to the Complaint, an X-Ray machine detected anomalies inside the trailer and a drug detection dog alerted to the rear door of the trailer.

Further inspection of the trailer's contents revealed a few automotive body parts among 6,266 packages of drugs. Of the total drug packages, 6,106 packages contained a substance that field-tested positive for methamphetamine; these packages together weighed approximately 7,976.2 kilograms (17,584.33 pounds). The other 160 packages contained a substance that field-tested positive for fentanyl and weighed approximately 176.42 kilograms (388.93 pounds).

"This is a staggering seizure that demonstrates the extent of our current fight against mass production of methamphetamine and fentanyl. But for the vigilance of our law enforcement partners, this record-breaking deluge of drugs would have caused incredible damage in our communities," said Acting U.S. Attorney Randy Grossman. "We commend our partner agencies for their tireless work and dedication to preventing these dangerous and deadly drugs from entering our country."

Record-breaking amounts of meth and fentanyl seized in San Diego

More than 17,500 lbs of meth and 389 lbs of fentanyl were seized from a tractor-trailer at the Otay Mesa Port last Thursday

Trucker arrested in record-breaking drug seizure at border



FILE - The U.S. Attorney's Office says more than 17,500 pounds of meth and 389 pounds of fentanyl were discovered last Thursday hidden inside a tractor-trailer at the Otay Mesa Port of Entry in San Diego. (Associated Press)



July 15, 2022

DEA seizes record 1 million fentanyl-laced pills in California

It's the biggest seizure of fentanyl pills in California history and the pills have an estimated street value of between \$15 million and \$20 million



This massive seizure disrupted the flow of dangerous amounts of fentanyl into our streets and probably saved many lives. The deceptive marketing coupled with the ease of accessibility makes these small and seemingly innocuous pills a significant threat to the health and safety of all our communities. A staggering number of teens and young adults are unaware that they are ingesting fentanyl in these fake pills and are being poisoned.

**SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE
BILL BODNER**

Los Angeles Field Division



OVER 1.1 MILLION FENTANYL PILLS SEIZED IN THE LAST 7 DAYS AUGUST 6, 2022 AT THE NOGALES POE



70,000 Fentanyl pills



90,000 Fentanyl pills



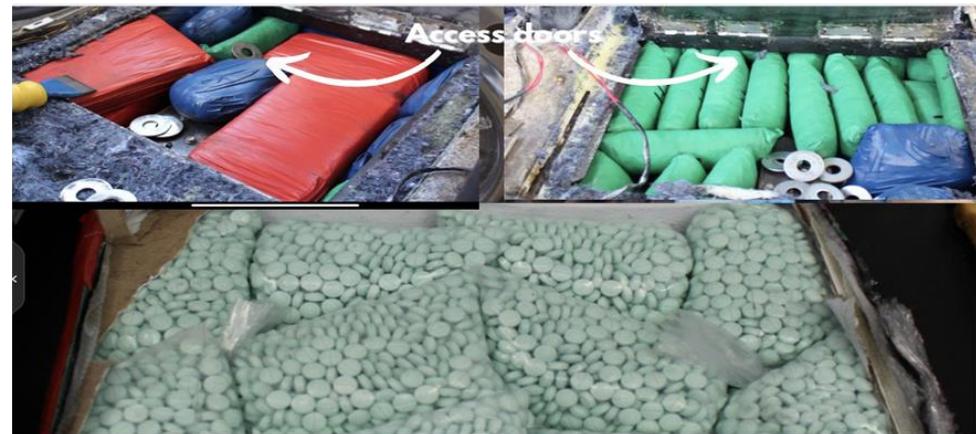
391,000 Fentanyl pills



420,000 Fentanyl pills



210,000 FENTANYL PILLS



PARENTS BEWARE: "The Mexican Cartels are the Enemy of the Children"



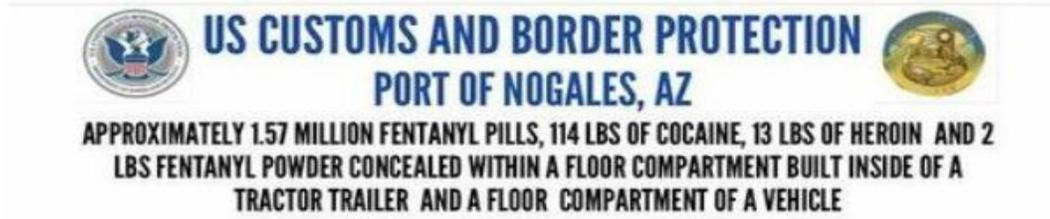
This Distribution Tactic and Marketing Brings a New Level of Danger for American Kids



US Border Agents Seize 1.6 Million Fentanyl Pills In Big-Rig, Destined For US Cities

ZeroHedge

AUG 22, 2022



Drugs were discovered in an 18-Wheeler trailer floor compartment. The vehicle was attempting to cross into Arizona from Mexico at the Nogales Port of Entry when CBP agents stopped it for inspection.

Millions in cash, fentanyl seized in raid

It may be the biggest seizure of drugs and money in New Mexico history.

Federal search warrant returns unsealed Friday revealed the discovery of up to \$4 million in bulk cash and what authorities said could be a record amount of fentanyl pills at one of 15 Albuquerque locations searched Thursday as part of an ongoing FBI investigation into a new evolving alliance among street and prison gangs in the state.

The deadly pills, believed to be destined for distribution in New Mexico, totaled more than 1 million. About 142 pounds of methamphetamine was also recovered, along with two hand grenades, ballistic vests, a bulletproof baseball cap, 37 firearms and thousands of rounds of ammunition.



Over 1 million fentanyl pills seized by officers; single largest bust in Phoenix Police's history

Sep 23, 2022,





South Carolina deputies seize 30,000 grams of fentanyl, arrest 6

Oct 25, 2022



During the execution of one search warrant on Golden Pond Dr in Clover, investigators said they seized around 30,531 grams of fentanyl, 2869 grams of cocaine, 704 grams of methamphetamine, 454 grams of marijuana, four firearms and seven pill presses used to manufacture illegal pills.





Port Director Michael W. Humphries @CBPPortDirNOG

On January 13th, CBP officers at the Nogales POE seized approximately 953,000 fentanyl pills and 2.65 pounds of cocaine concealed within commercial equipment in a vehicle. Most of the pills were the traditional blue color, some were green in color and some were "rainbow colored".

Port Director Michael W. Hump... @CBPPortDir... · Dec 21, 2022

On Wednesday, CBP officers working rail operations at the Nogales POE searched a train entering from Mexico and discovered a compartment in a spine rail car that contained approximately 736,200 fentanyl pills and 196 pounds of meth.

Port Director Michael W. Hump... @CBPPortDir... · Dec 29, 2022

CBP officers stopped two loads on Wednesday. First load contained approx. 541,000 fentanyl pills, 4 lbs fentanyl powder and 37.55 lbs of meth concealed in doors and rear panels of a car. Seven hours later, approx. 689,200 fentanyl pills were found hidden throughout a vehicle.



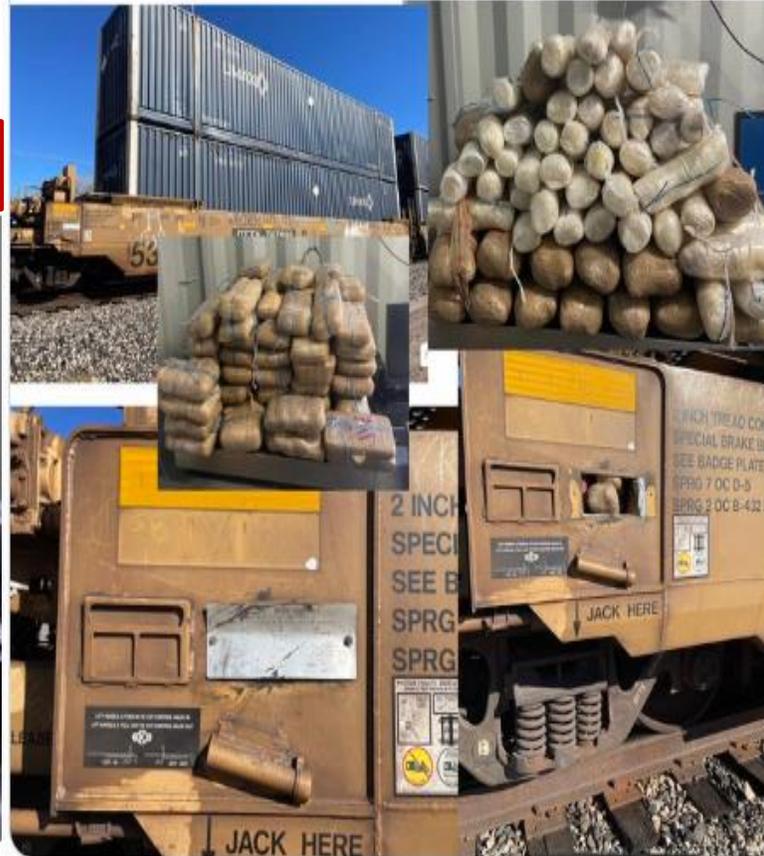
US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION
PORT OF NOGALES, AZ



Nearly 1 million fentanyl pills prevented from reaching U.S communities



US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION
PORT OF NOGALES, AZ



US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION
PORT OF NOGALES, AZ



One day, over 1.2 million fentanyl pills,
4 pounds fentanyl powder and
37.55 pounds meth



In the first 3 months of FY23, the Nogales POE has already surpassed the total amount of fentanyl seized throughout all of FY22, which was already a record year.





Fentanyl seized by CBP at the port of entry in Nogales, AZ.

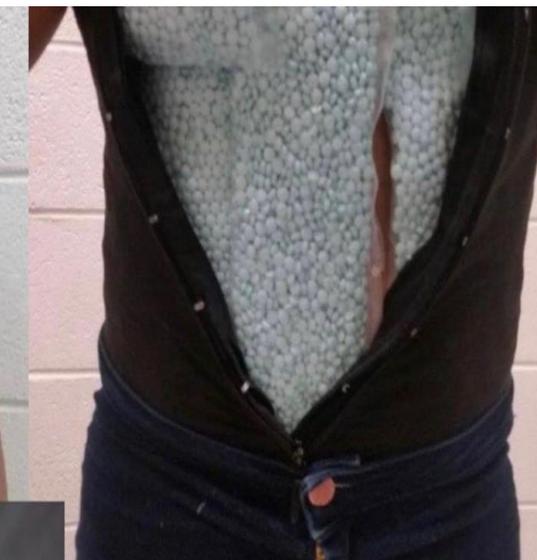


Bill Melugin
@BIIIFOXLA

*More than 40,000 fentanyl pills
found in a vehicle's modified battery*

*More than 10,000 fentanyl pills found in a body shaping
garment worn by a woman.*

July 10, 2022





July 20, 2022

Man arrested in California for allegedly smuggling nearly \$3.7 million of fentanyl in his car tire and gas tank



US Border Patrol agents arrested a man allegedly attempting to smuggle approximately 250 pounds of fentanyl in his truck's spare tire and gas tank

NEW YORK POST

July 25, 2022

Men arrested for smuggling 91,000 fentanyl pills inside potato chip containers

Two Washington men were charged in connection with smuggling 91,000 fentanyl pills inside potato chip containers

Investigation into the pair's connections to a transnational criminal organization that imports bulk quantities of fentanyl pills into Whatcom County, the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office said.



Homeland Security Investigations agents working with the sheriff's office received information that Hernandez-Hernandez arranged for 91,000 fentanyl pills to be delivered in Bellingham.



US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION PORT OF NOGALES, AZ



**APPROXIMATELY 14,000 FENTANYL PILLS CONCEALED INSIDE OF
CRUTCHES**



Biggest drug bust in Mesa PD history: 700K+ fentanyl pills, 15 lbs of hard drugs found





Drug Enforcement Administration

Cheri Oz
Special Agent in Charge

Phoenix
@DEAPhoenixDiver

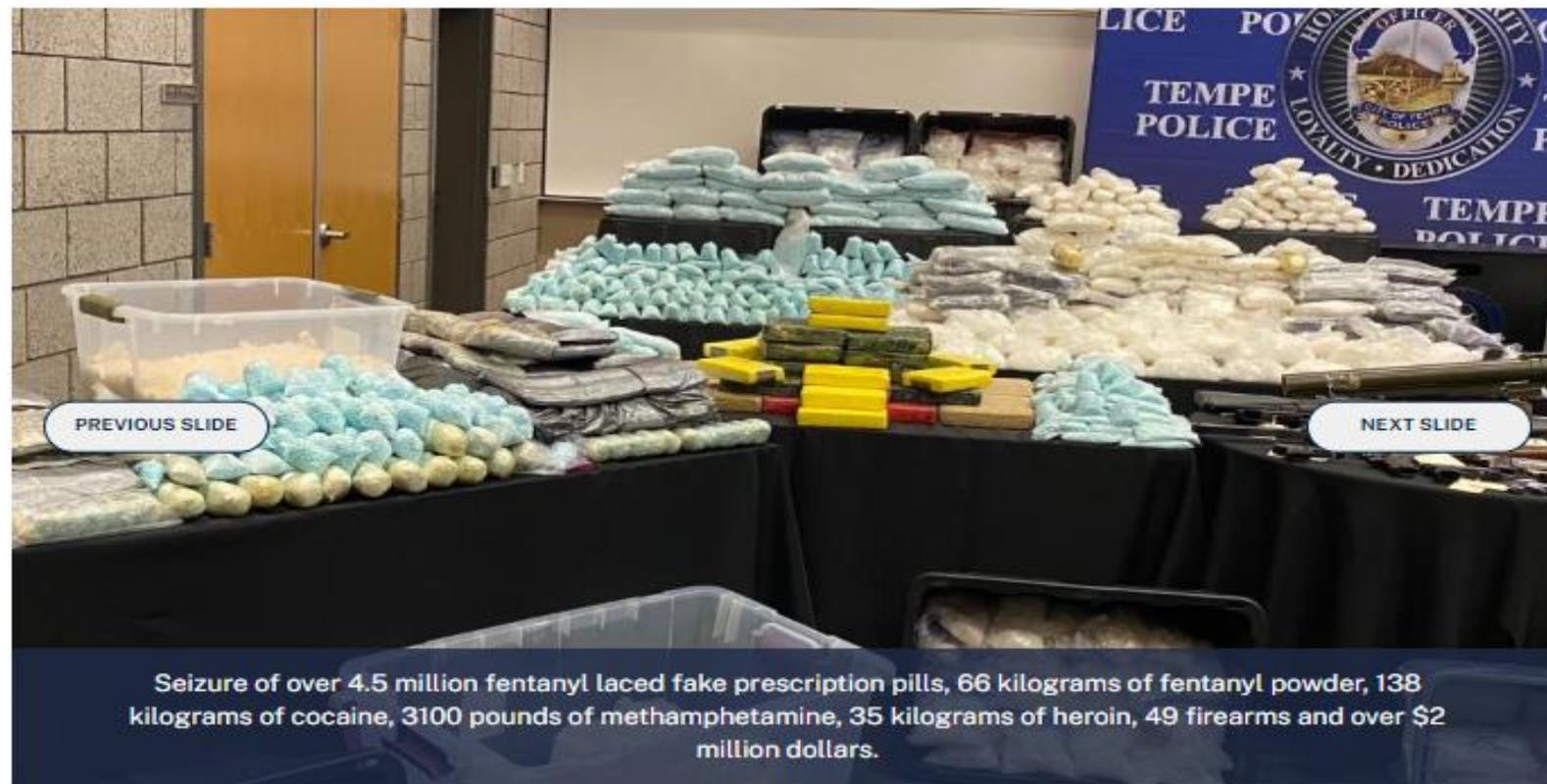
February 23, 2023

Contact: Jodie Underwood

Phone Number: (571) 387-3289

For Immediate Release

DEA, Arizona Attorney General & Tempe Police Announce 150+ Subjects Charged & Massive Quantities of Narcotics Seized



NEW DRUGS EMERGING
AROUND THE
COUNTRY ALSO
HIGHLIGHTING
THE SEVERITY OF
THE THREAT



Newsweek

7/22/22

New Drug About 10 Times Stronger Than Fentanyl Circulating in Colorado

NITAZENES

Pyro, the street name of a new drug that is stronger than the high-risk narcotic fentanyl, has been circulating in Colorado and recently reportedly killed at least one person in Denver.



The N-pyrrolidino **Etonitazene** drug is a high-potency synthetic opioid that is between 1,000 and 1,500 times stronger than morphine, while fentanyl is only around 100 times stronger than morphine, local news station KKCO reported on Thursday.

Detroit DEA warns of animal tranquilizer street drug 'Tranq' where Narcan has no effect



January 17, 2023

A new trend the agency is monitoring closely is the rise in use of a relatively easy-to-get animal tranquilizer called **xylazine**. It is known on the streets – as Tranq. We are hiring technologists now for the fintech of tomorrow. “We have seen xylazine within our field division, so Ohio and Detroit,” said Special Agent in Charge Orville Greene of the Detroit DEA

Florida leads the nation in overdose deaths related to new synthetic drug, CDC data shows



August 13, 2022

Florida is leading the nation in overdose deaths with a new synthetic drug called eutylone.

Eutylone is a synthetic psychoactive bath salt. Just last year it was listed as the seventh most identified drug detected in over 8,000 cases.

GROWING AND ALARMING THREATS

Flesh-eating drug 'tranq' meant for animals now linked to thousands of heroin, fentanyl ODs

NEW YORK POST

September 25, 2022

The flesh-eating animal tranquilizer xylazine has been linked to thousands of drug overdoses across the country as it inundates heroin and fentanyl supplies in places such as Philadelphia, Delaware and Michigan, reports say.

Known on the street as “tranq,” the sedative is now found in 91% of Philly’s heroin and fentanyl supplies, according to a report earlier this month in the peer-reviewed journal Science Direct.



La Crosse police investigating 9 recent fatal drug overdoses

yesterday

January 25, 2023



Click to copy

RELATED TOPICS

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[La Crosse](#)

[Opioids](#)

LA CROSSE, Wis. (AP) — La Crosse police are investigating nine recent drug overdose deaths amid concerns that a powerful animal tranquilizer may be present in the local illicit opioid supply.

The La Crosse Police Department, the city's mayor, Gundersen Health System and Tri-State Ambulance warned the community Tuesday about the high number of fatal overdoses during 2023's first three weeks.

Toxicology reports on those overdose deaths are pending, and it may take weeks to complete, the La Crosse Tribune reported.

But the deaths have raised concerns that the animal tranquilizer xylazine, known as "tranq," may have entered local illicit supplies of fentanyl, heroin and cocaine. The tranquilizer can leave users in an hours-long stupor, and it also causes slowed breathing that interferes with the effectiveness of naloxone, a medication used to reverse opioid overdoses.

"We want those who are struggling with substance abuse to know there is possibly a dangerous mix here in our community," said Jason Melby, La Crosse's assistant chief of police.

The ineffectiveness of naloxone in treating the recent overdoses highlights the importance of emergency care, such as supportive breathing, that can keep overdose patients alive even if the medication fails, said Dr. Chris Eberlein with emergency medicine at Gundersen Health System.

SEIZURES OF FENTANYL
REPORTED IN MEXICO
HIGHLIGHTING
THE SEVERITY OF
THE THREAT

Mexico announces its biggest seizure of pure fentanyl



260 pounds



The Mexican army said the lab busted on Oct. 28 in the northern city of Culiacan probably made about 70 million of the blue fentanyl pills every month for the Sinaloa cartel.

Dog sniffs out 2,000 fentanyl pills baked into bread rolls in Mexico

NOVEMBER 16, 2022

Mexican National Guard intercepted around 2,000 pills of possible fentanyl hidden in pieces of bread.



Mexican police find 660 pounds of fentanyl in coconuts

Prosecutors in Mexico say police found 660 pounds (300 kilograms) of fentanyl pills packed into coconuts

By The Associated Press
December 2, 2022, 3:33 PM



MEXICO CITY -- Prosecutors in [Mexico](#) say police found 660 pounds (300 kilograms) of fentanyl pills packed into coconuts.

The coconuts were found in a truck traveling on a highway in the northern border state of Sonora.

Prosecutors said the truck was detected Thursday on a road that runs along the Gulf of California, also known as the Sea of Cortez.

According to photos of the bust, the coconut husks had been neatly split in half, and re-assembled with plastic bags of fentanyl pills inside. The road eventually leads to the border town of Sonoyta, across the border from Lukeville, Arizona.

Mexico produces most of the fentanyl that reaches the United States, using chemical precursors imported from [China](#) and elsewhere.

Fentanyl is blamed for tens of thousands of U.S. overdose deaths each year, because the extremely powerful synthetic opioid is pressed into counterfeit pills often made to look like Xanax, oxycodone or Percocet. Many people who take them do not know they are taking fentanyl.



DEVASTATING IMPACT TO
FAMILIES AND THE FUTURE
GENERATION IN AMERICA
FROM DEADLY DRUGS
IMPORTED INTO THE USA



CARTEL DE SINALOA

CJNG



“The current unprecedented fentanyl poisoning crisis that’s killing our kids at record levels is not a  or  issue, it’s a RED, WHITE and BLUE issue. Need all Americans to work together NOW to SAVE LIVES”



Derek S Maltz





LOST VOICES OF FENTANYL



Tiffany



Forever 26

Austen



Forever 25

Matthew



Forever 20

Nadia



Forever 20

Tyler



Forever 23

Jayden



Forever 19

Logan



Forever 22

Taylor



Forever 19

Joseph



Forever 19

William



Forever 29

Dalton



Forever 20

Issaiah



Forever 15

Nikki



Forever 23

Donovan



Forever 19

Jake



Forever 25

Julia



Forever 18

Braden



Forever 24

Tyler



Forever 19

Eddit



Forever 20

Amanda



Forever 24

Melissa



Forever 23

Joshua



Forever 23

Zak



Forever 15

Lillianna



Forever 19

Jessica



Forever 21

Amy



Forever 23

Joeangel



Forever 18

Adrian



Forever 19

Logan



Forever 19

Zelaya



Forever 17

Mckenzie



Forever 19

Carter



Forever 20

Elana



Forever 15

Damon



Forever 18

Brayden



Forever 19

Jordan



Forever 24

Ryan



Forever 23

Spencer



Forever 20

Deziree



Forever 20

Hannah



Forever 17

Maurice



Forever 19

Paul



Forever 25

Devin



Forever 19

Zachary



Forever 17

Angelina



Forever 21

Jordan



Forever 21

Sydney



Forever 18

Olivia



Forever 15

Lillie



Forever 23

Shannon



Forever 22

Ryan



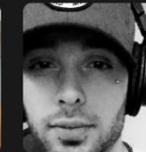
Forever 24

Miah



Forever 16

Drew



Forever 25

Kevin



Forever 19

Benjamin



Forever 26

Shelby



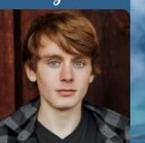
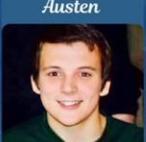
Forever 26



LOST TEEN VOICES OF FENTANYL

LOVED BEYOND WORDS MISSED BEYOND MEASURE



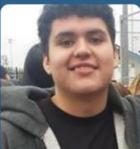
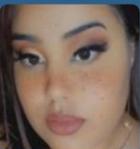
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 Forever 19	 Forever 19	 Forever 16	 Forever 19	 Forever 17	 Forever 19	 Forever 19	 Forever 19	 Forever 19	 Forever 17	 Forever 17	 Forever 17	 Forever 14	 Forever 17



LOST TEEN VOICES OF FENTANYL

LOVED BEYOND WORDS MISSED BEYOND MEASURE



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 Forever 18	 Forever 19	 Forever 19	 Forever 18	 Forever 18	 Forever 16	 Forever 16	 Forever 18	 Forever 18	 Forever 19	 Forever 18	 Forever 15	 Forever 16	 Forever 19
 Forever 15	 Forever 17	 Forever 17	 Forever 15	 Forever 18	 Forever 17	 Forever 16	 Forever 19	 Forever 18	 Forever 19	 Forever 19	 Forever 18	 Forever 17	 Forever 19