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Letter from the Assistant Commissioner: Opioids in America

- 1 I'm Pete Ladowicz, Assistant Commissioner for CBP's Office of Congressional Affairs. Every day, more than 115 people in the United States die of an opioid overdose. In communities all across the country, we mourn the family members and cherished friends who have lost their lives to this crisis. Whether or not you know someone who has struggled with opioid addiction, this public health emergency has affected the lives of every American. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that the total economic burden of prescription opioid misuse in the United States is \$78.6 billion a year, including the costs of health care, lost productivity, addiction treatment, and criminal justice involvement. As sobering as that number is, it does not include the significant social and economic welfare costs of the illegal opioid market, such as heroin and illegal fentanyl, that criminal organizations send across our borders.
- 2 We are all in this fight together, and will continue to work with our interagency partners to end this epidemic. We appreciate the funding appropriated by Congress in FY 2018 that provides resources — such as opioid detection equipment and labs — that CBP needs to counter this national emergency. We look forward to continuing to work with our friends in Congress to find solutions that will ultimately save lives.

CBP: Fighting the Opioid Scourge

As America's frontline border security agency, CBP is uniquely responsible — and uniquely positioned — for disrupting the influx of narcotics. Here is how CBP is combatting this crisis.



Enhancing Collaboration and Information Sharing

The border-crossing nature of the illegal opioid smuggling market makes it essential that CBP also partners with other law enforcement entities, such as the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the National Sheriffs' Association, as well as major cities' and counties' police and sheriff's departments. Since so many of the opioids originate overseas, CBP also works with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, which approaches the illegal drug trade from a security and public health perspective. In addition, the Domestic Highway Enforcement program links

local, state, and federal law enforcement officials — and international partners such as the Canada Border Services Agency — to catch drugs, currency, counterfeit money, and other contraband, and to break up human trafficking rings.

Producing Workable Intelligence and Cutting the Opioid Supply Chain

While agents and officers at the border and ports of entry check as many shipments as possible, it's simply not practical to check every shipment. Helping to narrow down which containers and packages to search, CBP's National Targeting Center uses a program where advance data and access to law enforcement and intelligence records together target travelers and cargo that pose the highest risk to U.S. security. If a suspicious substance is first found and confirmed at the port, it's then validated by a lab as a banned item. Then the case is turned over to the appropriate law enforcement agencies, including the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, for prosecution. The targeting center also adds information from those seizures into its database to better understand what to look for in future targets.

Protecting the Frontline from Opioids

CBP is educating officers and agents, and offering these precautions to stay safe:

- Personnel should have a heightened awareness of the potential presence of opioids, including fentanyl.
- Avoid exposure to cuts, scrapes, or mucus membranes. If exposed, wash the area with soap and water.
- Wear the proper protective equipment: gloves, respirator masks, and eye protection.
- Know the signs of opioid exposure in oneself and coworkers: slow or no breathing, drowsiness, pinpoint pupils, and/or an altered mental state.
- Make naloxone, a short-term antidote, available to all personnel, and make sure everyone knows how to administer the lifesaving drug.

For more information, check out the Frontline magazine article on combatting opioids on CBP.gov or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

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Communications



CBP.gov/Careers

Vigilance
★
Integrity
★
Service to Country

Philadelphia CBP Seizes Nearly \$1.7 Million in Fentanyl Shipped from China

On June 25, U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers seized 110 pounds of the deadly opioid fentanyl with an estimated \$1.7 million street value in Philadelphia. CBP officers from the Area Port of Philadelphia conducting routine examinations discovered the fentanyl in a shipment of iron oxide that arrived from China.

A CBP narcotics detector dog alerted to the presence of narcotics inside the barrels of iron oxide. CBP officers, wearing personal protective equipment, searched through the iron oxide and discovered 50 packages that contained sealed bags of a white, powdery substance. Officers tested the substance using a handheld elemental isotope analysis tool that can identify over 14,000 chemical substances with the use of a laser or infrared beam. The device identified the substance as fentanyl. CBP's Laboratory and Scientific Services conducted additional testing and identified the substance as 4-Fluoroisobutyryl Fentanyl, a fentanyl analog and DEA Schedule I controlled substance.

The fentanyl weighed a combined 50 kilograms, or 110 pounds. High purity fentanyl such as this can sell for over \$34,000 per kilogram on the street. For more information, please visit CBP.gov or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.



CBP Deploys New Technology to Help Identify Dangerous Drugs



Earlier this year, CBP Office of Field Operations at the Detroit Metropolitan Airport acquired additional technology with the ability to sample and identify more than 14,000 chemical substances. CBP continues to employ innovative methods and tools to detect, intercept, and prevent dangerous drugs from entering the United States while also keeping frontline officers safe.

CBP officers at the Detroit Metropolitan Airport recently received specialized training on a new handheld elemental isotope analysis tool that can identify hazardous chemicals and drugs coming into the United States via express consignment shipments and other means of transportation.

"Our officers now have the ability to safely sample unknown substances in real time, and get instant results. This in turn saves time while protecting our officers and the general public from potentially hazardous materials," said CBP Port Director Devin Chamberlain. "We are dedicated to combating the threat that fentanyl and other dangerous drugs pose to our nation."

Learn more at CBP.gov or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

Fentanyl Smuggling Attempt Foiled by Border Patrol Agents

Yuma Sector Border Patrol agents in Arizona seized 5,000 fentanyl tablets and arrested two after a failed attempt to smuggle the narcotics in their vehicle.



At approximately 11:50 p.m. on June 28, Blythe Station Integrated Targeting Team agents performed a vehicle stop on a 2009 silver Nissan Altima traveling on the Interstate 10 near Quartzsite. Agents searched the vehicle and discovered 5,000 tablets of fentanyl disguised as oxycodone with a street value worth more than \$538,000.

The 35-year-old male Mexican national and female 31-year-old United States citizen, both residing in Los Angeles, were arrested and will be charged with the smuggling of narcotics. The fentanyl and vehicle were seized.

"The opioid crisis continues to be a national public health emergency", said Blythe Station Patrol Agent in Charge Daniel Parra. "Today's seizure represents the contribution and commitment by the United States Border Patrol, specifically the Blythe Border Patrol Station, to combat this threat by disrupting the illicit fentanyl supply chain."

Learn more at CBP.gov or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

CBP Recruitment Corner

CBP is recruiting hundreds of mission-critical positions in both law enforcement and non-law enforcement roles. These positions include CBP officers, Border Patrol agents, air interdiction agents, marine interdiction agents, and numerous professional support staff positions, such as information technology specialists. For a complete list of non-law enforcement positions click here. Job opportunities are located nationwide.

Upcoming Recruitment Events

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| August 2, 2018 | King of Prussia Career Fair
Crown Plaza Hotel Valley Forge
260 Mall Blvd.
King of Prussia, PA 19406
11 a.m.-2 p.m. |
| August 8, 2018 | Norfolk Naval Base CBP Days
1327 West C Street
Norfolk, VA 23511
11 a.m. - 2 p.m. |
| August 11, 2018 | RGV Premium Outlets CBP Recruitment Event
5001 E. Expressway 83
Mercedes, TX 78570
11 a.m. - 6 p.m. |

Find more recruitment events at <https://www.cbp.gov/careers/events>.