

Large groups of migrants using drains under border barriers to sneak into U.S.

SAN DIEGO (Border Report) — Border Patrol agents have been seeing larger groups of undocumented immigrants entering the U.S. at once, putting a strain on resources along the border in recent months.

“Since October of this year, we’ve been seeing an increase of large gatherings of migrants being dropped off right along in the immediate border and then illegally entering into the U.S.,” said Justin De la Torre, Patrol Agent in Charge for the Border Patrol’s Imperial Beach Station.

De La Torre said smugglers are pushing the migrants into large drains that have been built to help the flow of water from one side of the border to the other.

“Typically, they are entering through storm drains underneath the border fence,” De la Torre said. “Quite frankly, when they bring in large groups at one time, it drains our resources so now our agents are spread thin and it leaves the border a bit more vulnerable in that period of time.”

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According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the large groups of migrants using the drains are mostly from Brazil and Venezuela, and some from Portugal. One recent group — all Brazilian nationals — numbered 86, and another group had 93 people. Both included men, women and children.

“They’re bringing people through these storm drains, they risk severe injury drowning, falling from steep terrain. Just this year alone, we’ve had 12 fatalities that we know of in this area of migrants being trafficked and smuggled into the area. The Border Patrol’s job is to keep people safe, keep American people safe, our agents safe and to keep the migrants safe as well. ... The smugglers, they

don't have that goal; all they care about is making money."

De la Torre says the gates are kept closed when it's not raining, but agents must open them when storms arrive as a way to maintain the water's natural flow from Mexico into the U.S.

"On the runoff systems we have grates and have put in bars to keep people from coming through, however, the smugglers go down there with power tools and cut through those bars and facilitate illegal entry for the migrants."

According to CBP figures, the number of migrants taken into custody along the southern border has gone down for the third consecutive month since a sharp increase this summer.

CBP is reporting more than 164,000 apprehensions along the entire U.S.-Mexico border in October, which is a 23 percent drop from July.

Source:

<https://www.borderreport.com/hot-topics/the-border-wall/large-groups-of-migrant-s-using-drains-under-border-barriers-to-sneak-into-u-s/>

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