



Texas-Mexico Public Health Preparedness and Response Program

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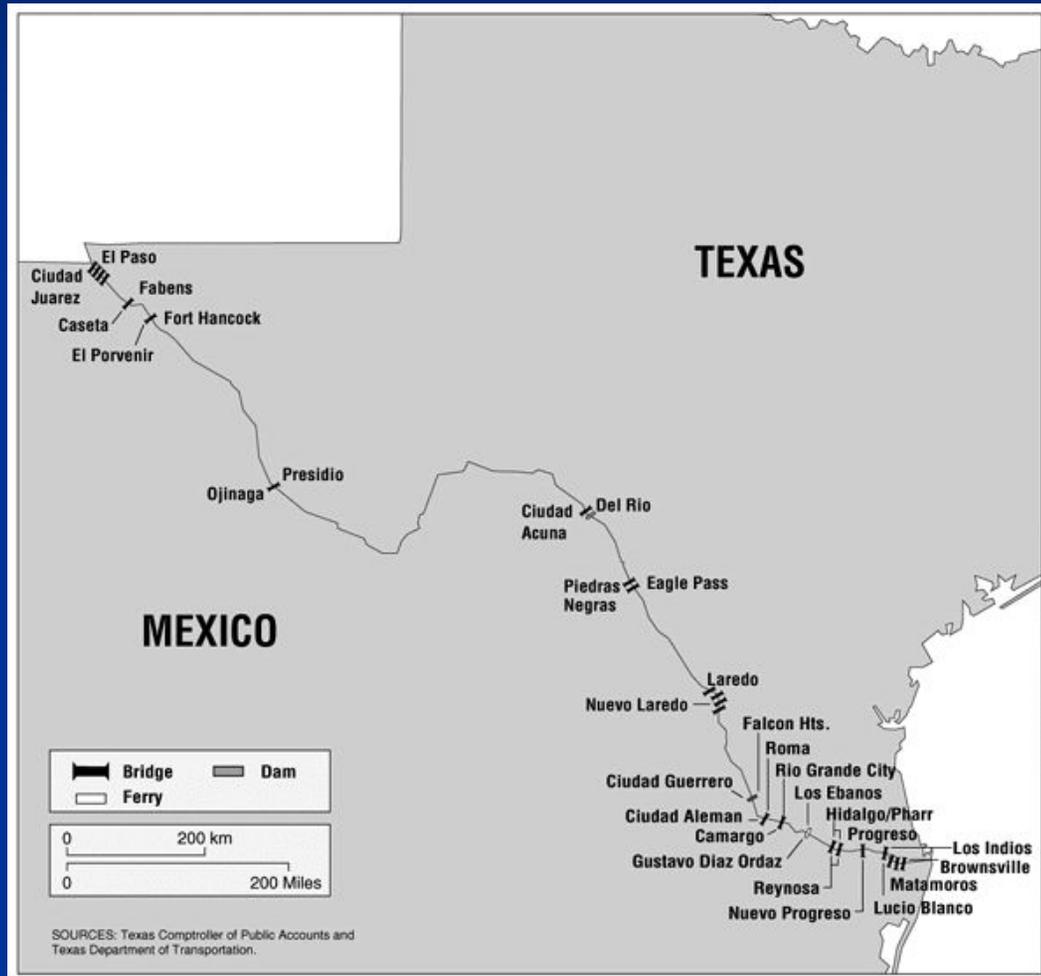
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Quick Facts: U.S.-Mexico Border

- 1,951 mile border is the busiest in the world
- Each year more than 300 million people, approximately 90 million cars, and 4.3 million trucks cross the border
- Since NAFTA, the number of commercial vehicles has increased by 41%
- Cross-border trade averages more than \$650 million a day

Texas-Mexico Border



Quick Facts: Texas-Mexico Border

- 1,254 miles long
- 56% of people, 72% of all trucks, and 89% of trains cross into Texas
- 13 Texas counties border Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and Tamaulipas
- 10 million people live in the border region
- Population growth of 1.8% per year
- \$88 billion economy



Laredo is home to the largest inland port in the US.



credit: TEXAS A salute from above
by T.R. Fehrenbach

Working with Mexican neighbors to enhance preparedness efforts on both sides of the border



Pan American Health Organization



Joint Contingency Plan-- Texas/Mexico Sister Cities



Population Data Sources:

US Census Bureau 2000

Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía,
e Informática (INEGI), 2000

North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)



U.S.-Mexico Border Health Commission



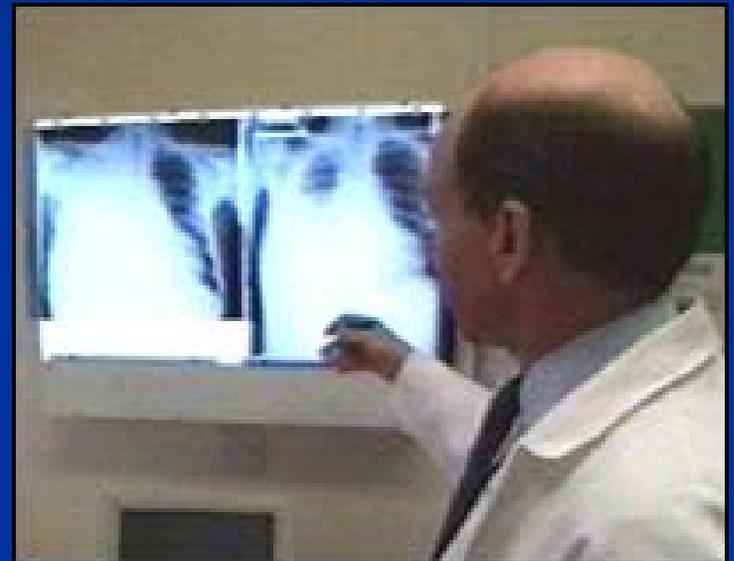
DSHS Office of Border Health

- Promotes and and coordinates
- USMBHC Texas Outreach office
- Informs, educates, mobilizes
- Community health hazards and problems
- Central point of communication



Binational Tuberculosis Projects

- Initiated in 1993
- “Juntos” – El Paso and Ciudad Juarez
- “Los Dos Laredos” – Laredo and Nuevo Laredo
- “Grupo Sin Fronteras” – Brownsville/Matamoros and McAllen/Reynosa



Bioterrorism Knows No Borders



Preparedness Partners



Timeline

- Events of 9/11
- October 15, 2001 – Tommy Thompson meets with members of USMBHC and voiced strong support for binational preparedness efforts
- April 2002 – CDC strongly encouraged border states to address preparedness issues

- January 2003 – Health officials from CA, AZ, NM, and TX met with federal officials

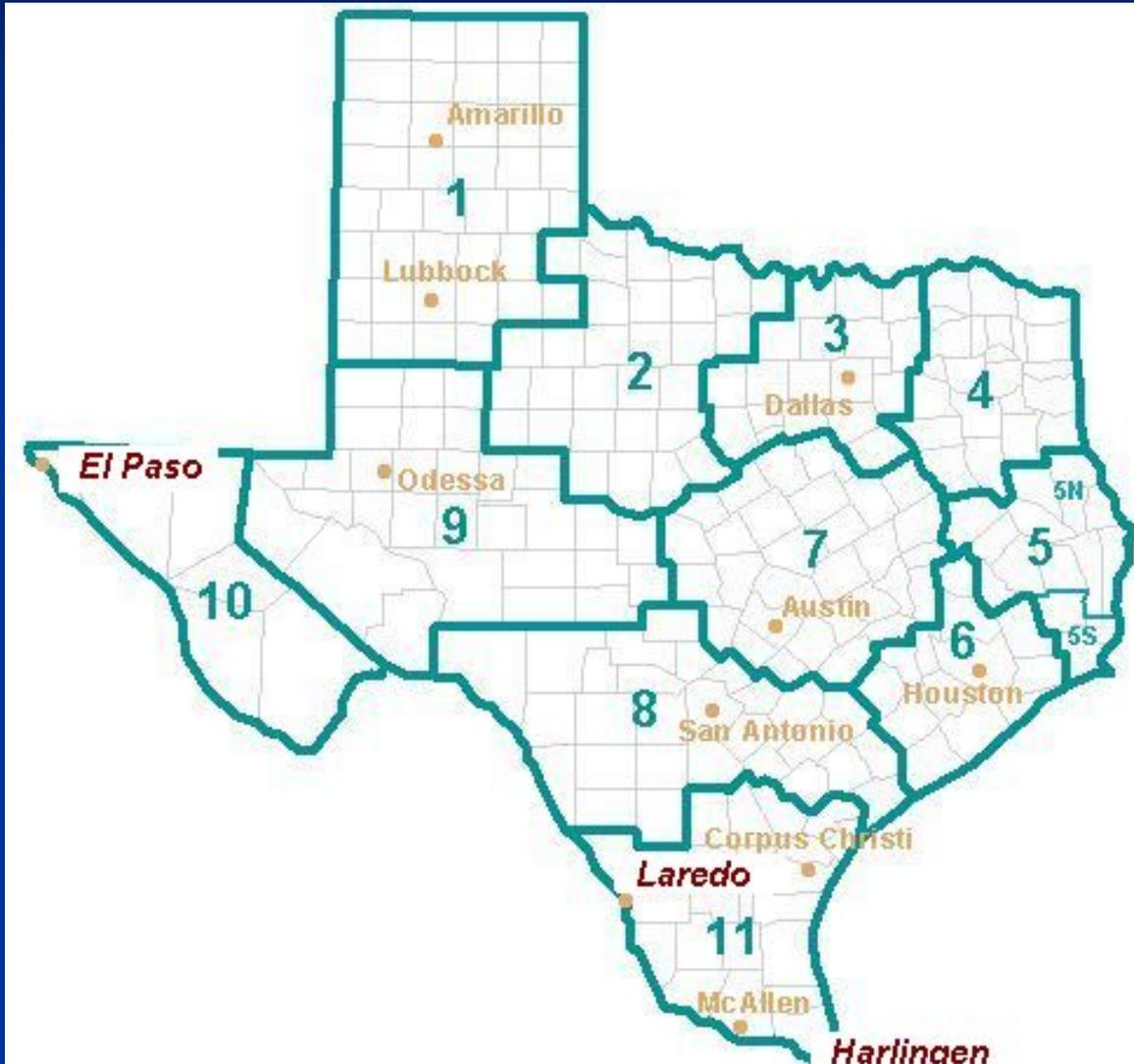


CDC Cooperative Agreement

Focus Area A

- Goal of Critical Capacity A3 is “to respond to emergencies caused by bioterrorism, other infectious disease outbreaks, and other public health threats and emergencies”
- July 2002 Texas Department of Health created three new positions of Binational Coordinator for Public Health Preparedness and Response

Binational Coordinators



Binational Program Objectives

- Perform advanced consultation services in the planning, development, implementation, evaluation, and exercise of public health preparedness and response plans for the Texas-Mexico border regions and the Texas Native American tribes.
- Provide technical assistance, consultation and facilitation to Binational Health Councils and Native American tribal organizations on methods to assess the need for increased planning, training and educational efforts related to these plans

Binational Program Objectives

- Work with stakeholders to ensure integration of public health preparedness plans with the Mexican and Texas emergency response plans.
- Work closely with U.S. Border Health Commission, Pan American Health Organization, Mexican state and federal health officials.

Binational Connectivity

- FY 2003 – Collaborations begin to develop binational communications plans to enhance cross-border communications
- Mexican health directors receive wireless handheld communication devices and videoconferencing equipment
- Computers purchased for each Mexican state's health department

Border Activities

- \$1.5 million in August 2003 to enhance early warning infectious disease surveillance along the Texas-Mexico border;
- Working with the USMBHC to co-host a series of bi-national forums;
- Contracting for tabletop exercises with federal, state, and local representatives from both sides of the border;

Border Activities

- Presenting binational forensic epidemiological workshops for public health and law enforcement officials in El Paso, Laredo, and McAllen, Texas;
- Enhancing the El Paso County and City of Laredo public health labs so they can provide rapid and effective laboratory services in support of the response to bioterrorism.

Texas-Mexico Forums

Working closely with Mexico's federal health agency, the Texas DSHS Office of Border Health, and officials from the Mexican states of Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and Tamaulipas, a series of Public Health Preparedness and Response forums were launched in 2004.

Forum Work Groups

Participants divided into three work groups and asked to address three areas:

- The need for rapid, around-the-clock information exchange and response coordination;
- The communication of risks, alerts, and interventions;
- The development of joint training and exercise programs.

Forums

- Ciudad Juarez, El Paso, Ysleta del Sur Pueblo & New Mexico, March 22-23, 2004
- Piedras Negras, Eagle Pass, Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, May 6-7, 2004
- Ciudad Acuña, Del Rio, May 20-21, 2004

Forums

- Nuevo Laredo, Laredo, June 17-18, 2004
- Matamoros, Brownsville, July 15-16, 2004
- Ojinaga, Presidio, August 12-13, 2004
- Nuevo Progreso, Rio Bravo, Progreso, Weslaco, McAllen, September 29-30, 2004

Epidemiology Training

Binational basic and forensic epidemiology trainings were conducted in the sister cities of El Paso/Ciudad Juarez, Laredo/Nuevo Laredo, and McAllen/Reynosa



Binational Exercises

- Held in:
 - Eagle Pass/Piedras Negras
 - Presidio/Ojinaga
 - Rio Grande/Camargo
- Brought together all levels of local and regional emergency response entities from both sides of the border

Forum Results

- General Director, the Secretaria de Salud de Mexico, invites U.S. officials to visit Mexico City to discuss both nations' pharmaceutical stockpiles and to improve coordination and cooperation between the two countries for preparedness and response

Forum Results

- Reactivation of Binational Health Councils
 - HOPE-K Trinational Health Council
 - Amistad Binational Health Council

Native American Tribes

- The participation of Texas tribes in bioterrorism exercises was a notable achievement.
 - Tigua Indians of Ysleta del Sur Pueblo
 - Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas



Next Steps

- Texas DSHS staff meets in March 2005 with members of USMBHC and Secretaria de Salud de Mexico to prepare Executive Briefing of forum results and to develop calendar of events for 2005
- Identify issues that are out of the span of control of local or regional agencies but that must be addressed by federal agencies

Lessons Learned

- There are multiple, equally valid realities. What I believe is probably different from what someone else believes – and we are both at least partially right.

Lessons Learned

- Cause and effect are separated by time and space. The effects of what I do may not be immediately apparent and may not occur when expected.

Lessons Learned

- The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Lessons Learned

- A few well-focused actions that work together can create significant change.

Lessons Learned

- There is no absolute control of anything, anyone, or any process.

Lessons Learned

- We all participate in the creation of reality we experience and the environment in which we experience it.



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