

## CBP Makes Largest Fentanyl Bust Ever at Arizona Border

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(Compiled from articles by Jack Crowe, YahooFinance and Anita Snow, YahooNews) – U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) agents made the largest fentanyl bust in history at a commercial port of entry (the Mariposa Port) near Nogales, Ariz. on Saturday, agency officials announced Thursday.

Agents were alerted by a drug-sniffing dog to the presence of 254 pounds of fentanyl and 395 pounds of methamphetamine concealed under a secret compartment inside a tractor trailer hauling a load of produce from Mexico into Arizona.

The fentanyl, valued at a \$3.5 million, would be sufficient to kill roughly 57 million people and would have netted traffickers over \$100 million in sales, according to an internal CBP memo obtained by Fox News. Most of the seized fentanyl was in white powder form, but about 2 pounds of it (1 kilogram) was contained in pills.

Authorities arrested the 26-year-old Mexican national who was driving the truck and charged him with possessing a controlled substance with intent to distribute. The driver was a participant in the Department of Homeland Security's **trusted-traveler program**, which is designed to expedite commercial vehicles' entry into the U.S.

**Michael Humphries, Nogales area port director**, praised his team's diligence when announcing the bust on Thursday.

"Their attention to small details that is necessary to make these types of seizures is incredible. The size of a few grains of salt of fentanyl, which is a dangerous opioid, can kill a person very quickly." The seizure, he said, had prevented an immeasurable number of doses of the drug "that could have harmed so many families."

The drug was found hidden in a compartment under the rear floor of a tractor-trailer after a scan during a secondary inspection indicated "some anomalies" in the load, and the agency's police dog team alerted officers to the presence of drugs, Humphries said.

**Doug Coleman, the DEA's special agent** in charge for the Phoenix division, expressed admiration for the bust, emphasizing that it was not the product of any intelligence from his agency but rather "pure, old fashioned police work" by the agent who pulled the truck over.

"It was totally a cold hit" based on the agent's hunch, Coleman said.

President Donald Trump praised the bust in a tweet Thursday, writing: "Our great U.S. Border Patrol Agents made the biggest Fentanyl bust in our Country's history. Thanks, as always, for a job well done!"

Fentanyl, a synthetic opiate up to 100 times more potent than morphine, was responsible for more than 28,000 overdose deaths in the U.S. in 2017, according to the Centers for Disease Control. [The FDA reported: "Many users believe that they are purchasing heroin and actually don't know that they are purchasing fentanyl — which often results in overdose deaths."]

The Drug Enforcement Administration said the previous largest U.S. seizure of fentanyl had been in August 2017 when it seized 145 pounds (66 kilograms) of the drug in a Queens, New York, apartment that was linked to the Sinaloa Cartel. Before that, the largest recorded fentanyl seizure was 88 pounds (40 kilograms) nabbed from a pickup truck in Bartow County, Georgia.

Mexican traffickers have been increasingly smuggling the drug into the United States, mostly hidden in passenger vehicles and tractor-trailers trying to head through ports of entry in the Nogales, Arizona, and San Diego areas.

DEA officials have said that while 85 percent of the illicit fentanyl entering the United States from Mexico is seized at San Diego-area border crossings, an increasing amount is being detected on the border with Arizona, a state where the Sinaloa cartel controls the drug trade and fatal fentanyl overdoses are rising.

Most of the illicitly produced fentanyl in the United States comes through Mexico from China.

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