

GOVERNMENT



## As Imperial County heat deaths rise, critics say 'people have died' from Calexico's inaction

They say closed public restrooms and limited access to the city's cooling center have made the heat more dangerous for those experiencing homelessness.



**Maribel Padilla**, co-founder of the nonprofit Brown Bag Coalition, brings bottled water to unhoused neighbors when temperatures hit extremes.

"There's no water fountains. They closed down all the bathrooms. So where do these people go?"

**Francisco Ramirez** was friends with one of the unhoused men who died in downtown Calexico in July. "I know that what happened to Cuba could happen to me."



Advocates like **Ismael Arvizu** from @calexiconedschange say to keep people safe, the city needs to open a cooling center near downtown.

"The fact that they made it in the community center, which is like blocks away from where people really need it, shows to everyone how much they don't care."

The cooling center was closed on a Friday in August when **Fernando Toledo** felt sick after working in the fields. He spent the day moving between patches of shade in Calexico's Border Friendship Park.



Read the story in English

Lee la historia en español

**Link in bio.**