# COVID-19 wastewater levels and hospitalizations continue to rise across the US

**Evan Blake**
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The latest wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in the US, entirely hidden from the public, is continuing apace. On Thursday, Biobot Analytics released its latest data, showing that the level of SARS-CoV-2 viral particles in wastewater across the US has risen by 125 percent over the past six weeks. Every geographic region is undergoing a surge in wastewater levels, an advance indicator of the spread of the virus.

Scientists are forced to estimate the spread of COVID-19 by sampling wastewater because the federal government has stopped counting the number of COVID-19 cases. In May, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) stopped reporting the daily number of people who tested positive for COVID-19, in a deliberate effort to cover up the spread of the disease in order to condition the public to accept perpetual mass infection.

Extrapolating from wastewater data, infectious disease modeler J.P. Weiland estimates that they translate to roughly 419,000 Americans currently being infected with COVID-19 each day, or one in every 790 Americans. Given that a COVID-19 infection lasts for 10 days on average, this means that roughly 4.2 million Americans are likely currently infected with the virus.

Hospitalizations from COVID-19, a lagging indicator, have also risen nationwide for two weeks straight. According to official figures from the CDC, 8,035 people were hospitalized due to COVID-19 infections for the week ending July 22, a 12.1 percent increase from the prior week and 24.6 percent higher than two weeks prior.

The ongoing wave appears to be driven largely by the Omicron EG.5 subvariant, a descendant of the XBB variants. Coinciding with the latest surge, over the past six weeks EG.5 has risen from 0.4 percent of sequenced cases to 17.3 percent, which is now the highest percentage of all variants in the US. Other Omicron subvariants contributing to the wave are XBB.1.16 and XBB.2.3, which combine to account for 26.8 percent of all sequenced cases.

While official COVID-19 death figures are presently low, these data have been distorted over the past two years and are not reliable. Excess deaths above the pre-pandemic baseline remain elevated throughout the world, with the cumulative total now standing at 24.5 million, according to *The Economist*. The majority of these deaths are directly due to COVID-19, either in the acute phase of the infection or the result of heart attacks, strokes and other causes of death associated with the aftereffects of COVID-19 infection.

The ongoing wave of the pandemic in the US began in the immediate aftermath of the Biden administration and the World Health Organization (WHO) ending their COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) declarations. These unscientific decisions prompted the corporate media to completely stop covering the pandemic, playing a critical role in what is effectively a government-media conspiracy against the population.

Since the emergence of the Omicron variant in November 2021, there has been an ever-deepening propaganda campaign designed to cultivate fatalism, as well as illusions that COVID-19 is now “endemic” and essentially no more harmful than the common cold.

This escalated dramatically after the ending of the PHEs in May, affecting even many people who had previously continued to take precautions against infection. Recent months have seen numerous anecdotal reports on social media by people noting that their friends or family members, who had remained vigilant and protected themselves from the virus through disciplined masking with an N95, let their guard down after the ending of the PHEs and quickly became infected.

At the same time, the horrific effects of Long COVID continue to be covered up, with virtually no reporting in the corporate media despite the constant publication of

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new and alarming research. Within the scientific community, it is now abundantly clear that the societal health impacts of Long COVID will reverberate for decades to come.

Last month, *Nature* published a major review of scientific literature on Long COVID by a group of leading immunologists, which warned sharply:

> The oncoming burden of Long COVID faced by patients, health-care providers, governments and economies is so large as to be unfathomable. If 10% of acute infections lead to persistent symptoms, it could be predicted that ~400 million individuals globally are [presently] in need of support for Long COVID.

The latest summer surge, which is the fourth in four years of the pandemic, upends all the lies that COVID-19 is now "endemic" and equivalent to the cold or flu. In reality, the virus is continuing to mutate rapidly, more than twice as fast as the common flu, and new variants that can bypass prior immunity threaten to unleash repeated waves of infections, hospitalizations and deaths for the foreseeable future.

The effective policy of the ruling class in the US and internationally is that the pandemic is now a matter between individuals and their insurance companies, if they are lucky enough to have insurance.

With virtually no social supports whatsoever, masses of people are being denied access to any treatment for Long COVID by these profit-driven insurance monopolies. Care is only provided for people with proof of a positive PCR test, under conditions in which these tests are now unavailable and overpriced for the vast majority of Americans.

Furthermore, the latest estimates show that roughly 3.85 million Americans have been disenrolled from Medicaid since the ending of expanded access on March 31, with only 41 states and Washington D.C. reporting. The overwhelming majority, 74 percent, lost access due to procedural reasons, i.e., they did not fill out the paperwork properly or on time.

The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that up to 24.4 million Americans, including 7.2 million children, could lose their healthcare coverage by next May, among the most horrific results of the bipartisan propaganda campaign claiming that "the pandemic is over," which has been spearheaded by the Biden administration.

The latest figurehead for this campaign is newly installed CDC Director Mandy Cohen. Since replacing Rochelle Walensky—widely loathed among anti-COVID advocates and scientists for her blatantly pro-corporate and anti-public health policies—Cohen has stepped into her role with vigor. Since July 10, she has tweeted no less than 43 photos of herself maskless in a wide variety of indoor settings, including with large groups and in front of packed audiences at the CDC.

In an interview with NPR this week, Cohen stated bluntly, "We know COVID is here with us. It's going to stay with us. And it's—sadly, it is still killing folks every single day."

Cohen was previously the head of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services from 2017 until late 2021, just as the Omicron variant was first sweeping the globe. Under her lead, North Carolina was one of the first states to begin reopening after limited lockdowns on May 8, 2020, just as cases were again rising and hospitals were being inundated with patients. She was also among the most ardent promoters of lifting mask mandates in May 2021, after Walensky falsely told vaccinated Americans this would be safe, setting the stage for the horrific Delta and Omicron waves.

Based on these credentials, Cohen was hand-picked by Jeff Zients, Biden's multimillionaire Chief of Staff and former White House COVID Response Coordinator who oversaw the disastrous pandemic response in 2021 and early 2022.

The cover-up of the latest COVID-19 wave in the US and the relentless efforts to normalize disease, debilitation and death express the reactionary and bankrupt character of the capitalist system. Public health is now a dead letter in America and throughout the world, as the ruling elites rush headlong into World War III and a deepening climate catastrophe which threaten to kill millions and potentially destroy human civilization.

It is urgently necessary for the international working class to stop this descent into barbarism by mobilizing its collective strength to seize state power, reorganize society along socialist lines, and ensure the health and well-being of future generations.

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