

# *Official Confirm Mexican Drug Kingpin Escapes Through Tunnel*

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Mexico City, July 13 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Mexican drug lord Joaquin Guzman, known as “El Chapo,” escaped from prison through a hole in his cell that led to an elaborate, handmade tunnel, Mexico's National Security spokesman Monte Alejandro Rubio García confirmed on Sunday.

The former head of the notorious Sinaloa Drug Cartel was missing from the Federal Social Re-adaptation Center Number One near the city of Toluca, Saturday around 9pm.

This is the second time that the infamous drug cartel boss has escaped from a Mexican jail. After reviewing the escape, Garcia told a press conference early Sunday the prisoner had escaped through a small 50 by 50 cm hole in the shower area of his cell, shimmied some 10 meters down a vertical pipe, and exited through a tunnel nearly a mile long.

The tunnel was reportedly fixed with lighting and ventilation systems. Garcia also confirmed that oxygen tanks as well as various tools and objects used for construction were found along the way – including a motorcycle that officials believe was used to clear away the dirt from the building process.

Guzman is also wanted in the United States on multiple federal drug trafficking and organized crime charges related to his activities in the Sinaloa cartel, which is said to be one of Mexico's biggest and most powerful drug syndicates. He escaped from a high-security prison in 2001 by riding out through a laundry cart, and was not detained again until 2014 when he was found at a beach resort in Mexico.

Garcia said officials have issued a red alert, secured the remaining prisoners and are prohibiting any in or outward flow from the detention center, according to prison protocols. Eighteen employees from the maximum-security prison have also been taken in for questioning. Local search operations are also underway, while all flights from the Toluca International Airport have been suspended, reported Garcia.

Guzman is reportedly known for his elaborate tunnel designs, using them as escape routes from his many hideouts in Mexico. He is the first Mexican drug trafficker to hire architects and engineers to help build them, according to reports from CBS news.

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