

NEWS

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County Seeks \$3.75 Million in Stimulus Funds for Crime Programs

SAN BERNARDINO – The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors today authorized seeking grants totaling more than \$3.75 million to support victims of crimes, and add personnel for crime scene investigations, high-tech investigations and dispatch.

“The work load on our law enforcement personnel has increased greatly in recent years,” said First District Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt. “These federal stimulus funds will also help us assist crime victims, while providing much-needed staffing for investigations and dispatch.”

The Board authorized applying for funds from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009. The County is seeking \$920,000 to develop new programs and expand existing services for victims of crimes. The money would fund six advocates for two years. That will cover the cost of four existing advocates and restore two other positions that were slated to be deleted next fiscal year.

The County is also seeking \$1,253,000 for five positions for the Sheriff’s specialized investigations units. The Crime Scene Investigations unit would receive three positions to improve the capability of the Sheriff’s Department to respond to crime scenes and provide training related to evidence collection.

The Hi-Tech Crime Detail would receive two positions. The detail was established in 1999 to specialize in computer, audio and video forensics. Since 2003, the workload of the detail has nearly doubled from 304 cases to 585 cases with no increase in staffing. Two additional detectives will improve the turnaround time for cases.

The Sheriff’s Department is also seeking \$1,579,000 to fund 10 dispatchers for the Desert and Valley Communications Centers. The call volume at the dispatch centers has increased by 60% in the last six years. The Department has had to rely on overtime to ensure adequate staffing. The addition of 10 positions would provide better service to the public and reduce the need for overtime.