San Bernardino County
Emergency Medical Care Committee

COLORADO RIVER MEDICAL CENTER (CRMC)

PUBLIC HEARING

CHANGE IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT PERMIT

May 17, 2010
Needles, California

CONDUCTED BY

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
(Committee of the Whole)

Allen Francis, RN, Emergency Nurse
James Holmes, Hospital CEO (Chair)
Diana McCafferty, Private Ambulance Transporter

INTRODUCTION

In January 1999, legislation was enacted in California to require general acute care hospitals to provide advance notice of intent to downgrade or close emergency departments to the State Department of Health Services (SDPH) and to local EMS agencies (ICEMA).

Additionally, local EMS agencies are required to prepare an Impact Evaluation Report (IER) on the effects of the emergency department licensure change on the provision of emergency medical services in the area. The IER must include at least one public hearing. ICEMA requested that members of the Emergency Medical Care Committee (EMCC) serve as the Hearing Board.

The public hearing was held on May 17, 2010, in the City of Needles. The public hearing is intended to gather information from the community, health care providers, public officials, citizens, and any other interested parties.

The Hearing Board consisted of Jim Holmes, CEO, Redlands Community Hospital, Allen Francis, RN, representing emergency nurses, and Diana McCafferty, representing private ambulance transporters.

Also in attendance were San Bernardino County Counsel and a court reporter. Mindy Spiegel, MD, consultant on licensure for CRMC, joined in the hearing by telephone.

The hearing agenda is noted in Attachment I.

RECOMMENDATION OF HEARING BOARD TO EMCC

Based upon the information received during the Public Hearing, the Committee of the Whole has determined that the change in emergency licensure will have no impact upon the existing delivery of emergency medical services, PROVIDED THAT CRMC MAINTAINS 24/7 EMERGENCY PHYSICIAN SERVICES.

The information below summarizes the discussions leading to this determination.

1. **The ICEMA Report (Attachment II) indicates that there were 10,935 emergency department encounters during FY 2008-09. Based upon OSHPD reports, ninety–seven percent (97%) of these patients were discharged to home or to self care from the emergency department (Attachment II). Additionally, Dr. Vaezazizi, ICEMA's Medical Director, concludes that the permit change will not impact the existing EMS system, provided the hospital maintains 24/7 emergency physician coverage.**

2. **CRMC's CEO (David Selman), the Emergency Department Medical Director (Matthew Kidd, M.D.), the Mayor of Needles (Jeff Williams), and a member of the Board of Trustees (Linda Kidd) reported that CRMC has not been in compliance with State Regulations required for a "basic" permit in many years.**

   CRMC has not had an intensive care unit (ICU) and it has no immediate plans or abilities to open an ICU. The costs are prohibitive and physician availability is limited, although the hospital is working diligently on physician recruitment.

3. **Mary O'Toole, Deputy Chief of Staff for First District Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt, provided information on the many efforts by the Supervisor and others to increase health care programs in the Needles area.**

4. **The emergency department contracted physician group is EM Care and is well established at the hospital. The Director, Dr. Kidd, described the close working relationship with EMS personnel and the existing abilities**

to transfer to other hospitals with a higher level of care when needed. CRMC has a licensed helipad to facilitate rapid transfers.

5. **Needles Ambulance, the paramedic provider/transporter in Needles and the surrounding area, has advised ICEMA that the system is working in Needles and does not anticipate any changes to EMS if the permit is changed.**

   No law enforcement, fire, or EMS providers provided input to the Hearing.

6. **Public comments were mainly concerned that the emergency department remain open 24/7 and that citizens, including those calling 9-1-1, would have a physician available at all times. Once these assurances were provided, most of the public withdrew these concerns about the permit change.**

   One speaker indicated a measure has been placed on the June ballot in Needles that could lead to the sale/reorganization of the hospital. The speaker was advised that if issues changed in the City or CRMC, those entities would need to determine the appropriate next steps.

Written comments received from all parties, including CRMC's written commitment to maintain 24/7 emergency department physician coverage, will be included in the approved Impact Evaluation Report that will be submitted to the State Department of Health Services once approved by ICEMA's Governing Board.

Attachment I

Inland Counties Emergency Medical Agency

Serving San Bernardino, Inyo and Mono Counties

Virginia Hastings, Executive Director
Reza Vaezazizi, M.D., Medical Director

PUBLIC HEARING

CONVERSION OF COLORADO RIVER MEDICAL CENTER EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT PERMIT FROM BASIC TO STANDBY PERMIT

Monday, May 17, 2010

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Needles City Council Chambers
1111 Bailey Avenue
Needles, California

A G E N D A

I. **Call to Order – Emergency Medical Services Committee (Committee of the Whole)**

II. **Overview of the Emergency Medical Services System**

Virginia Hastings, Executive Director
Inland Counties EMS Agency (ICEMA)

III. **Presentation by Colorado River Medical Center**

David Selman
Interim Chief Executive Officer

Matthew Kidd, M.D.
Emergency Department Medical Director

IV. **Presentations by Elected Officials**

Jeff Williams
Mayor, City of Needles

Mary O'Toole
Deputy Chief of Staff
Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt

Linda Kidd
Hospital Board of Trustees

V. **Presentations by Law, Emergency Medical Services, Fire Department Representatives**

VI. **Public Comments**

REMINDER: Individuals desiring to speak must complete a "Request to Speak" form located at the entry to the meeting room. Speakers will be called upon in the appropriate agenda category based upon the order in which the "Request to Speak" form is received.

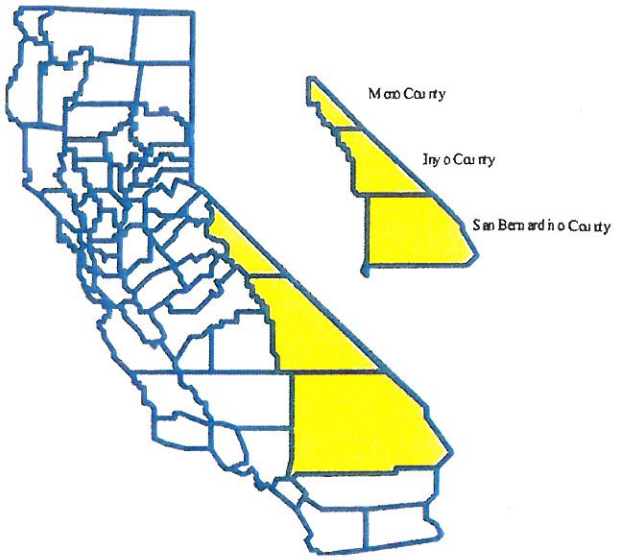
In the interest of time, each speaker will be limited to three minutes. The Chair of the Hearing Board reserves the right to restrict time further if necessary in order to allow maximum participation.

At precisely12:30 p.m. the Hearing Board will cease taking comments to allow for discussion/concluding remarks by the Board.

NOTE: The Hearing Board is not required to present its findings/ recommendations at this hearing. A report on this public Hearing will appear on the full Emergency Medical Care Committee agenda for its May 20, 2010 meeting. The EMCC agenda will be on ICEMA's web page - www.icema.net

Colorado River Medical Center (CRMC)

PUBLIC HEARING
CHANGE IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT PERMIT



Prepared By:

Inland Counties Emergency Medical Agency
Virginia Hastings, Executive Director
Reza Vaezazizi, Medical Director

May 17, 2010

INTRODUCTION

In January, 1999, legislation was enacted in California to require general acute care hospitals to provide advance notice of intent to downgrade or close emergency departments to Local Emergency Medical Services Agencies (Inland Counties Emergency Medical Services Agency), the State Department of Public Health (SDPH), Licensing and Certification Branch, and health plan providers. Additionally, legislation requires that the Inland Counties Emergency Medical Services Agency (ICEMA) prepare an Impact Evaluation Report (IER) on the effects of the emergency department downgrade or closure on the provision of emergency medical services in the area. The IER must include at least one public hearing.

This Public Hearing is scheduled in accordance with the Health and Safety Code, Section 1300 (a) (b), and is intended to gather information from the community, health care providers, 9-1-1 providers, public officials and others who may want to offer information relating to the Colorado River Medical Center's intent to change its basic emergency department permit to standby emergency department permit.

Information learned during this Public Hearing will become part of the IER required to be provided to the SDPH. The IER will be posted on the ICEMA web page (www.icema.net) when completed and placed on the agenda of the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors for approval to forward to SDPH.

ICEMA has requested members of the San Bernardino County Emergency Medical Care Committee (EMCC) to conduct the Public Hearing. Members of the EMCC are appointed by the Board of Supervisors to provide advice to the Board and to ICEMA on matters relating to the emergency medical services system. The EMCC members who will be conducting the Hearing, along with the organizations each represents, are noted on Page 2. The full EMCC membership may be found on ICEMA's web page (www.icema.net).

NOTIFICATION TO THE PUBLIC

Notices were posted at ICEMA, CRMC, and Needles City offices. Additionally, notifications were posted for two weeks in the Mohave Daily News and Desert Dispatch, and distributed via e-mail notification to all EMS system participants.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COMMITTEE
HEARING BODY

NAME	ORGANIZATION
James Holmes	Hospital Representative
Alan Francis	EMS Nurse
Diana McCafferty	Private Ambulance Provider

BACKGROUND/DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

On March 29, 2010, the Colorado River Medical Center (CRMC) notified CDPH and ICEMA of its intent to convert its emergency services permit from "basic" to "standby" (Attachment I). CRMC is owned by the City of Needles and is a licensed general acute care hospital with a "Basic" emergency services permit issued by the SDPH, Licensing and Certification Branch. The City of Needles contracts with the Camden Group to manage CRMC. The interim Chief Executive Officer is David Selman. CRMC also is certified as a "critical access hospital" by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid services and the SDPH. CRMC intends to maintain its "critical access hospital" designation which requires that the hospital provide emergency care necessary to meet the needs of its inpatients or outpatients. This critical access designation provides flexibility in allowing CRMC to match resources and subsequent costs with the actual needs of the patient population. CRMC commits to maintain 24-hour, seven days a week in-house emergency physician coverage.

Description of Area:

CRMC is located at 1401 Bailey Avenue in Needles, California, a community located on the Colorado River, the divider between California and Arizona. The population of Needles is reported as follows: 5,471 total population, 3,987 urban and 1,484 rural. The population fluctuates with the seasons due to its close proximity to the Colorado River. Additionally, CRMC is the closest hospital for travelers along the heavily traveled Interstate 40, Highway 95, the lower Mohave Valley, Arizona and approximately 3,100 square miles of the outlying areas of unincorporated San Bernardino County. See Attachment II for demographic information.

Emergency Medical Services Responders:

The following providers respond into the service area covered by CRMC:

- San Bernardino County Fire (SBFD) provides First Responder Basic Life Support. SBFD does not have transport capabilities.
- Ambulance transportation has been provided by Needles Ambulance/Baker Emergency Medical Services (BEMS) since 1998. BEMS employs two (2) full-time paramedics and three (3) part-time paramedics in the immediate area .
- Air Ambulances service is provided by Mercy Air and mutual aid is provided by Native Air, CareFlight and Guardian from Arizona.
- Arrowhead Regional Medical Center (ARMC) is the assigned Paramedic Base Hospital.

Refer to Attachment III and IV for 9-1-1 call frequency in Needles and the surrounding area.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE/EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VOLUME

TYPE	TIME PERIOD	VOLUME
9-1-1 ambulance responses [1]	FY 2008-09	787
Interfacility Transfers[2]	FY 2008-09	177
CRMC total number of encounters[3]	FY 2008-09	10,935

[1] Refer to Attachment V Needles Ambulance Response by Category FY 2006-07

[2] Refer to Attachment VI Needles Ambulance Responses by Transport Type and Receiving Hospital

[3] Source – http://www.oshpd.ca.gov/MIRCal/

OTHER HOSPITALS/MEDICAL CENTERS NEAR NEEDLES

The next closest hospital to CRMC is Valley View Medical Center in Fort Mohave, Arizona (approximately 12 miles from CRMC).

The graphic below lists the closest hospitals and the key services each provides:

OTHER HOSPITALS/MEDICAL CENTERS NEAR NEEDLES

FACILITY	ER SERVICES	BEDS	TRAUMA	PEDIATRIC TRAUMA	NEURO	BURN CENTER	CARDIOPULMONARY	PSYCHIATRIC	PERINATAL	NEONATAL
Colorado River Medical Center	Basic	25								
Valley View Medical Center (about 12 miles; FORT MOHAVE, AZ)	Basic	66			♦		♦			
Western Arizona Regional Medical Center (about 18 miles; BULLHEAD, AZ)	Not dedicated	139								♦
Havasu Regional Medical Center (about 31 miles; LAKE HAVASU CITY, AZ)	Not dedicated	178								♦
Kingman Regional Medical Center (about 54 miles; KINGMAN, AZ)	Basic	160								
Palo Verde (about 95 miles; BLYTHE, CA)	Stand by	51							♦	
Barstow Community Hospital (about 150 miles; BARSTOW, CA)	Basic	56								

Arrowhead Regional Medical Center (ARMC), the paramedic base hospital, Level II trauma center and licensed burn center is approximately 217 miles from CRMC. Loma Linda University Medical Center (LLUMC), approximately equal distance as ARMC, is a Level I adult and pediatric trauma center. Aircraft have to circumnavigate restricted area over Twentynine Palms Marine Corps Base.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The Health and Safety Code generally requires that paramedics transport patients to a "basic" emergency department; however, exceptions are allowed in rural areas. The Medical Director of an EMS Agency may authorize another facility to receive patients requiring emergency medical services if the facility has adequate staff and equipment to provide the services, as determined by the Medical Director of the EMS Agency.

Information available from Office of Statewide Health and Planning Department (OSHPD) reports for fiscal year 2008/09. The CRMC emergency department had 10,936 patient encounters. Of the 10,936 patient encounters, 97% were discharged to home or self care from the emergency department.

CRMC will maintain its Critical Access Hospital designation, which requires it to provide "emergency care necessary to meet the needs of its inpatients and outpatients".

CRMC has committed in writing to maintain a physician experienced in emergency medicine in the emergency department 24 hours a day, seven days a week. CRMC reserves the right to change this physician coverage at a future date, but commits to adequate notification to the EMS system prior to physician staffing changes.

CRMC does not have an intensive care unit nor does it provide specialty care programs.

All 9-1-1 patient destinations are determined by ICEMA policies. The ICEMA Medical Director, Reza Vaezazizi, M.D., does not envision that the change in the emergency department permit will alter the current patient destination decisions as long as CRMC maintains 24/7 in-house emergency physician coverage. Any decrease in this level of physician coverage may result in different destination policies for 9-1-1 providers. Additionally, CRMC maintains a licensed heliport which facilitates rapid transfer to higher levels of care as necessary.

ATTACHMENT I

1401 Bailey Avenue
Needles, CA 92363
Telephone: (760) 326-7183
Fax: (760) 326-7275

March 29, 2010

Ms. Lena Resurrection, District Administrator
The California Department of Public Health
Licensing and Certification
San Bernardino District Office
464 W. Fourth Street, Suite 529
San Bernardino, CA 92401

Dear Lena,

Please find this as formal notification of our request to convert from Basic Emergency status as defined by the State of California Code of Regulations, Licensing and Certification, Section 70413 to Standby Emergency Medical Service, Section 70651. As we've discussed, CRMC does not operate an Intensive Care Unit, nor plans to reopen one, therefore we are not in compliance with Section 70413.m.1. of the Code of Regulations.

This notification is being copied to Virginia Hastings, Director, ICEMA.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Please don't hesitate to call if I can answer any questions for you.

Sincerely,

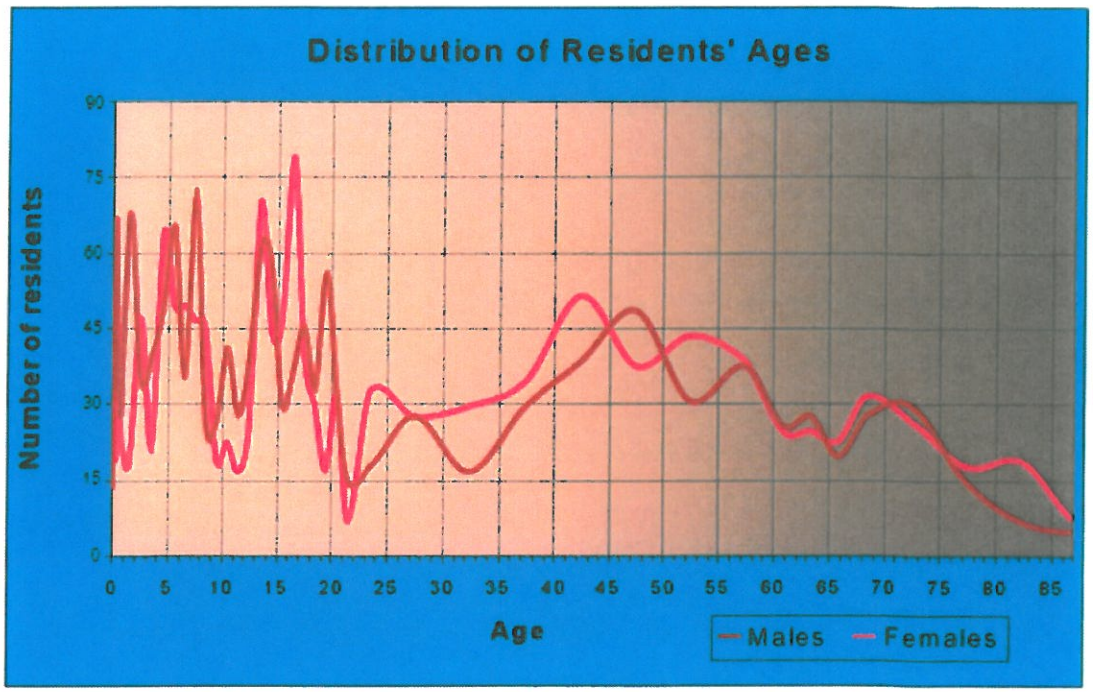
David Selman, FACHE
Interim CEO/CFO

Cc: Virginia Hastings

ATTACHMENT II

DEMOGRAPHICS

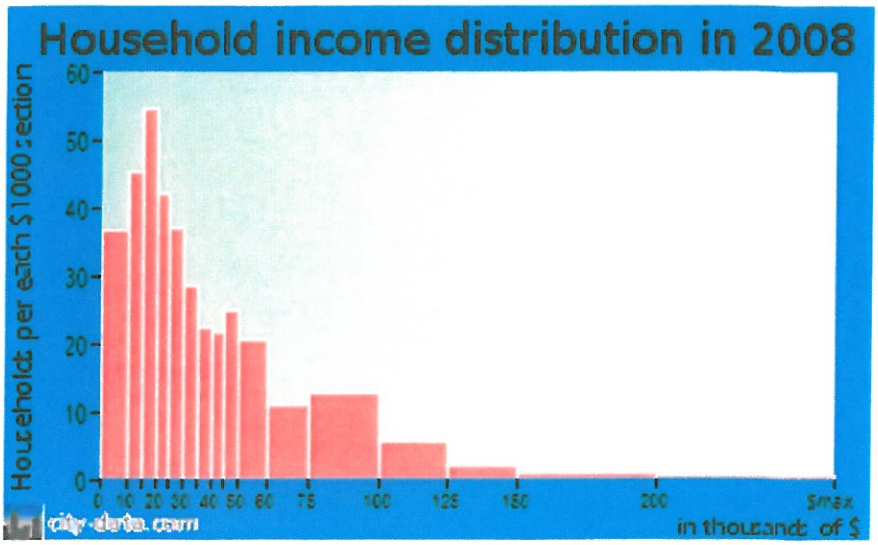
Total population: 5,471 Urban population: 3,987 , Rural population: 1,484. Population change since 2000: +8.6%. Population fluctuates with seasons due to proximity to Colorado River.



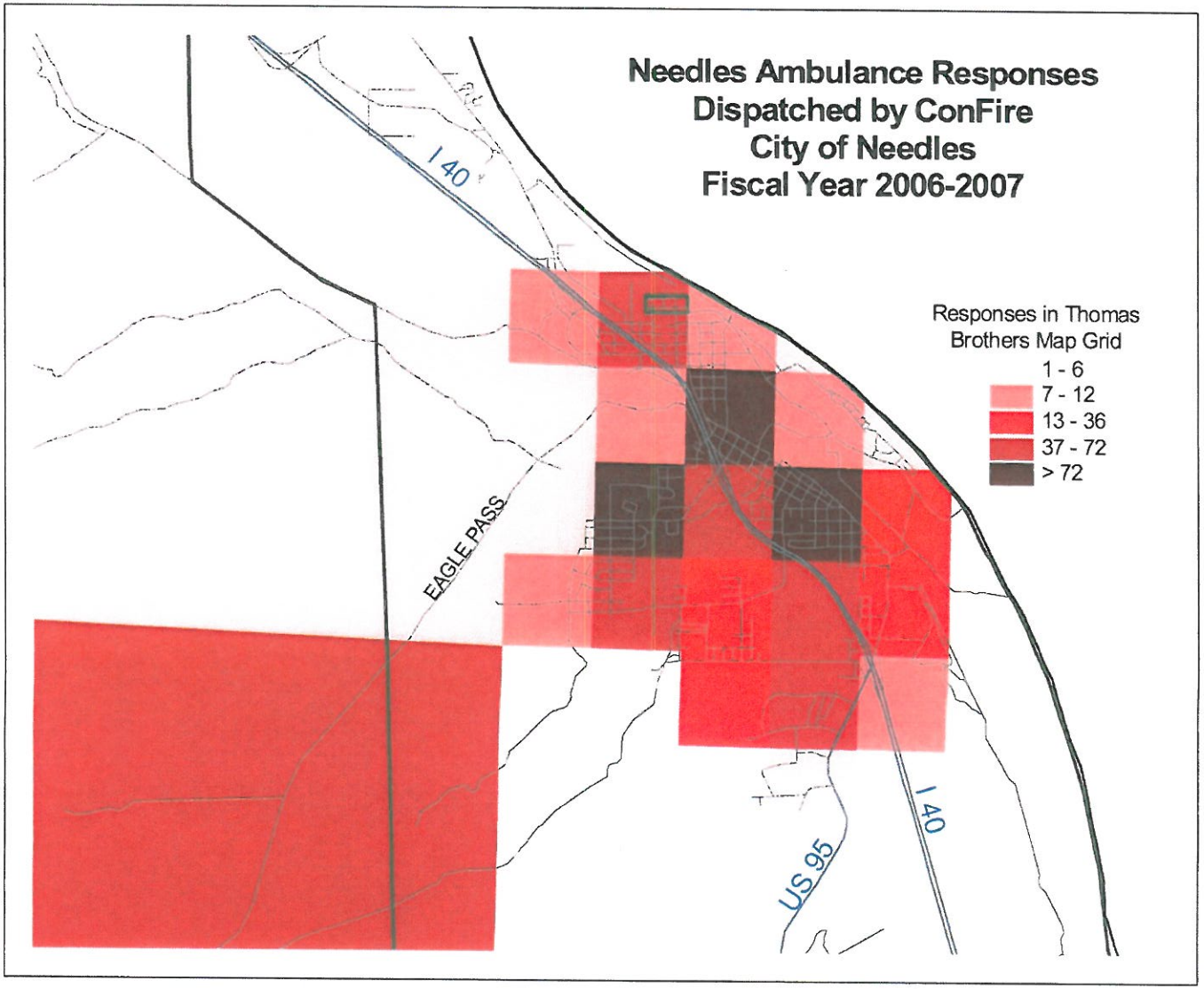
Estimated median household income in 2008: $34,148 compared to $61.021 statewide.
Estimated per capita income in 2008: $19,736.

Residents with income below the poverty level in 2008:
This zip code: 24.7%
Whole state: 13.3%

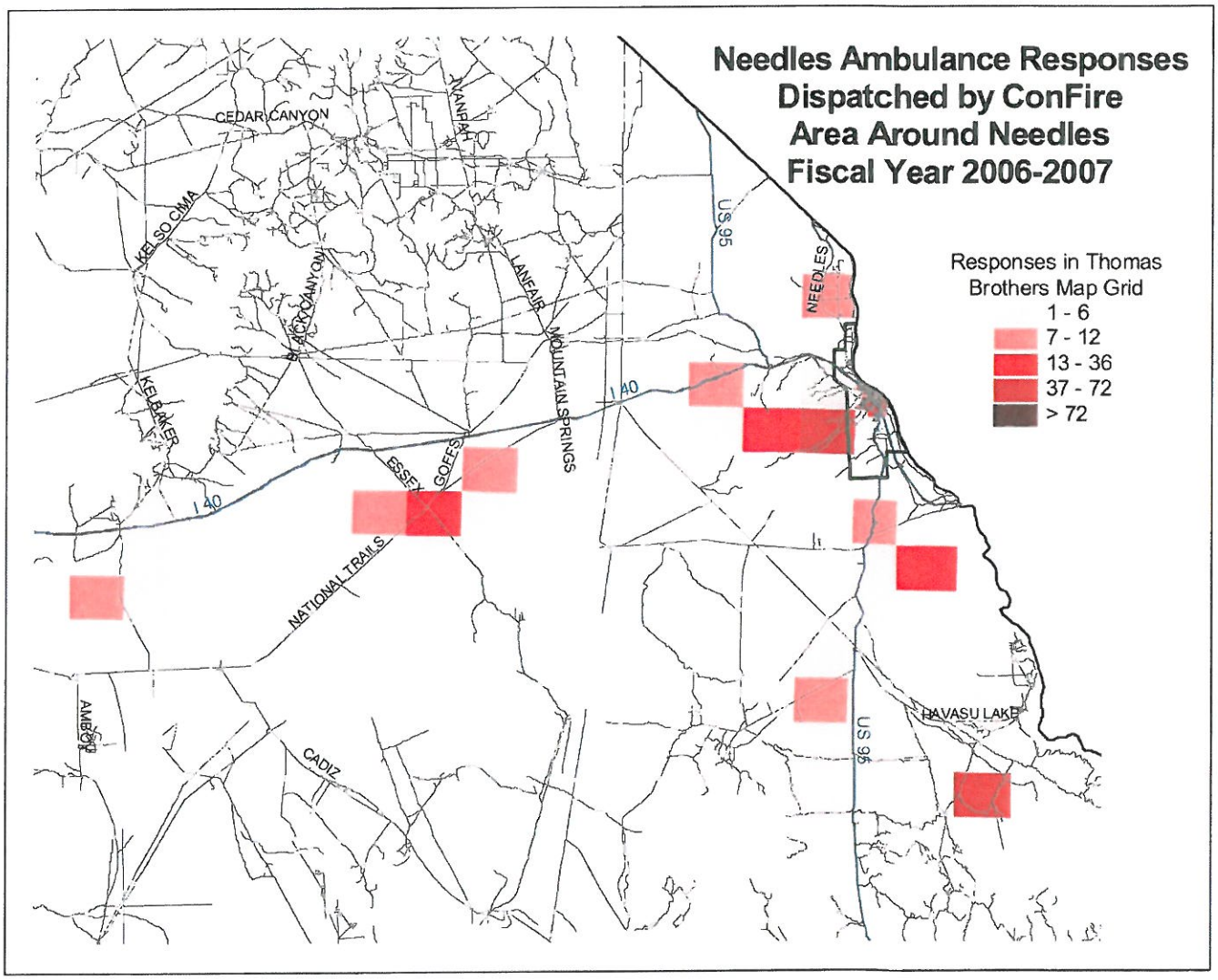
Residents with income below 50% of the poverty level in 2008:
This zip code: 9.2%
Whole state: 5.4%



ATTACHMENT III



ATTACHMENT IV



ATTACHMENT V

Baker-EMS Needles Ambulance Responses by Category and Outcome
Fiscal Year 2008-2009

	Outcome				
Care Category	Total Patients	Ground	Non-Transport*	Helicopter Amb (Intercept)	%
Other Medical	358	332	24	2	30%
Traumatic	253	217	19	17	21%
Respiratory	73	71	2		6%
Cardiac	59	58	1		5%
Behavior/OD	17	17			1%
Obstetric	14	14			1%
Environment	13	11	2		1%
Subtotal	**787**	**720**	**48**	**19**	66%
Transfer	177	177			15%
Missing	223	1	222		19%
Total	**1,187**	**898**	**270**	**19**	**100%**
%	100%	76%	23%	2%	

*Includes: Response Cancelled, No Patient Found, Pt/Parent Refused Care & Transport, Treated & Not Transported by EMS Personnel, Pt. Dead Arrival of EMS Responders, etc.

Source: ICEMA – ePCR

ATTACHMENT VI

Baker-EMS Needles Ambulance Responses by Transport Type and Receiving Hospital
Fiscal Year 2008/2009

Receiving Hospital 9-1-1 Emergency Transports

Receiving Hospital	Patients	%
Colorado River Med Ctr.	690	93%
Valley View Med Center	23	3%
UMC Trauma	12	2%
SunRise Hospital	11	1%
Barstow Comm. Hosp.	1	0%
St. Rose Sienna Hospital	1	0%
UMC Medical Center	1	0%
Missing	1	0%
Grand Total	740	100%

Receiving Hospital Interfacility Transfers

Receiving Hospital	Patients	%
SunRise Hospital	72	41%
Valley View Med Ctr.	30	17%
Out of County Facility	19	11%
WARMC (Western AZ)	18	10%
Colorado River Med Ctr.	12	7%
River Gardens	6	3%
Southern Hills	4	2%
Brookside Healthcare	4	2%
Desert Springs Hospital	4	2%
UMC Medical Center	3	2%
River Gardens Care Ctr.	3	2%
ARMC	2	1%
Grand Total	177	100%

Receiving Hospital Air Transported Trauma

Receiving Hospital	Patients	%
UMC Trauma	10	59%
SunRise Hosp	6	35%
UMC Medical	1	6%
Grand Total	17	100%

Source: ICEMA ePCRs