

NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino
www.sbcounty.gov



SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

AT YOUR SERVICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2013

For more information, contact
David Wert, Public Information Officer
(909) 387-4717

dwert@sbcounty.gov



Public safety center dedicated; now ready to serve

HESPERIA – County, state, federal and local dignitaries and scores of public safety personnel and community members ushered in a new era in public safety for the Victor Valley and all of San Bernardino County today with the dedication of the High Desert Public Safety Operations Center.

The 30,000-square-foot complex is located within the 2½-year-old Jerry Lewis High Desert Government Center, which was built not only to the highest environmental standards but also to survive an extreme disaster. The PSOC houses an updated and expanded Sheriff and Fire 911 call and dispatch center and an emergency operations center.

“This high-tech operations center for sheriff’s and fire dispatchers is great news for first responders and the High Desert community as a whole. And the fact that the project came in at 45 percent under budget is great news for taxpayers,” said Supervisor Lovingood, whose First District includes Hesperia and most of the High Desert.

The facility, which goes into operation at the end of the month, will not only make the High Desert self-sufficient during a disaster, but if the county’s main emergency operations center in Rialto is disabled, the High Desert PSOC is equipped to become the crisis nerve center for the entire county.

“At the flip of a switch we can transfer work from one center to another,” said County Fire Chief Mark Hartwig. “This is especially important in our county because of the concern we have for a big earthquake.”

-MORE-

High Desert PSOC Dedication

May 10, 2013

Page 2

Faced with the need to replace the county's aging emergency operations center in Rialto, housed in a building not designed to withstand a disaster, the county conducted a review in 2007 that concluded the county needed two emergency operations centers, one in the San Bernardino Valley and the other in the High Desert. The High Desert facility alone was projected to cost \$38.8 million.

The Board of Supervisors, with assistance from the County Administrative Office, in 2011 developed the idea of using surplus space in the Jerry Lewis High Desert Government Center at less than half the cost of a separate building.

"This is what our employees deserve," Sheriff-Coroner John McMahon said of the new 911 dispatch center, which will replace crowded and outdated space elsewhere in the High Desert. "These are the people who take care of us."

The \$16.7 million PSOC is served by a 175-foot communication tower that will give first responders the ability to communicate when lives are at stake. The facility will provide multiple communication paths in and around the greater Victor Valley. Two types of devices, land mobile radio type antennas and microwave dishes, are attached to the tower.

All of the elements at the PSOC will have duplicate emergency generators that back up power to the building as well as the systems within the facility.

"This is the closest thing I've seen to being ready for combat," said Congressman Paul Cook, a retired Marine colonel whose district includes the High Desert. "This is the most important thing we do for our citizens."

This facility incorporates the concept of a Fusion Center – a place where all agencies and people essential in all aspects of an emergency can work together to assist the public, keep them safe, and orchestrate recovery. A key goal will be to provide critical information to first responders, government and community leaders, the news media, and the public.