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LOCAL NEWS

Somerton/Cocopah unveils new ambulance

BY PAIGE LAUREN DEINER
Mar 12, 2005

SOMERTON — Somerton/Cocopah Fire Department's new ambulance has an extra feature that may put children more at ease as they travel to the hospital.



Somerton/Cocopah Fire Department's new ambulance is more spacious than the station's other ambulances. It also is four-wheel drive, which is unique for ambulances in the Yuma area. Photo by Jacob Lopez/The Sun

The ambulance features a DVD player and children's movies, so that they after they are stabilized, they can watch "Dora the Explorer" on the 12- to 15-minute ride from Somerton to Yuma Regional Medical Center.

"The reason why we're going to put the DVD player in there is so they (children) can concentrate more on the movie and the paramedics can put more concentration on the child. We'll be able to make the ride to the hospital a lot more comfortable — it's a scary situation for any child when they're being transported to the hospital in an ambulance," said Robby Rodriguez, Somerton/Cocopah Fire Department public information officer.

The ambulance, which cost \$130,000 and was a project more than two years in the making, is one of few in Yuma County that is four-wheel drive. The ambulance was purchased through a Community Development Block Grant.

Friday was its first day in service. The department, which serves Somerton and the Cocopah reservation, has two other ambulances.

Rodriguez said the department is going to use the vehicle "in areas in the county that require four-wheel drive — like behind the state prison."

Rodriguez said the four-wheel-drive feature will allow the company to respond faster to all-terrain vehicle accidents. He said when the company responded to this type of accident before, first responders had to park the ambulance and walk to the scene of the accident, carrying all of the equipment. Now they can drive to the accident site with the ambulance.

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Dating Contest	
Community	
Education	"We can get into places where we can't get in with two-wheel drive vehicles," said Rodriguez.
Election Results	
Events Calendar	Rodriguez said they will also use the ambulance to respond to dehydrated immigrants in the desert. He said if the department can drive the ambulance there, instead of going with the U.S. Border Patrol, they can start treatment sooner.
Community Info	
Photo Gallery	Somerton Mayor Jose Yopez said, "It's the pretty red truck I never want to be riding in the back of, but when I do, it will be nice, new and reliable."
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