

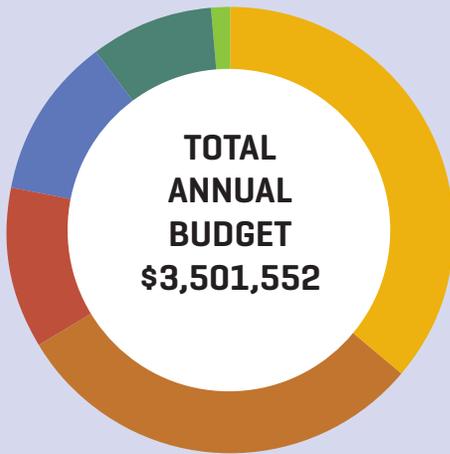
Enriching Our Community

Gila County Health & Emergency Management

Fiscal Year
2016-2017
Annual Report

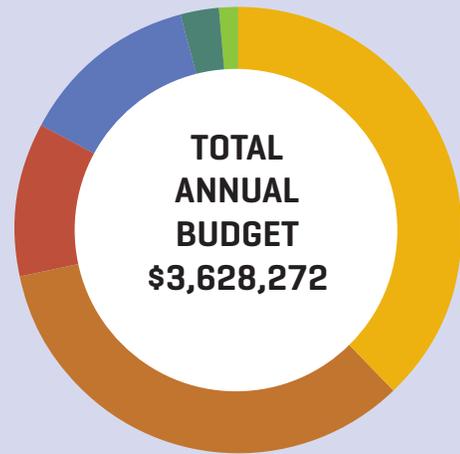
Fiscal Budget & Funding Information

FY2017 BUDGET



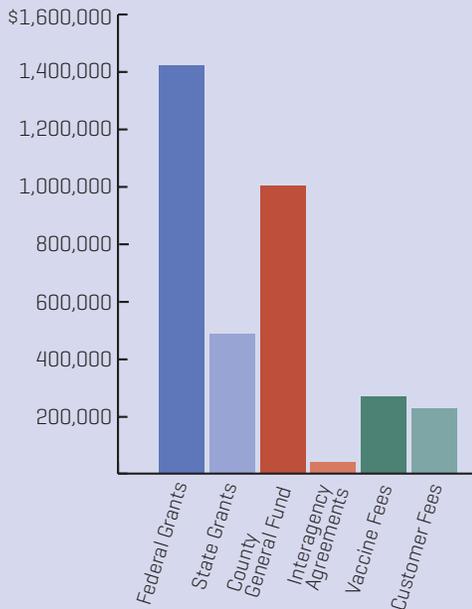
- Health Services
- Prevention
- Animal Care & Control
- Emergency Management
- Environmental Health
- Other [Accreditation]

FY2016 BUDGET

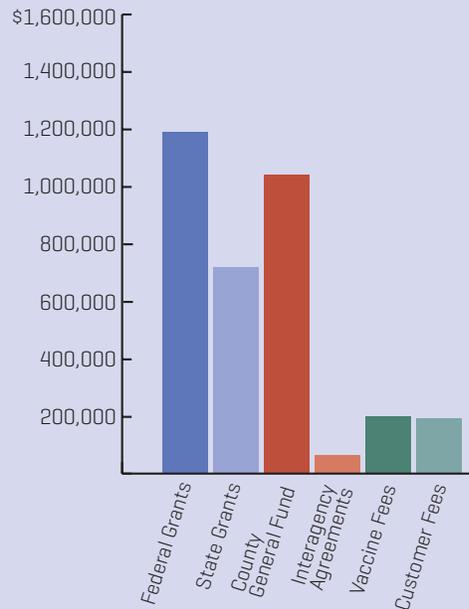


- Health Services
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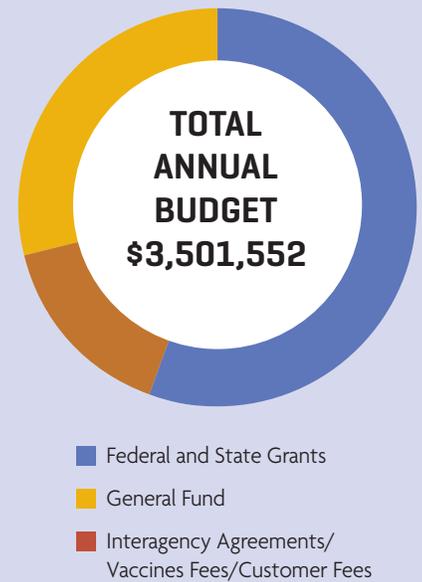
FY2017 REVENUE SOURCES



FY2016 REVENUE SOURCES



FY2017 COUNTY FUNDING



- Federal and State Grants
- General Fund
- Interagency Agreements/
Vaccines Fees/Customer Fees

Source: Gila County Health & Emergency Management budget data.

Gila County Health & Emergency Management Leadership Team
[from left to right]: Samantha Jerome, Nutrition Services Manager; Paula Horn, Deputy Director; Michael O'Driscoll, Director; John Castaneda, Animal Care & Control Manager; Nancy Rutherford, Health Programs Manager; Ginnie Scales, Health Services Program Manager



Enriching Our Community

Dear Gila County residents & friends:

Our teams accomplished a lot this year. Their coordinated efforts, unwavering vigilance, and good old-fashioned hard work have once again been key in delivering exceptional services to our great county. I am proud to lead such a dedicated group.

As Gila County's public health partner, we know our actions have a direct impact on our residents' well being. And we take this privilege seriously. We serve nearly every county school, healthcare organization, and humane society, as well as seniors, new mothers, families, teens, and children with services that help them live safer, smarter, and better prepared lives. Indeed, everything we do is focused on "enriching our community."

With our Community Health Assessment (CHA) finalized last year, we were able to begin action toward our Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Our priorities this year were obesity, substance abuse, access to healthcare, and sexual health. In addition to fine-tuning programs, we strengthened ties with our community partners and improved outreach, to ensure every action has noted and lasting effect.

While many initiatives were headed up by our Health Services and Prevention teams, every department made strides. Environmental Health expanded its surveillance and vector control efforts to mitigate Zika Virus. EM/PHEP supported the development of our new southern CERT and teen CERT, continued the rollout of our Everbridge system, and organized eight training sessions with our community response partners, ensuring better preparation for emergencies. And our Animal Care & Control team launched new branding and social media efforts — quadrupling adoptions and increasing its live release rate by more than 50%!

As we begin the new fiscal year, we remain steadfast in our mission to deliver quality programs and services that continue to enrich our community. You can learn more about our offerings through our websites [gilacountyaz.gov and readygila.com] and facebook pages. Please take a moment to sign up for Everbridge notifications on readygila.com to ensure you and your loved ones are aware of emergencies and weather issues. We welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,

Michael O'Driscoll, MPH
Director, Health & Emergency Management

“Our priorities this year were substance abuse, access to healthcare, obesity, and sexual health. In addition to fine-tuning programs, we strengthened ties with our community partners and improved outreach, to ensure every action has noted and lasting effect.”



Programs at a Glance

Department

2016 Key Accomplishments

Health Services

[see page 5]

- Our skilled nurses administered 916 influenza shots, 586 TB skin tests, and 4,662 vaccinations to 2,730 Gila County residents — bringing needed services to 16% more people than in 2015.
- We initiated a partnership with Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center and “One Call” to augment our community healthcare support.

Environmental Health

[see page 6]

- Our sanitarians conducted 386 inspections to ensure safe food handling in restaurants, pools and spas, community facilities, daycares, and schools, as well as mobile events. We investigated and resolved just 27 complaints — a reduction from previous years that we attribute to our more collaborative approach with owners.
- We continued and expanded our work in monitoring and abating mosquito populations to contain the spread of Zika Virus, Dengue Fever, Chikungunya, and other vector-borne illnesses.

Animal Care & Control

[see page 7]

- We rebranded our department, identified and formed partnerships with more rescues and animal agencies, produced new consumer literature, and conducted a number of discounted vaccination and adoption events. We also launched a facebook initiative that has gained us new interest and advocates across the Phoenix valley, as well as out of state.
- We increased adoptions by an average of 400% and our “live release” rate of owner-surrendered and adoptable animals by 67% for dogs and 52% for cats.

Prevention

[see page 8]

- We formed an Obesity Action Group and implemented discount programs to encourage healthy eating and make fresh, local produce more affordable to needy families.
- We produced and distributed updated advertisements and literature to better connect with residents on substance abuse, teen pregnancy prevention, and sexual health.
- Our prevention specialists facilitated 416 classes in bullying prevention, hand-washing, oral health, life skills, sexual health, tobacco prevention, and safe teen driving.

Emergency Management/ PHEP

[see page 9]

- We continued to build subscribers for our Everbridge® communitywide notification system, enrolling 15,459 residents as of July 1, 2017, and connecting with others through various lists. This critical tool enables us to reach and apprise residents of every imminent health and weather issue, environmental hazard, terrorism concern, or other pressing threat. Residents can sign up by visiting readygila.com.
- We worked with community partners to develop protocols for mass emergencies. We also administered various training initiatives to best prepare staff, CERT volunteers, and residents. Finally, we welcomed the development of a new Teen CERT program in Globe/Miami.



Health Services

Our **Health Services Department** enriches our community by providing life-saving immunizations, low-cost wellness screenings, and health services education. We also issue birth and death certificates.

Our 11-person team spans registered nurses, communicable disease specialists, medical case managers, medical services billing specialists, and vital records specialists, who collaborate closely with other county healthcare organizations, state officials, and physicians to address pressing issues.

Access to Healthcare

Last year's Community Health Assessment (CHA) identified "access to healthcare" as one of the county's top concerns. We took this to heart, and have incorporated it as a priority focus.

One example is our collaboration with Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center and "One Call" to promote and update community resources and referral processes. "One Call" is a call-in line through which residents can get their healthcare questions answered by a registered nurse.

Immunizations

One of the primary ways we enrich our community is by offering low-cost immunizations. Our skilled nurses administer a wide range of immunizations, which includes annual flu shots. Every April, we also conduct our "Kindergarten Roundup," hosted at our Globe facility, providing children with immunizations required by the school system. In addition, we host a number of wellness screening opportunities.

Through these programs in 2016, Gila County Health Services served more than 2,700 adults and children — 16% more than in 2015. We also extended our collaboration with Native Air in Payson to ensure first responders and emergency personnel received their flu shots and TB skin tests.

In total, we administered over 4,600 health-promoting and wellness vaccinations — including those provided free of cost to uninsured and needy individuals. We continue to enhance visibility of our services to ensure all members of our community have access to these essential health resources.



Our skilled nurses review the importance, benefits, and possible side effects of every immunization with our clients.

Nursing Services

Nursing Services is comprised of four Registered Nurses, two medical case managers, one communicable disease specialist, and two administrative professionals, who provide on-site nursing support to community residents at both our Globe and Payson offices.

One program in this area is Communicable Disease, which manages monitoring, testing, and reporting of infectious diseases in Gila County. In 2016, we investigated 193 cases of influenza, 101 cases of RSV, and 56 cases of STDs — including 3 positive HIV cases — among other diseases.

We also administered a total of 586 TB skin tests. For all positive diagnoses, we assisted individuals by providing educational materials and support in finding a primary care physician, if needed. In instances of HIV and some STDs, we handled required state reporting and home visitations to ensure these individuals get ongoing care and medication.

In addition to these threats, our team stays abreast of new disease dynamics so that we can best support our community. One particular illness we are following is Zika Virus, which is spreading across Texas and Florida. In 2016, we provided training refreshers and updates for all of our nurses on Zika Virus, so they are better prepared to handle any arising issue.

Vital Records

Finally, Gila County Health Services handles the issuance and recording of vital records. Using data provided by the Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS), we recorded the county's births and deaths, issuing 996 birth certificates and 3,387 death certificates in 2016. This number included all requested copies.

In the next year, we expect to have this process more streamlined and efficient, as a new electronic vital records registry from AZDHS comes online this October. The system will be the most significant vital records enhancement in Arizona in the last decade.

Environmental Health

The **Gila County Environmental Health (EH) Department** oversees food safety and environmental quality for our community. Our two-person team ensures best practices of restaurants/food service operations, hotels/motels, community pools/spas, recreational facilities, daycares, children's camps, schools, and other institutions. Our registered sanitarians also perform epidemiological (e.g., foodborne illnesses) investigations, sanitation of grounds, and air/soil quality studies, and handle various vector control and other environmental complaints and issues.

Food Safety Inspections

Our Environmental Health team plays a big role in enriching our community. We regularly inspect all county food service establishments and mobile providers to ensure food safety and reduce any risk to our residents. Contaminated or improperly prepared or handled foods can be a source of serious illness or disease, including salmonella, shigella, and **e coli**. In 2016, we handled 386 inspections, 18 followups, and 27 complaint investigations (roughly 40% fewer than in 2015). Our collaborative approach in supporting owners and helping them address issues was key in reducing violations.

Our team also ensures proper startup procedures for new and temporary food service operations, including food trucks and mobile catering providers. In 2016, we oversaw the opening of 32 new establishments, reviewing architectural plans for proper sanitation plans, hand-washing sinks, and refrigeration equipment. Our team also performed 89 temporary food vendor inspections, to support county fairs and other special events.

As we head into FY 2017, we are hoping to reinstate food safety training events to better support operators.



Our sanitarians inspect more than 350 food, hospital, school, and other establishments that serve our community, working closely with operators to resolve potential safety issues.

Vector Control

Amidst the rising threat of mosquito-borne diseases (see Vector Control Update, left), Gila County Health & Emergency Management has ramped up surveillance, monitoring, and remediation. Both our Environmental Health and Emergency Management/PHEP teams have been active in this effort. Our work has spanned identifying and eliminating standing water on public and personal property, proactively spraying for mosquitoes, and eliminating all other potential breeding areas. We are also enriching our community by providing high-quality educational materials with the latest information and advisories. Visit readygila.com/zika or visit our Globe or Payson offices for printed copies.

Other vector control issues included an increase in feral bee complaints. This involved our working with beekeepers to contain the bees, as well as educate our community about what to do when encountering a potentially unsafe situation.

Other Programs

Our Environmental Health team also handles other environmental issues and complaints, including property maintenance concerns, domestic water pollution, potentially hazardous building and structures, storage collection/waste disposal, and public area tobacco use.

In 2016, we investigated 101 of such cases, including 6 **Smoke-Free Arizona** complaints. For all claims, we upheld our 24- to 48-hour response time and were able to resolve issues quickly, avoiding personal injury and property damage.

VECTOR CONTROL UPDATE

Zika Virus, Dengue Fever, and Chikungunya



Mosquito-based illnesses remain a significant concern.

The **Aedes aegypti** mosquito has been linked to Dengue Fever, Chikungunya, and Zika Virus — diseases that can have serious health effects in our community.

As of July 24, 2017, there were 57 travel-associated cases of Zika virus in Arizona. There were also 3 confirmed cases and 11 probable cases of Dengue Fever, and 2 confirmed and 2 probable of cases of Chikungunya in Arizona over the last year. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is monitoring all suspected and confirmed cases to identify areas of potential outbreak. Our Environmental Health and Emergency Management/PHEP teams are collaborating with the state health department, other counties, and local agencies to reduce risk to all Arizona residents.

Animal Care & Control

Gila County's **Animal Care & Control Department's** four Animal Care & Control Officers, Animal Care & Control Manager, and shelter worker provide a range of quality animal services for our residents. Our core activities include:

- Preventing animal-borne diseases through proper animal registration and discounted vaccination opportunities.
- Reuniting lost animals with owners or finding new homes for stray, abandoned, and surrendered animals.
- Investigating and thwarting animal attacks, dog-at-large, neglect, animal cruelty, feral animal, and other community issues.

Rebranding & Marketing Initiative

Our Animal Care & Control Department had a busy 2016. We began the year with a rebranding, which included promotional/educational materials, updated signage, and a number of news releases. We also launched a facebook page. In addition to listing found and adoptable animals, we are promoting responsible pet ownership via community questions and participation in other facebook forums. Response to our page has been overwhelming. **As of August 6, 2017, we have amassed more than 700 likes and average over 10 shares per post!**

Lost & Adoptable Animals

Everyone on our team is an animal lover. We even have a shelter dog (Gila) and shelter cat (KeeKee) of our own. Thus, we work very hard to reunite lost dogs and cats with their owners and adopt out all animals that are surrendered or abandoned. Bringing our efforts online May 15, 2017, we adopted out 27 pets, and reunited 3 dogs with their owners through June 30, the end of our 2016 fiscal year. This represents a 450% increase in our adoption rate prior to facebook. **More impressive, over the full year, we improved our “live release” rate for dogs by 67% and 52% for cats through social media and other actions.**

Additionally, during the year, we strengthened our partnership with the Arizona Animal Welfare League (AAWL), the largest and oldest no-kill shelter in Arizona. In cases where we exhaust our search for adopters, we work with AAWL to help these beautiful pets find homes in other counties.



Animal Care & Control Officer Gabe Arrellin assists with the adoption of Lucky, a shepherd mix, to the Vargas family.

Vaccinations & Registrations

Arizona state law and county ordinances require that all dogs be licensed, and current on their rabies vaccinations. Additionally, it is extremely important that all puppies be vaccinated for canine hepatitis, distemper, and parvovirus. Parvo is one of the most devastating and long-lasting — though completely preventable — illnesses across our county.

For just \$60–100 total per adoption, Gila County Animal Care & Control includes a microchip, an initial rabies shot, an annual license, and parvo/distemper 5-in-1 shot, along with a spay/neuter voucher. This makes our dogs very affordable, while helping adopters understand their pet's immunization needs.

Outside of our adopted animals, we also strive to license every Gila County dog. This not only is a requirement of Arizona state law, but it also helps our county better plan our budget to ensure we have enough resources for our pet population.

Unfortunately, annual licensing remains a challenge. In 2016, we licensed 2,747 dogs — or approximately 22% of our county's estimated dog population. In 2017, we hope to improve these numbers via better outreach initiatives.

While we had previously held low-cost immunization clinics, there are now 9 county vets and a number of retailers providing these, so we will be redirecting efforts to other programs where we can have more impact.

Complaints & Investigations

Finally, we help enrich our community by resolving any claims of animal threats, diseases, or other issues that infringe on the welfare of Gila County residents.

In 2016, our team investigated 848 animal-related complaints, roughly 20% fewer than in 2015 — a reduction we attribute to greater resident knowledge about how they can work with neighbors to peacefully address issues. Complaints included 20 rabies calls, 63 dog bites, 328 dog-at-large calls, 364 neighbor complaints, and 73 negligence claims. Negligence and animal cruelty reports are taken very seriously. We have developed various forms and processes to ensure any and every such charge is investigated immediately. All other claims were responded to within 24 hours, with resolutions made swiftly.

Prevention

The Gila County **Prevention Department** improves community health through programs spanning Prescription Drug Prevention, Community Nutrition, SnapEd, WIC, Anti-Tobacco, and School Initiatives. This year, we also focused on Sexual Health and Obesity. While space doesn't allow us to showcase all our efforts, snapshots follow below. Contact our department at 928-402-8811 for information on other services.

Our team is comprised of 15 full-time staff, which include five WIC employees, six community health specialists, one policy development specialist, one registered dietitian, one nutritionist, and one program manager — with all positions funded 100% by grants.

Prescription Drug Prevention Program

Tackling the opioid epidemic is at the crux of our Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Our prevention team has taken great strides, winning a grant to develop and promote a **Prescription Drug Monitoring Program** and conduct **"Rx360 Training"** for community prescribers. Rx360 Training educates on the risks of prescription medication misuse and abuse, safeguards, and proper disposal of unused or expired medication. Outreach has been successful, securing the support of 65% of prescribers and over 100 agencies.

Other actions included creating billboards and print materials, administering a youth assessment, and participating in local events, such as the DEA's "National Take Back Day" at which we helped retrieve 3,500 pounds of unused medication.



Our Prevention team participates in numerous local and regional events to promote awareness of important health issues.

Our team also worked with local law enforcement and Sonoran Prevention to train officers on the use of Narcan and distribute more than 150 kits of the emergency nasal spray, which is used to save people's lives in an opioid overdose.

Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program

In 2016, we served 11,568 women, infants, and children through our **WIC Program**. This program provides nutrition assessments, education, and "vouchers" to low-income pregnant women and new mothers to help them purchase nutritional foods to promote their health and that of their children. WIC also provides growth monitoring to ensure healthy child development and referrals to local health and human services as necessary. We will be rolling out an eWIC initiative in early November.

Community Nutrition & Obesity Initiatives

Last year, our Community Health Assessment (CHA) identified obesity as one of the top health concerns for our community. In response, our prevention team created an Obesity Action Group. In 2016, this group devised a Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP), and implemented "Double Up Food Bucks" — all of which are making it easier for residents to afford and make healthier food choices.

School Wellness Program

Forming healthy habits in young people is especially important. Our **School Wellness Program** aims to improve the quality and amount of physical education in schools. Through this program, we collaborate with Payson USD and Miami USD to ensure at least two teachers at each school, as well as two county health employees, are trained to administer FITNESSGRAM®.

School Health Liaison Program

This program assigns each prevention specialist as a liaison to a Gila County school district, where they conduct public health classes. Classes facilitated include bullying prevention, hand-washing, oral health, life skills, sexual health, tobacco prevention, and safe driving. In 2016, our professionals facilitated 416 classes to students from kindergarten through 12th grade.

Teen Pregnancy Prevention & Sexual Health

In 2016, our team served 431 high school students, providing sexual health education and supportive resources, as well as hosting a **Teen Maze**. The high-impact event aimed to help teens make better choices in their everyday lives.

Tobacco-Free Environments

Gila County now has three anti-tobacco coalitions for teens, which are led by our prevention experts. These squads in Globe High School, Miami High School, and Payson High School hold weekly meetings to advocate for and create tobacco-free policies, as well as educate peers about the dangers of tobacco. They also attend several state-wide training conferences with us to get the latest research and insights from industry leaders.

Emergency Management / PHEP

Gila County Emergency Management/Public Health Emergency Preparedness (EM/PHEP) monitors and coordinates response to weather hazards, natural disasters, infectious disease outbreaks, environmental hazards, terrorist concerns, and other issues.

Our team is comprised of four emergency experts who partner with infectious disease specialists, nurses, and other professionals to mitigate illness and hardship. We also collaborate with other counties, the Arizona Department of Health Services, Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on larger or imminent issues.

Emergencies & Investigations

In 2016, we had several situations that required our response. These included the 2016 winter storm, the Pinal Fire, the Highline Fire, and three other wildfires. Our EM team also assisted Yavapai County with the Goodwin Fire in Prescott. All events were able to be controlled with few displacements or evacuations.

In addition to responding during these events, we also worked to mitigate their aftermath. We applied for and received a \$300,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) that enabled us to hire contractors to remove debris from the drainage areas directly below the Pinal Fire. This helped prevent infrastructure damage, and flooding of homes located there, during the monsoon season.

Emergency Communications Tools

Community awareness is a critical focus. In 2016, we worked to enhance our community by signing up 15,459 residents to our Everbridge® communitywide notification system. This tool issues text, email, and phone alerts to residents of every pending weather, natural disaster, disease, and other potential threats. In addition to signups, this figure include additions from a purchased white pages list. We encourage residents not currently enrolled to sign up by visiting readygila.com or emailing emsdept@gilacountyaz.gov.

Communicable Disease

We continued to enhance communication with county hospitals and schools to ensure various diseases and conditions are reported quickly to the health department. We also worked to educate and prevent the spread of norovirus and pertussis, after cases were reported in the community.

Another key focus in 2016 was proactive efforts in preparing for, educating the public on, and containing Zika Virus — activities on which we are collaborating with other Gila County Health & Emergency Management departments.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP)

We conducted a Point of Dispensing (POD) exercise with the Gila County Sheriff's Office, Payson Fire, Payson Police, the Town of Payson, and CERT volunteers. Through this exercise, we determined protocols for optimal partner collaboration to ensure health and safety of our communities in the event of any mass



Our EM/PHEP team conducts ongoing training to ensure staff, volunteers, and residents are prepared for any emergency.

emergency. We further identified ways to ensure community access to healthcare/medications without overloading emergency rooms.

Preparedness Training

Community preparedness is key in minimizing the adverse effects of emergencies and hazards. We once again held a number of FEMA training sessions, spanning basic through advanced Incident Command Systems operation and management as well as public information dissemination. More than 150 staff, community volunteers, and residents attended these events.

Community Volunteers / CERT

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) continue to be a valuable part of our team. CERT is a FEMA initiative that trains volunteers in emergency support and life-saving skills so they can serve their community during disasters, hazardous situations, and high-traffic situations.

In 2016, our Northern Gila County CERT put in 1,878 volunteer hours helping with flood response, the Highline Fire, and several large community events. The team grew from 33 active volunteers to 40, an increase of 21%.

In its first full year of operation, our Southern Gila County CERT focused on recruiting and training. Additionally, the team developed and will administer a **Teen CERT** program for Globe High School freshmen for the 2017–2018 school year. Modules include fire safety training, disaster drills, and mock exercises.

Strategic Roadmap

Fiscal year 2016 marked the start of a number of new initiatives in our Division. Using key findings from our 2014-2015 Community Health Assessment (CHA), Gila County Health & Emergency Management embarked on several community-enhancing projects and programs as noted on the previous pages. Longer term, we have earmarked funding, and have begun planning for community needs anticipated for the future. Such efforts are outlined in our two core guiding documents: our **Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)** and our **Health & Emergency Strategic Plan**.

You can find downloadable pdfs of both documents on our county website at gilacountyaz.gov.

Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

- In fiscal year 2016, our actions focused primarily on the top 4 county priorities identified in our CHA. These included: **Access to Healthcare**, **Substance Abuse**, **Obesity**, and **Sexual Health**. Significant efforts have been made in all areas, with specific examples discussed on our Health Services, Prevention, and Emergency Management pages. This includes our work with Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center and the “One Call” health hotline, a number of nutrition-enhancing and obesity-prevention initiatives, and better communications tools. We are also proud to have built several great new partnerships, which are sharing resources and tools.
- In 2017, we will continue to collaborate with partners in these core areas and others to further enrich our community.

Health & Emergency Strategic Plan

- A strategic plan provides a local health department and its stakeholders with a clear picture of where it is headed, what it plans to achieve, the methods by which it will succeed, and the measures it will use to monitor progress. **In May 2016, the Gila County Health & Emergency Management leadership team developed and implemented its first five-year Strategic Plan.** Strategic priorities in this plan included showing progress toward CHIP health priorities, performance management (PM)/quality improvement (QI), workforce development (WFD), and communication.
- In addition to numerous CHIP-related actions, a key focus for 2016 was workforce development. This included identifying individual skill sets and implementing training to address gaps.
- In 2017, we plan to take on a number of QI projects across all departments to enhance customer service, maximize efficiencies, streamline resources, and best position us for national accreditation.





Mission

The Gila County Division of Health & Emergency Management strives to advocate, educate, improve, and monitor the public health and safety in Gila County, by providing the highest level of quality, integrity, and respect to those we serve.



Our commitments to our community



Vision

To sustain a culture of excellence that promotes health, safety, and well-being for all Gila County residents.

County Contacts

Gila County Health & Emergency Management

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“Like” Gila County Animal Care & Control and Gila County Emergency Management on facebook for our teams’ latest news, opportunities, and special events.

