

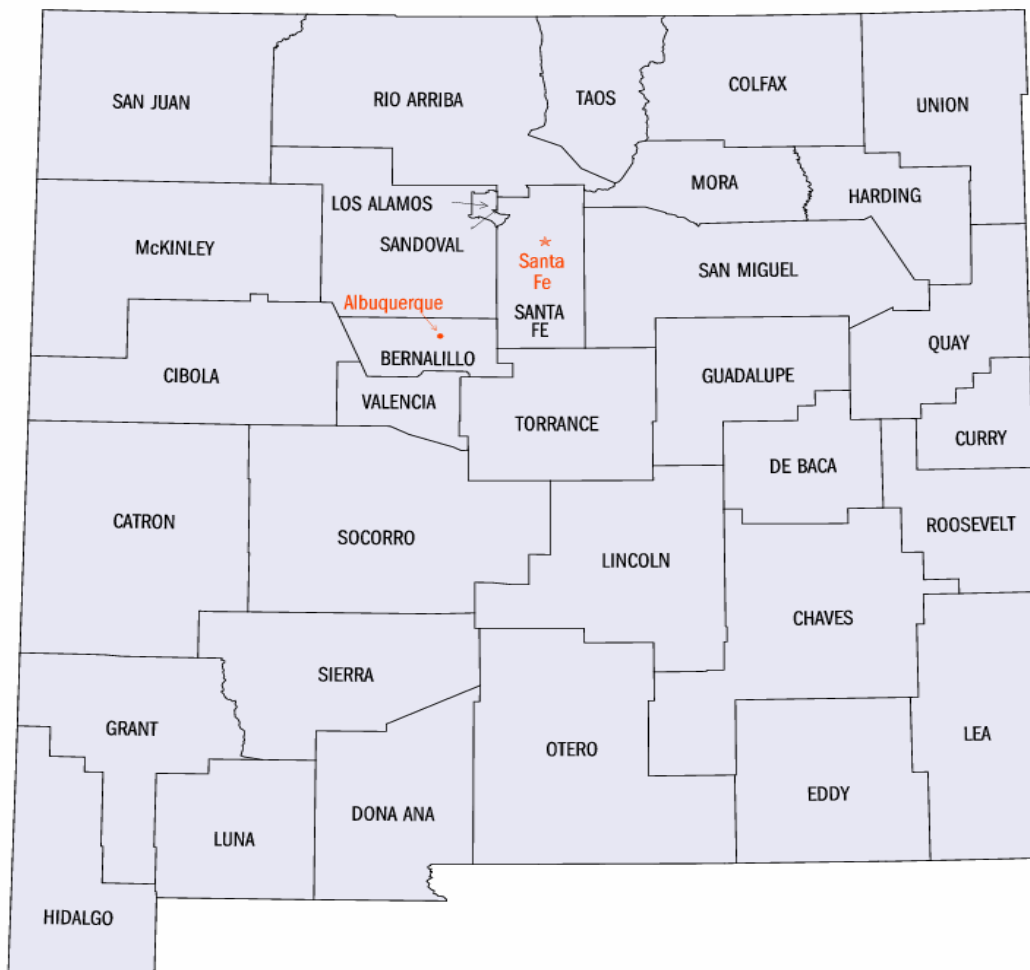
# Office of National Drug Control Policy

## Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

### Las Cruces, New Mexico

#### Profile of Drug Indicators

July 2004



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

## **Las Cruces, New Mexico**

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

### **Demographics<sup>1</sup>**

- Population (2000 Census): 74,267
- Race/Ethnicity (2000 Census): 72.0% white; 2.4% black/African American; 1.8% American Indian/Alaska Native; 1.2% Asian; 22.5% other race; 4.3% two or more races; 53.9% Hispanic/Latino (of any race)
- County: Dona Ana

### **Politics**

- Mayor: William Michael Mattiace<sup>2</sup>
- City Council (Districts 1-6, respectively): Jose Frietze, Dolores Connor, Dolores Archuleta, Steven Trowbridge, Wesley Strain, Ken Miyagishima<sup>3</sup>
- Chief of Police: Harry Romero<sup>4</sup>
- Dona Ana County Sheriff: Juan Hernandez<sup>5</sup>

### **Programs/Initiatives**

- High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)<sup>6</sup>  
Designated in 1990, the Southwest Border HIDTA/New Mexico Partnership is responsible for thirteen counties, including Dona Ana. In addition to these thirteen counties, the New Mexico Partnership region also encompasses four ports of entry and approximately 180 miles of international border shared with Mexico.

### **Federal Funding**

- Drug-Free Communities Support Program grantees in Las Cruces (total funds received since original award year):<sup>7</sup>
  - FY 2003 and 2002: no grantees
  - FY 2001:
    - \$300,000 to Southern New Mexico Human Development, Inc.
    - \$300,000 to City of Las Cruces, Project Organ Mountains
  - FY 2000: no grantees
  - FY 1999:
    - \$425,000 to Dona Ana County, South Central New Mexico Coalition
- Community Capacity Development Office<sup>8</sup>  
Las Cruces has received Federal funds and has been officially recognized as a Weed and Seed site.
- Las Cruces did not receive any funding for the FY 2003 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Discretionary Grants.<sup>9</sup>
- Las Cruces did not receive any methamphetamine funding in 2003 from the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services<sup>10</sup>
- There were no Las Cruces recipients of the FY 2003 Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Grant Program.<sup>11</sup>

- FY 2003 Office of Justice Programs and Community Oriented Policing Services grant amounts received by Las Cruces recipients:<sup>12</sup>
  - Community Based (discretionary): 1 award valued at \$225,000
  - Counter-terrorism (discretionary): 0 awards
  - Juvenile Justice:
    - discretionary: 4 awards valued at \$1,020,125
    - formula: 0 awards
  - Law Enforcement:
    - discretionary: 1 award valued at \$198,651
    - formula: 5 awards valued at \$769,887
  - Substance Abuse: 0 awards
  - Victims: 0 awards
- Las Cruces did not receive funding from the FY 2001 Housing and Urban Development Drug Elimination Grant.<sup>13</sup>

### Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- There were 4,944 larceny-theft offenses known to the police in Las Cruces during 2000.<sup>14</sup> This number decreased to 4,208 during 2001.<sup>15</sup>

Number of Offenses Known to Police, Las Cruces, 2000-2001

Offense Type	2000	2001
Murder and non-negligent manslaughter	7	0
Forcible rape	56	65
Robbery	93	79
Aggravated assault	304	268
Burglary	1,190	928
Larceny-theft	4,944	4,208
Motor vehicle theft	171	192
Arson	10	8
Crime index total	6,765	5,740

### Drugs

- Cocaine

The importation, distribution, and consumption of powder and crack cocaine are the biggest threats in the New Mexico Partnership (HIDTA) region.<sup>16</sup> During 2001, prices for powder cocaine in Las Cruces ranged from \$500-\$900 per ounce and \$14,000-\$18,000 per kilogram. Powder cocaine purity levels ranged from 29-77% in Las Cruces. Crack cocaine sold for \$900 per ounce and \$20 per rock during 2001 in Las Cruces, with purity levels ranging from 56-61%.<sup>17</sup>
- Heroin<sup>18</sup>

Prices for Mexican black tar and Mexican brown powdered heroin have remained unchanged in recent years in Las Cruces. An ounce of either type of heroin sold for \$1,500-\$2,000 per ounce with purity levels ranging from 39-87%.
- Marijuana

According to the New Mexico Partnership (HIDTA) region Mexican marijuana is the most prevalent drug abused in the area.<sup>19</sup> A pound of marijuana sold for \$350 in Las Cruces during 2001.<sup>20</sup>

➤ **Methamphetamine**

Methamphetamine availability is increasing according to the New Mexico Partnership (HIDTA). Methamphetamine available in the New Mexico Partnership (HIDTA) is transported from Mexico and California, although it is also produced locally.<sup>21</sup>

Methamphetamine prices ranged from \$40-\$80 per gram to \$800-\$1,000 per ounce during 2001 in Las Cruces with purity levels ranging from 26-99%.<sup>22</sup>

**Enforcement**

- As of October 31, 2002, there were 211 full-time law enforcement employees working in Las Cruces (143 officers and 68 civilians).<sup>23</sup>

**Trafficking and Seizures**

- Dona Ana County is the direct corridor used for the movement of drugs from the Juarez/El Paso area through New Mexico.<sup>24</sup>
- Most of the New Mexico/Mexico border area is open desert, barren and generally uninhabited offering drug smugglers easy access into the United States and to major interstate highways. Also, the areas between the ports of entry offer favorable conditions of smuggling alternatives.<sup>25</sup>
- Freight trains and commercial motor vehicle carriers which cross the Texas/New Mexico and Mexican borders, travel through New Mexico and are frequently used by major Mexican drug trafficking organizations to transport drugs into the United States.<sup>26</sup>
- According to the U.S. Customs Service (USCS) in Las Cruces, drug traffickers cut out sections of the fence creating gates to facilitate the movement of vehicles or individuals smuggling illegal drugs into the United States.<sup>27</sup>
- Prison and street gangs in Las Cruces are involved in the retail distribution of heroin.<sup>28</sup>

**Courts**

- **Drug Courts**<sup>29</sup>  
As of May 2004, there were four drug courts in Las Cruces that have been in existence for over two years. There were no other drug courts recently implemented or being planned.

**Consequences of Use**

- During 2002, the New Mexico Office of the Medical Investigator reported 13 drug caused deaths in Dona Ana County.<sup>30</sup>
- During 2001, there were 308 hospital inpatient discharges for alcohol and/or drug abuse in Dona Ana County.<sup>31</sup>

## Hospital Inpatient Discharges for Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Dona Ana County, 1999-2001

Year	Alcohol and Drug Abuse
1999	363
2000	273
2001	308

### Sources

- <sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>
- <sup>2</sup> Las Cruces Mayor's Web site: <http://www.las-cruces.org/mayor/>
- <sup>3</sup> Las Cruces City Council Web site: <http://www.las-cruces.org/council/default.aspx>
- <sup>4</sup> Las Cruces Police Department Web site: <http://www.las-cruces.org/police/default.aspx>
- <sup>5</sup> Dona Ana County Sheriff's Office Web site: <http://www.zianet.com/daso/>
- <sup>6</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy, Southwest Border High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area New Mexico Partnership Web site: [http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames\\_nmex.html](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames_nmex.html)
- <sup>7</sup> Drug-Free Communities Support Program Web site, Grantees: <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/dfcs/grantee/index.asp>
- <sup>8</sup> Community Capacity Development Office, New Mexico Weed and Seed sites: <http://www.weedandseeddatacenter.org/map.aspx?state=NM>
- <sup>9</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, FY 2003 Discretionary Funds, New Mexico: <http://alt.samhsa.gov/funding/content/states/State.htm>
- <sup>10</sup> Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, COPS Methamphetamine Initiative 2003: <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/mime/open.pdf?Item=951>
- <sup>11</sup> Bureau of Justice Assistance, FY 2003 Drug Court Grant Awards: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/grant/03DrugCtAwd.pdf>
- <sup>12</sup> Office of Justice Programs, New Mexico FY 2003 Office of Justice Programs and Office of Community Oriented Policing Services Grants: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fy2003grants/map/nmsubj.htm>
- <sup>13</sup> Department of Housing and Urban Development, *FY 2001 Federally Assisted Low Income Housing Drug Elimination Grants: Detailed Congressional Report*: <http://www.hud.gov/content/releases/drugelimination.pdf>
- <sup>14</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2000*, October 2001: <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/00cius.htm>
- <sup>15</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2001*, October 2002: <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/01cius.htm>
- <sup>16</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy, Southwest Border High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area New Mexico Partnership Web site: [http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames\\_nmex.html](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames_nmex.html)
- <sup>17</sup> National Drug Intelligence Center, *New Mexico Drug Threat Assessment*, April 2002: <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs07/803/803p.pdf>
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy, Southwest Border High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area New Mexico Partnership Web site: [http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames\\_nmex.html](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames_nmex.html)
- <sup>20</sup> National Drug Intelligence Center, *New Mexico Drug Threat Assessment*, April 2002: <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs07/803/803p.pdf>
- <sup>21</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy, Southwest Border High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area New Mexico Partnership Web site: [http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames\\_nmex.html](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames_nmex.html)
- <sup>22</sup> National Drug Intelligence Center, *New Mexico Drug Threat Assessment*, April 2002: <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs07/803/803p.pdf>
- <sup>23</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2002*, October 2003: <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/02cius.htm>
- <sup>24</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy, Southwest Border High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area New Mexico Partnership Web site: [http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames\\_nmex.html](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/hidta/frames_nmex.html)
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> National Drug Intelligence Center, *New Mexico Drug Threat Assessment*, April 2002:  
<http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs07/803/803p.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Clearinghouse and Technical Assistance Project, *Summary of Drug Court Activity by State and County*, May 27, 2004:  
<http://spa.ward.american.edu/justice/publications/drgchart2k.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> New Mexico Office of the Medical Investigator, *Annual Report 2002*: <http://omi.unm.edu/02ar.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> New Mexico Department of Health, *2003 New Mexico County Health Profiles: Dona Ana County Health Profile*: <http://dohewbs2.health.state.nm.us/VitalRec/County%20Profiles/DonaAnaProfile.pdf>

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