Facts about the Forensic Science Center

1. The Maricopa County Forensic Science Center is a state of the art medical examiners office, about 11 years old, and approximately 68,000 sq. ft. in size.

2. We have 3 floors, the top level is our toxicology department, the middle floor are offices and administration, and the entire lower level (basement) is where the bodies are admitted, stored and where the examinations are performed.

3. We have a total of 12 autopsy tables, ten in the main autopsy room, and two tables in the special procedures room for potential infectious disease cases, decomposed, and burned bodies.

4. We currently have eleven forensically-trained and board-certified pathologists (one current vacancy) and we perform a minimum of twelve autopsies per day.
We currently have 20 full time forensic investigators who cover all of Maricopa County, with 4 refrigerated county vans. Each van is equipped to store four bodies. Also have 2 trailers for equipment transport. Available access to 20' trailer and additional transport support. The office is open 24/7 with an investigative and admitting office staff, and a on-call pathologist available for any questions (scene calls), tissue donations, or for various decision making capabilities. Total staff at the OME is currently 83 employees.

We have 10 full-time forensic toxicologists who performed over 85,000 drug tests last year on most of the decedents. The toxicology laboratory does over 98% in-house testing and the testing turn-around time for the pathologists is approx 98% in 45 days. We also have an in-house, histology laboratory which produces glass slides of tissues for microscopic evaluation by the pathologist. The laboratory is the only lab in Arizona to be certified by the American Board of Forensic Toxicology (ABFT).
Storage at the Medical Examiners Office

- There are 3 large storage coolers at the OME with the total normal storage capabilities of approximately 143 bodies, placed on racks.
- In an event of an emergency (pandemic or mass disaster), we probably have an additional storage (overload) cart and floor capacity for another 100-125 bodies.
- We have additional non-cooler storage in the basement of the parking structure for supplies, in the event of a mass disaster, where several thousand body bags and personal protective equipment are stored.
• Directly across from the OME, there are 2 large county-owned lots, separated by an alley, for possible refrigerated trucks, additional storage with security and for media coverage.
• Easy access for bodies to enter the OME via a tented walkway from the trucks.
• These 2 lots and a temporary (mobile) morgue in the underground parking structure makes for easy exchange of bodies without interference of the main autopsy suites for its daily capacity.
Two Lots Across from OME

Lot Across From OME

Underground Parking Structure for Temporary or Mobile Morgue

Underground Parking Structure for Temporary or Mobile Morgue

Morgue OPS-Mass Fatality ICS Chart that can be Applied at Local–Federal Level

Mobile Morgue Forensic Stations
Mobile Morgue Forensic Stations

Admitting Station

Radiology Station

Dark Room for Radiology Station

Pathology Station

Fingerprint Station
Dental or Odontology Station

Anthropology Station

DNA Staging Station

Mobile Morgue Storage Area

Resource Partners

**Public Health:** Vital Records and OPR, we have a strong, close partnership with daily and ongoing event planning

The Department: Funding and equipment opportunities allowed for OME growth and preparedness for fatality management–Digital X-ray project

**Hospitals:** Working with MIHS for additional cold storage and alternative location to set up surge morgue.

**Staffing:** Cross training and collaborative efforts for collecting information from family (anti-mortem data) interviews and procedures.

Medical Examiner infrastructure statewide – No statewide system or centralized coordination

Historically – managed with personal relationships and professional commitment with contracts

Arizona - The Grand Canyon State
Role of OME is more involved than coming in at the end.....

The End
Any Questions?