



# NEWS RELEASE

## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE

YUMA BORDER PATROL SECTOR HEADQUARTERS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 1, 2002

### **Yuma Border Patrol to Erect More Rescue Beacons** *Six Beacons Are Already Standing*

Border Patrol Officials from the Yuma Arizona Sector are scheduled to place additional rescue beacons in the scorching desert on the outskirts of Yuma. Six beacons are already in place in the vast desert area south of Wellton. Early tomorrow morning Yuma Sector support units will place their seventh beacon on the Barry Goldwater Range, southeast of Yuma.

The rescue beacons are 30-foot towers designed to save human life. The beacons can be seen from distances up to ten miles at night and slightly less during daylight, depending on conditions in the area. The beacons have mirrored metal for glaring visibility at daytime and strobe lights for night visibility. On the lower part of the beacon there is a large red button that engages a sensor when pushed. The sensor alerts Border Patrol radio communications who in turn relay the information to initiate rescue operations. There are signs on the rescue beacons written in English and Spanish, along with an artist's sketch showing stranded people how to use the device. Once the button is pushed and the sensor is activated, Border Patrol Agents will respond within one hour by ground or air, whichever manner is most rapid, safe, and practical.

The six active rescue beacons are located in strategic areas where rescues and/or deaths of illegal immigrants have occurred in the past. The strategy of placing the beacons at crucial rescue points in the desert will continue with the second iteration of rescue beacons. The original rescue beacons have been in place since March 13, 2002. In addition to the beacon that will be installed tomorrow, the Yuma Border Patrol tentatively plans to install 8 more beacons in the most dangerous parts of the desert.

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The beacons, constructed by technicians from the Yuma Sector, are tested on a weekly basis. The first use of a rescue beacon by illegal immigrants occurred early in the morning on June 14<sup>th</sup>. A group of three severely dehydrated subjects pushed the button and were subsequently rescued by Border Patrol Agents.

For further information contact Yuma Border Patrol Public Information Officer Michael McGlasson at (928) 782-9548.

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