



Greenfield police officers Raul Garcia, from left, EJ Ballenti, Mike Rice and Sgt. Fred Perez retrieve equipment from a mobile command post during training in November at the Greenfield city yard. The training included the deployment of tactical equipment, with a forced entry into a building looking for armed suspects. It also included the use of tear gas and stun grenades.

PROVIDED PHOTO

# Greenfield PD in hiring mode

*Chief wants to add specialty officers for force*

By **DAWN WITHERS**  
The Salinas Californian

As Greenfield grows, so will its police presence, said the city's chief of police.

Joe Grebmeier, who became the police chief three years ago, said as the department adds more officers to the force — with three rounds of hiring planned over the next nine months — he wants the department's quality of service to exceed community expectations.

"I want the best possible officers with the best possible training and the best possible equipment," Grebmeier said.

The department has acquired \$100,000 in new equipment over the last two years and is rewriting its training manual. Grebmeier said next year he wants the department to undergo the Commission on Law Enforcement's three-year accreditation program, which scrutinizes more than 300 police standards.

"It's a way to reassure and report to the public we're constantly analyzing our-

## **GREENFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT**

- n **CHIEF:** Joe Grebmeier
- n **STAFFING:** 17 officers, four civilians and one volunteer.
- n **LOCATION:** 215 El Camino Real, Greenfield.
- n **HISTORY:** Established in 1947.
- n **ONLINE:** [www.ci.greenfield.ca.us/police.htm](http://www.ci.greenfield.ca.us/police.htm).

selves to meet the best needs of the public," Grebmeier said.

As the role of the police continues to change in Greenfield, with officers working specifically with local schools and community relations, Grebmeier said the department is applying for grants such as a \$50,000 Gang Resistance Education and Training grant and a \$2.5 million grant for the South Valley Gang Task Force.

The grants are intended to help the department cope with the city's gang problem from education and prevention standpoints, working in concert with the cities of Gonzales, Soledad and King City.

A big challenge to the police department, Grebmeier said, is recruiting qualified

police officers to fill four vacancies.

To keep pace with growth, the department needs to have 1.25 officers for every 1,000 residents and will be hiring in May, July and January to help meet that goal.

As the department acquires more officers, Grebmeier said, he wants two police officers dedicated to the city's violence suppression unit, a full-time detective, a community service officer and an officer for parking enforcement.

He said he wants to improve the department's crime scene investigations and reports and improve the officers' data gathering and entry of crime information.

In honor of their work in the community, Greenfield police last month were recognized in a ceremony by the city's indigenous Mexican population and the Mexican consulate in San Jose.

Grebmeier said in the past three years the department has offered Spanish classes for officers and holds monthly meetings with Greenfield's farm-worker community.

When asked how the department has changed in the past few years, he said, "I think there's a lot more trust and cooperation and working together on issues."

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