

GONZALES/ A new station

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Officers are trained as first responders to medical emergencies.

As soon as September, the city will tear down the current station and move operations into temporary buildings for about a year while the new headquarters are built.

Cudio, who became chief in March 2005, said the department also is implementing crime-prevention initiatives. One program involved creation of a community-police advisory board, which is composed of community and city leaders and police. She said the board spent the past several months trying to establish a broad approach to handling threats to public safety.

"We are just in the first year," she said. "It's really to build relationships with the community — real community government."

Tackling gangs is a priority for the group, Cudio said.

"As the city grows, that is one

'As the city grows, (gang activity) is one of our big problems. We are not only handling the problem now, but trying to prevent it from becoming a bigger problem.'

— Paulette Cudio,
Gonzales police chief

of our big problems," she said. "We are not only handling the problem now, but trying to prevent it from becoming a bigger problem."

With an annual budget of about \$1.2 million, the department responds to nearly 9,000

GONZALES POLICE DEPARTMENT

n **CHIEF:** Paulette Cudio

n **STAFFING:** 13 sworn-in officers, three civilians.

n **LOCATION:** 109 Fourth St.

n **HISTORY:** Established Jan. 10, 1947.

n **ONLINE:** www.ci.gonzales.ca.us/openpolice.html.

calls and makes about 400 arrests annually, Cudio said. In addition to serving the 9,000 residents of Gonzales, the department works with the Soledad Police Department to help police Salinas Valley State Prison. Gonzales handles those duties in odd years.

The department also is planning a new event called Forum 2020. Sponsored by the city and the Police Department, the chief said, it'll be an opportunity for area city managers, police chiefs and city councils to meet with futurists and to discuss new technology and how it will affect populations and development. The first Forum 2020 is scheduled for August.

"We hope it gets people thinking outside the box and ahead," Cudio said.

After retiring from the Los Angeles Police Department, she came to Gonzales for new opportunities.

"It was like a breath of fresh air," she said of becoming Gonzales' chief. "It is a very charming community. I love every moment of it."

"I have the opportunity to do a lot of things I couldn't do in L.A. We are able to have relationships with the community. Gonzales does not have much in common with Los Angeles, and that is a good thing."

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