

Flag-Raising at Chaparral Business Center Recognizes New Cell Towers

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On April 10, staff from Salt River Devco and Saddleback Communications took part in a ceremony to commemorate the newly installed cellular phone towers at the Chaparral Business Center.

The morning started out with juice and doughnuts, while members of the Salt River Bushmasters Post 114 were folding the three flags that would soon be flying on the newly installed cell towers, which do double duty as flagpoles. Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Tribal Council Member Ricardo Leonard, who is also member of the Bushmasters Post 114, and Council Member Tom Largo attended the event. Largo opened the ceremony with a blessing, then the Bushmasters conducted the flag-raising.

Salt River Devco Asset Manager Frano Milicevic had been working with Saddleback Communications for about four years to get the new cell towers/flagpoles installed at the Chaparral Business Center, which is a Community enterprise.

"The flag-raising and cell towers are significant for the Community because of the [modern] impression they give of the Community," said



Members of the Bushmaster 114 connect the flags to the poles and raise them to the top.

Tim Pickering, president and CEO of Salt River Devco. "Previously, there was no wireless cell service on the Community, and our businesses suffered for that. But we have overcome that issue through a joint effort of the Community, Salt River Devco and Saddleback Communications, and now we can provide a needed service to our customers."

Saddleback has the technical

expertise to develop such sites as well as ensure that the best interests of the Community are maintained.

The project began with a development application for one cell carrier. A design was submitted that would house up to three carriers as customer demand dictated; two additional carriers requested flagpoles to service their customers. Thus, all three flagpoles were erected at the same time.

Don Schilling, director of wireless development for Saddleback Communications, was asked specifically about "stealth" technology, which is the technology used in the upper portions of the flagpoles that house the cellular antennas. He commented that with the evolution of technology, cellular towers don't need to be as high as they used to be. Stealth designs now include flagpoles saguaro cactus (built at our site at State Route 87 and Shea), palm trees and pine trees. Stealth technology can also be incorporated into roadside billboards.

You can see the new cell towers while driving south on the Loop 101 freeway; just before you pass Chaparral Road, they will be off to the right side. Salt River Devco is located along the Loop 101-Pima Freeway Corridor on the western boundary of the Salt River-Pima Maricopa Indian Community.