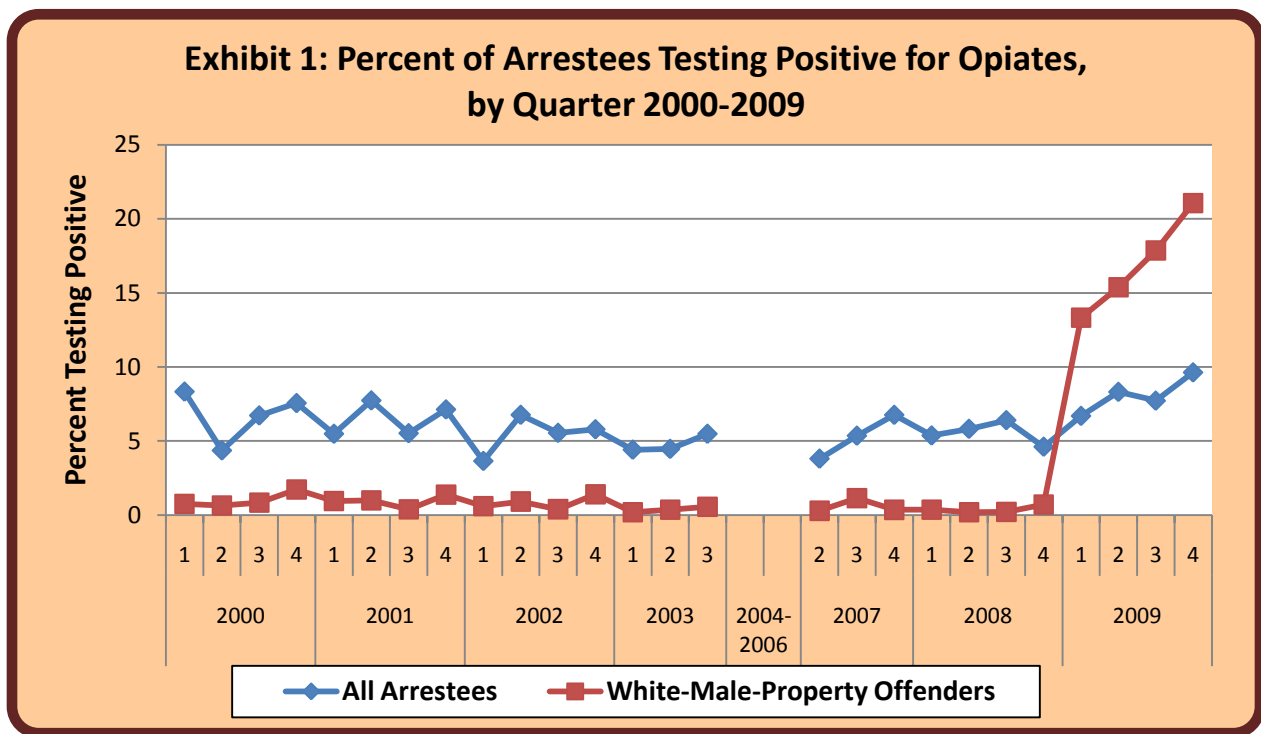


March 3, 2010

The Arizona Arrestee Reporting Information Network – AARIN – collects information from recently booked arrestees through a face-to-face interview using a standardized questionnaire. Sponsored by the Maricopa County Manager’s Office, interviews are conducted in three booking facilities across Maricopa County on a quarterly basis. Interviews are voluntary and anonymous, and at the completion of the questionnaire, urine specimens are collected. Questions about the respondent’s current arrest charges, current drug use and history, victimization, gang affiliation, firearm possession and basic demographic information are routinely collected, as well as numerous special topic issues. A distinct advantage of the AARIN Program is its use as a surveillance system that has the capacity to detect emerging trends among the arrestee population. As part of this surveillance function, we periodically release *AARIN Alerts* that describe potentially important trends in arrestee patterns. This *AARIN Alert* notifies criminal justice agency personnel, treatment providers, and social service providers of an emerging trend in opiate use.

Exhibit 1 below shows long-term trends among Maricopa County arrestees who tested positive for opiates. Opiates include heroin as well as many common prescription pain medications such as hydrocodone (Vicodin), oxycodone (OxyContin), codeine, meperidine (Demerol), and propoxyphene (Darvon). Using prior data from the National Institute of Justice’s Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program, trend analysis was conducted from 1st quarter of 2000 through 2003 and continues with AARIN data in 2007 through 2009. While the data indicate opiate use has modestly increased among the arrestee population overall, it also shows that use of the drug among white, male property offenders, is increasing at an alarming (see Exhibit 1 below).



Further analysis of arrestees who tested positive for opiate by their most serious arrest charge highlights the relationship between property offenders and opiate use (Exhibit 2). For most of the past three years, positive tests for opiate ranged from 2-10%, regardless of ethnicity, gender, or current charge. However, in 2009 there is a significant spike in positive tests for white males charged with property offenses.

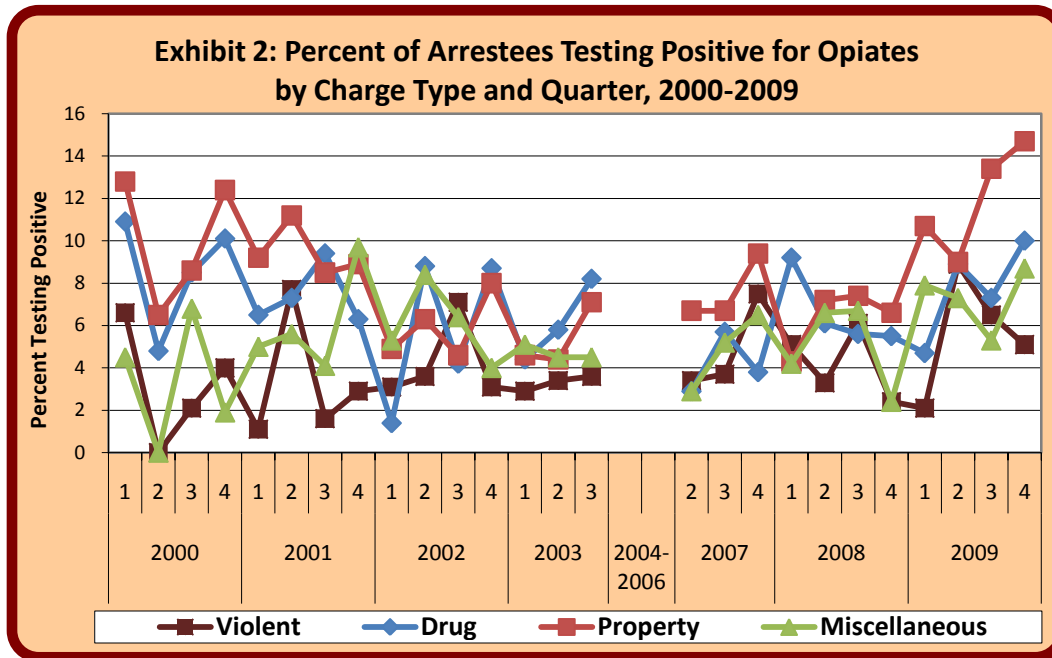
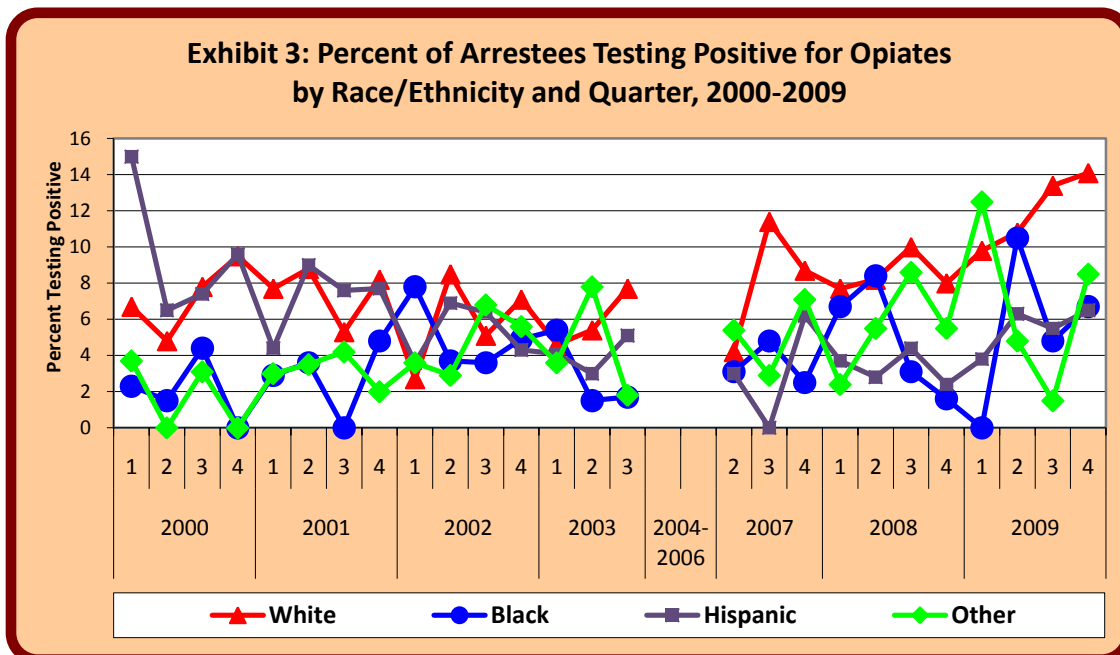
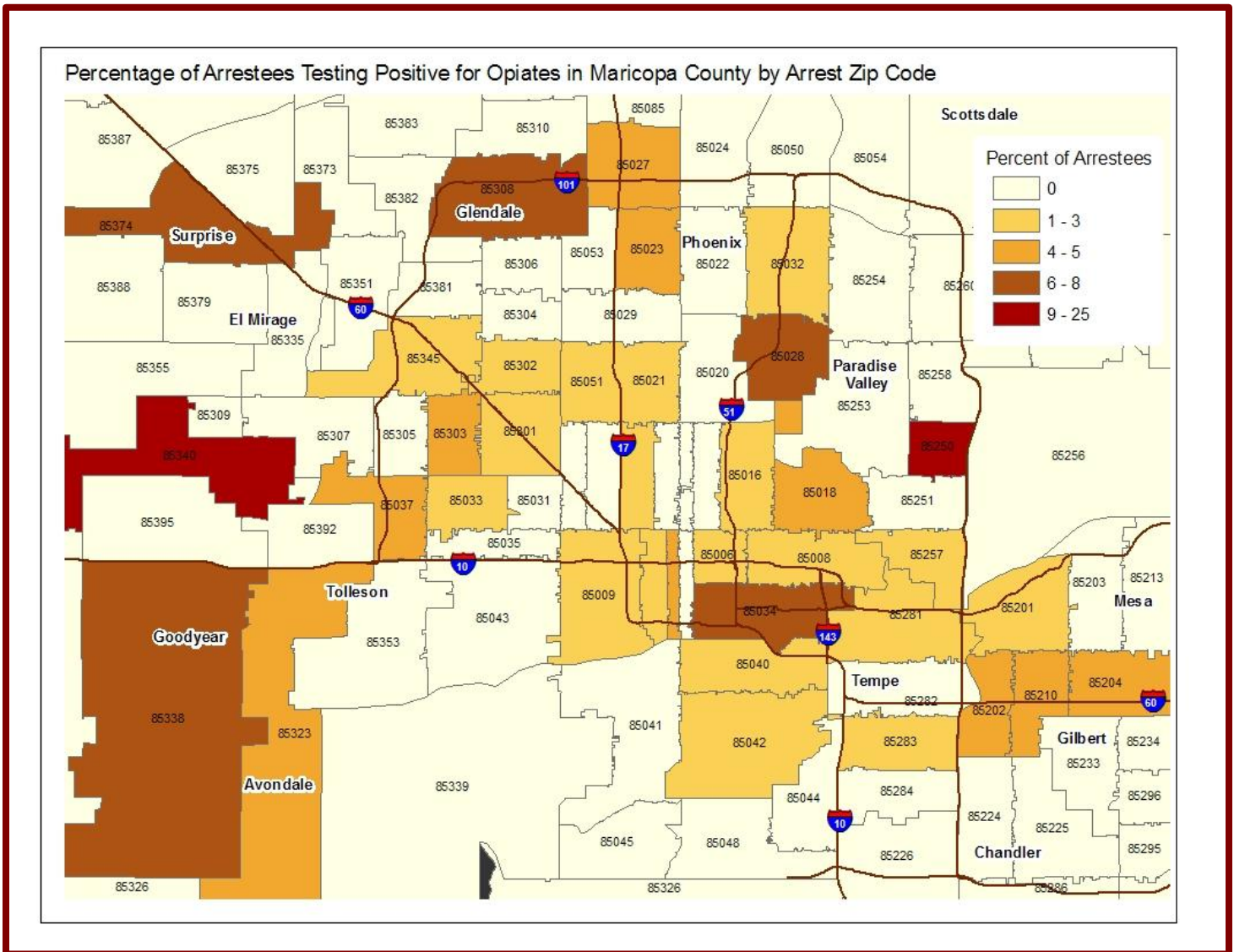


Exhibit 3 shows the relationship between ethnicity and arrestee opiate use. Opiate use rates have remained relatively stable among Black or African-American and Hispanic/Latino arrestees. Arrestees categorized as “Other” included predominantly Asian and Pacific Islanders and American Indians. Among both Other and White respondents, the AARIN data suggests an increase in opiate use. Among White respondents, for example, there has been a significant and steady increase in the percentage of arrestees testing positive for the drug.

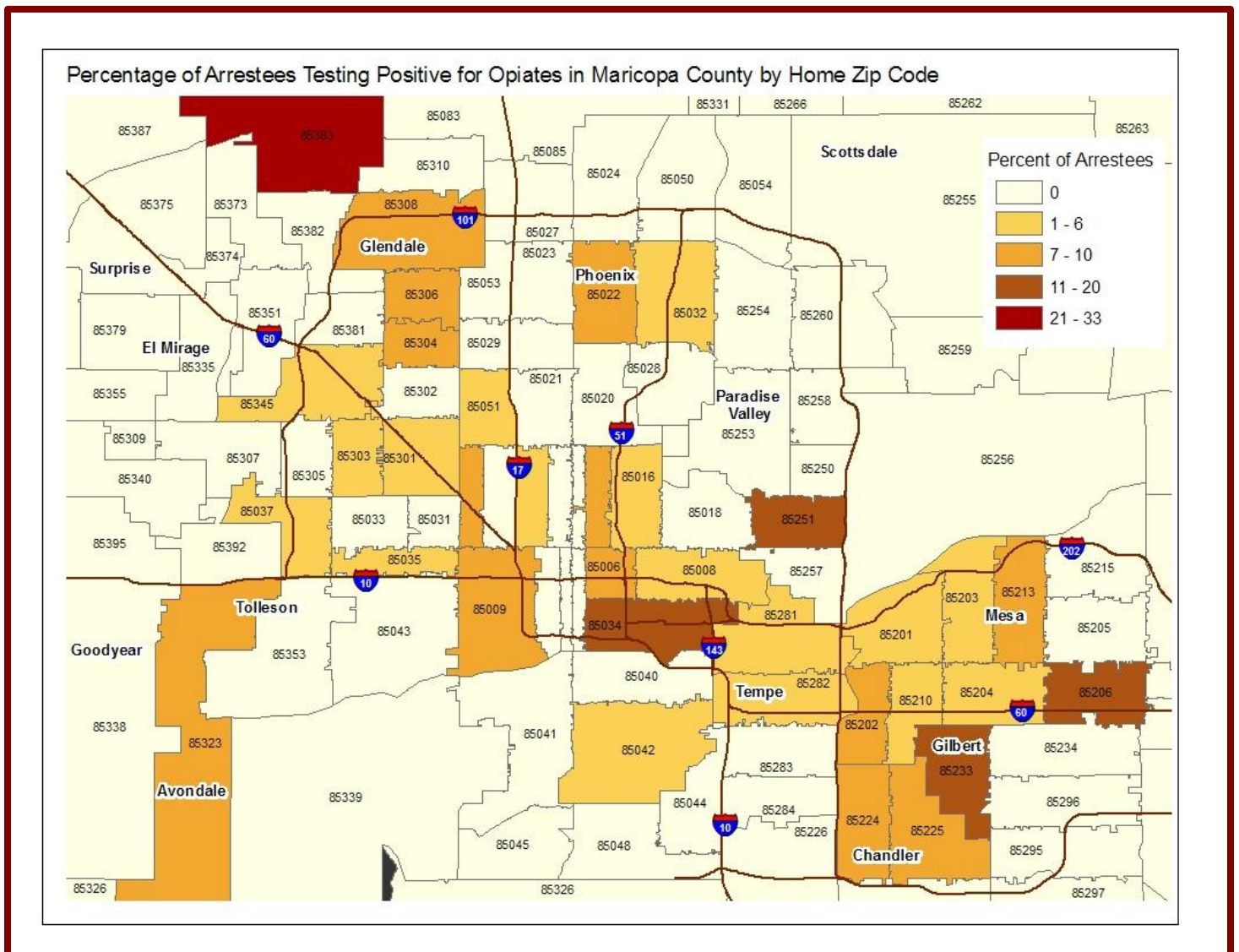


To understand the spatial distribution of the opiate problem among arrestees we mapped the distribution of arrestees who tested positive for opiates in 2009 across the Phoenix metropolitan area. There are a few notable geographic areas where opiate use is particularly pronounced. Looking at those respondents who tested positive for opiates by their arrest location we identified seven zip codes with higher than average opiate use rates, and two that are alarmingly high – 85340 in the west valley, and 85250 in Scottsdale. In the 85250 zip code, almost 18% of AARIN respondents tested positive for opiates. In the west valley we found that about 24% of arrestees from the 85340 zip code tested positive for opiates (see Exhibit 4 below).

**Exhibit 4: Percentage of Arrestees Testing Positive for Opiates by Arrest Location Zip Code**



## Exhibit 5: Percentage of Arrestees Testing Positive for Opiates by Home Address Zip Code



This *AARIN-Alert* seeks to inform criminal justice practitioners, policy-makers, treatment providers, and social service providers throughout Maricopa County that opiate use has increased dramatically among white, male property offenders. Future monitoring is warranted to determine whether this trend continues and whether it spreads to the wider arrestee population and the general population. Practitioners and policymakers should determine the appropriate steps that might be taken to respond to the problem.

For more information about the AARIN Project and ASU's Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety, visit our website at: <http://cvpcs.asu.edu/aarin>. Full-page, PDF versions of the maps in this report are also available on the AARIN Project website. For questions related to this *AARIN-Alert* contact Charles Katz at (602) 496-1471 or [ckatz@asu.edu](mailto:ckatz@asu.edu) or David Choate at (602) 496-1473 [dchoate@asu.edu](mailto:dchoate@asu.edu).

*The AARIN Project is funded by the Justice System Planning and Information unit of the Maricopa County Manager's Office.*