

Five illegal immigrants die in Ariz.

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Body

Five illegal immigrants died after crossing the border into southern **Arizona**'s treacherous desert, and authorities searched yesterday for a sixth.

"We're hoping to find him or her alive," said Andy Adame, a spokesman for the Border Patrol's Tucson Sector, which covers most of the **Arizona**-Mexico border.

Two adults and two juveniles survived. They and the six others had become stranded in the rugged terrain Sunday after crossing the border. Temperatures soared over 100 degrees.

One of the survivors was a Mexican man who sought help Sunday morning at a ranch west of Gila Bend, about 75 miles north of the border, Adame said.

Over the next several hours, Border Patrol search crews found four dead migrants and a fifth who **died** while en route to a hospital. Two of the dead were females.

It was the deadliest border crossing in **Arizona** since May 2001, when Border Patrol agents found 14 dead **immigrants** on the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge near Yuma. Twelve survived that crossing, including a smuggler.

More than 115 **illegal immigrants** have been found dead since Oct. 1 in the **Arizona** desert, the busiest **illegal** entry point along the U.S.-Mexico border.

"It surprises me that we have not had more deaths in large groups," said the Rev. Robin Hoover, founder of Humane Borders, a group that puts water in the desert for **illegal** crossers.

A record 154 **immigrants died** sneaking into **Arizona** in the 2003 fiscal year, which ended Sept. 30, most of them succumbing to the heat.

Adame said he did not know how long the group found Sunday had been in the desert. He also did not know their nationalities, except for the man who went for help.

Three **immigrants** were hospitalized and were expected to survive, Adame said.

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The man who reported the group was treated for dehydration and did not require hospitalization. He was in Border Patrol custody yesterday, along with one of the three other survivors, who had been released from the hospital, Adame said.

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