



# CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

Changing demographics have implications for Boulder Fire-Rescue:

**Seniors** The number of senior residents, ages 60 and older, is projected to increase from 13 percent of the population in 2010 to 23 percent by 2025. As residents age, their needs and expectations for emergency services increase and the number of emergency calls rises, as does the severity of medical problems. Fragile, disabled, and bedridden seniors require a higher level of care.

**Disadvantaged** Poverty now affects one in seven residents, and the gap between rich and poor is widening. The number of economically disadvantaged include people who are mentally ill, homeless, and those who receive or need social services. They are less likely to have health insurance and to own vehicles, and are more likely to use emergency services and hospitals for medical needs that more affluent residents would have treated at urgent care clinics or in a doctor's office.

**Young Children** About 12 percent of the city's population is age 13 or younger. Many of the department's 9-1-1 calls are for accidental fire and medical emergencies involving young children.

**College Students** For the 29,000 college students and others in this age group, fire risks are high due to at-risk behaviors such drinking, drug use, and leaving lighted candles unattended. The high density of housing, with students living in high-rise dorms, fraternity and sorority houses, and group houses, poses greater challenges and risks in fire and medical emergencies.

**Populations with Language Barriers** The Spanish-speaking population nearly doubled between 1990 and 2000. Some immigrants may fear or avoid authority figures, including uniformed firefighters, because of their immigration status or past political or social experiences. Immigrant families are more likely to live in inadequate housing, which can increase fire and medical emergency risks.

