

La Porte/Bayshore Sun

La Porte Police Get New Equipment to Help Curb Auto Thefts

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In an effort to combat both auto theft and violations of the Texas Transportation Code, the La Porte Police Department has obtained the Department's first mobile automated License Plate Reader.

These devices, mounted on a police vehicle, monitor all four sides of a patrolling police car using high-speed video cameras and report information directly to a computer screen located directly inside of a police car.

The devices automatically read all license plates within view of any of the four cameras, scan them directly into a police database, and alert officers to vehicles that have been reported stolen.

Without the L.P.R., officers are compelled to punch license plate numbers into their mobile data terminals by hand or call in numbers to the department's dispatch center if for some reason suspicion was raised related to a specific vehicle on their beat.

Although most of the Department's patrol officers manually scan license plates during their tour of duty each day, the procedure is slow and tedious, resulting in less than 100 license plates being checked per day. The automated License Plate Reader, however, has the capability of checking a license plate every second, allowing officer equipped with this new technology to check as many as 3,000 license plates every hour.

La Porte Police Chief Ken Adcox has said that the Department intends to purchase additional L.P.R.'s, which will act as what he calls "force-multipliers."

According to Adcox, "These L.P.R.'s provide our officers with the tools they need to successfully do their jobs and keep our community safe. By using this new technology, we can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our individual police officers. It's a great investment and will revolutionize the way our officers target auto thieves."

L.P.R.'s will not only be used curb auto theft, but are also capable of alerting officers when the registered owner of a vehicle is unlicensed, uninsured, or has an outstanding arrest warrant listed in the computer database.

L.P.R.'s may also aid in the location of missing persons as well as identifying registered sex offenders who frequenting prohibited areas, such as parks and schools.

Should the system detect one of the infractions, audible and visual alerts notify officers of the vehicle's location and the electronic system tracks the vehicle in question.

Citizens are reminded it's not just the owners of brand-new vehicles who need to worry about auto theft. In many cases, an older car can be more valuable when it's dismantled and sold for parts. By acquiring the new L.P.R.'s, La Porte Police has taken another innovative step to protect the interests of their citizens.

For more questions regarding La Porte Police Department's continual efforts to thwart criminal

activity or for any other matters concerning La Porte Police operations, please call 281-842-3185.