

## Lubbock Police Dept. statement 12-21-2007

I would like to begin by thanking everyone in attendance for this opportunity for the Lubbock Police Department to alleviate any concerns about cameras deployed recently in property crimes investigations conducted by detectives of the Lubbock Police Department. Representing the police department with me today are Acting Chief of Police Thomas Esparza; the Property Crimes commander, Captain Wayne Bullock; and the detective supervisor leading the use of the cameras, Sergeant Robert Ferguson.

The crime of Burglary of a Habitation is a serious offence that can have devastating affects for victims. In fact, it is classified as a 2<sup>nd</sup> degree felony offense under the Texas Penal Code, carrying a punishment range of 2 to 20 years in prison and up to a \$10,000 fine. So far this year, 2649 burglaries have been reported as of October. Burglary is one of only two Part 1 crimes to have increased over last years totals in the City of Lubbock, Part 1 crimes being those of a more serious nature.

Unfortunately, burglaries are historically one of the most difficult crimes to solve. In fact, Burglary currently carries the lowest clearance rates of any Part 1 Crime. Many factors account for the difficulties in solving and prosecuting burglars. Rarely is evidence left behind by suspects, and such crimes are often completely random, offering few leads for detectives to follow.

Rather than just accept that burglaries are too difficult to solve, detectives from the Property Crimes Sections of the Lubbock Police Department began researching the use of cameras to capture images in public right-of-way areas in vicinities where multiple burglaries were occurring. Detectives tested several platforms and conferred with other agencies around the state already using cameras in a similar fashion. Since the cameras have been deployed, they have been instrumental in solving four burglaries. Suspects have been arrested, and tens of thousands of dollars worth of stolen property has been recovered.

The use of these crime fighting tools are regulated by a Standard Operating Procedure issued by Captain Wayne Bullock, the commander of the police department's Property Crimes Section. While we cannot discuss the specific tactics and techniques of utilizing investigative equipment, I will share with you the first rule in this SOP. It states: "Officers will be respectful of the constitutional rights of all citizens and endeavor to protect those rights at all times."

The Lubbock Police Department regards the privacy of citizens with the upmost seriousness and is committed to safeguarding the constitutional rights of everyone. These cameras are placed only in public places with views of public rights-of-way. The same standard for police officers viewing an area from only a lawful vantage point is fully applied to the use of these cameras.

While the technology of these cameras is nothing new, our detectives have developed an innovative way of tasking them to impact a serious crime that remains to be one of the most difficult of all crimes to control.