



## CITY OF MADISON POLICE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE



### USE OF TIRE DEFLATION DEVICES

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Eff. Date 02/07/2023

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this standard operating procedure (SOP) is to establish guidelines on the safe use of tire deflation devices.

#### **APPLICABILITY**

This SOP governs the actions of MPD officers for MPD initiated response as well as MPD involvement in mutual aid requests for pursuit assistance coming into the City.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

**Tire Deflation Device:** These devices are spiked strips or sticks that are put down on the roadway to deflate the tires of any vehicle running over them. The tires lose air, making continued travel difficult or impossible. Timing is critical, requiring good communication and coordination among officers. When deploying tire-deflation devices, there should be adequate warning and sufficient distance to permit the suspect to stop before reaching the device. Proper training is necessary in order for officers to use this technique. Only tire deflation devices approved by the Madison Police Department are approved for use by Madison Police Department employees.

**Stationary Vehicle:** Any vehicle with four or more tires, which has the apparent ability to be driven away from the scene of an incident.

**Moving Vehicle:** Any vehicle with four or more tires, which is being operated in such a manner as to avoid the arrest of the occupant.

#### **PROCEDURES**

1. Only officers who have successfully completed training in the proper use and deployment techniques of the tire deflation device are authorized to deploy the system.
2. Only department issued tire deflation devices will be utilized.
3. The tire deflation device will not be deployed on two or three wheeled vehicles unless the use of deadly force is justified.
4. Prior to beginning each tour of duty, officers will determine if their squad is equipped with a tire deflation device and verify that it is in proper working order.

#### **AUTHORIZED USE**

##### **Stationary Vehicle**

1. A tire deflation device may be deployed when the possibility exists that a wanted or dangerous person may enter a vehicle and leave an area of containment (during an active police operation).
2. A tire deflation device may be utilized to contain a suspected impaired driver who refuses to exit a vehicle and may attempt to drive away after being stopped by an officer.

A tire deflation device may only be deployed on a stationary vehicle when a reasonable belief exists that the vehicle will be operated or occupied by an individual posing a risk to officers or to the public. Officers must maintain visual sight of a stationary vehicle after a tire deflation device has been deployed, and warn the driver of the devices prior to him/her operating the vehicle (if feasible).

### **Moving Vehicle**

1. A tire deflation device may be deployed during an active MPD vehicle pursuit.
2. MPD officers may deploy tire deflation devices to stop vehicles fleeing from another agency that have entered the City of Madison without a specific mutual aid request. Deployment in these instances will only be done with a supervisor's approval, unless it is impractical to obtain such approval. Outside agency officers involved in the pursuit will be notified prior to deployment if possible.
3. A tire deflation device may be deployed on a moving vehicle not being actively pursued with the approval of a supervisor only under these circumstances:
  - a. A reasonable belief exists that the vehicle has recently fled from officers attempting to stop it (whether an actual pursuit followed or not); or
  - b. Pursuit of the vehicle is not authorized, but the vehicle is or has recently been operating in an extremely unsafe manner that creates a risk to the public.
  - c. When an officer has probable cause to believe that a vehicle contains a dangerous suspect who is wanted or has outstanding probable cause for arrest.

If a tire deflation device is deployed in this circumstance, officers should attempt to stop the vehicle once the tire(s) are deflated. Officers shall continue to follow the authorized pursuit guidelines of the Emergency Vehicle Operations Guidelines if the vehicle does not stop.

Prior to deploying the tire deflation device, the deploying officer will advise the pursuing officers of the location of the deployment. Once the suspect vehicle has passed over the device, the deploying officer will remove the device from the roadway.

### **USE CONSIDERATIONS**

1. Motor vehicle pursuits are inherently dangerous and attempts by officers to bring a pursuit to a safe conclusion, including the deployment of tire deflation devices, carry with them additional risks and dangers. In order to reduce the risks to officers deploying a tire deflation device, the following safety issues should be considered:
  - a. Officers should deploy the device from behind cover, which will provide them protection from a motor vehicle traveling at high speed (e.g. bridge abutment, overpass pillars, guardrail, concrete barrier, or large trees).
  - b. Deploying officers should not use a vehicle as cover when deploying the tire deflation device.
  - c. Deployment location should allow the officer to safely observe the suspect vehicle and other traffic as it approaches.
  - d. Deploying officers should always have an escape route available.
  - e. Although low-light and dark conditions can provide an officer with a level of concealment, it can make judging distance and the lane position of a vehicle difficult.

- f. Deploying officers should allow for sufficient time for a proper tire deflation device deployment, as rushed deployments are often ineffective and dangerous.
- g. Deploying officers shall not enter the roadway, or lanes of travel, in order to remove the tire deflation device until such time when all vehicles involved in the pursuit have passed and it is safe to do so.

### **DEPLOYING OFFICERS**

Ensure that they communicate with the pursuing officers the exact location of the planned tire deflation device deployment. Monitor radio transmissions of the ongoing pursuit.

Deploying officers will re-pack the tire deflation devices and place back into squad car and prior to the end of shift the tire deflation device will be inspected and any missing spikes will be replaced at that time. The fully functional device will then be returned to the squad.

### **PURSUING OFFICERS**

1. Maintain communications with the deploying officer.
2. Pursuing officers will decrease vehicle speed as they approach the tire deflation device deployment location and proceed cautiously through the deployment area.
3. In the event the tire deflation device has not been removed from the roadway, officers involved in the pursuit should continue driving over the system. Do not attempt to swerve or come to an abrupt stop.

### **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

Officers deploying tire deflation devices will complete a supplemental report including all pertinent facts surrounding their use.

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