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LAW ENFORCEMENT SOLUTIONS

SPECIAL REPORT

OFFICER HEALTH AND SAFETY

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BALLISTIC PERFORMANCE

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**Shields are tested against high velocity oblique impacts as well.*

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VANGUARD - VS

LEVEL III
RIFLE THREAT PROTECTION
14.8 lbs (20" x 30")

Size	Configuration	Weight	Testing
20"X30"	Viewport	14.8 lbs.	Independent
20"X30"	Viewport and Light	16.1 lbs.	Independent



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Learn more
about Vanguard



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EDITORIAL

WEAR YOUR VEST

Body armor is the most effective lifesaving gear available to law enforcement; not wearing it can be a fatal mistake.

Since its introduction, soft armor has been an effective way to protect law enforcement wearers from common handgun rounds. But the trick has been getting officers to wear it, especially in the heat of summer.

Officers' resistance to wearing body armor is mostly about comfort, especially in warmer climates. Armor is not going to be as comfortable as a regular shirt for many years to come. But it is getting better, as manufacturers are now using lighter and more flexible materials. Another thing that has made wearing body armor all day more bearable is the external vest carrier, which distances the armor from the wearer's skin.

Still, there are officers who don't want to wear their vests. Which is why many agencies

now mandate it.

The Denver Police Department does not mandate wearing body armor on duty. Fortunately, one of the department's officers who was shot in June chose to wear his vest.

He was ambushed in the early morning hours of June 7 while sitting in his patrol vehicle. The suspect fired 18 rounds in the exchange, striking the officer three times in his ballistic vest. The officer exited the vehicle under fire, engaged the suspect, fired 17 rounds, and fatally wounded him.

Thanks to his decision to wear his armor that officer suffered minor injuries from bullet impacts on his armor.

Wear your vest. 

There are still officers who don't want to wear their vests. Which is why many agencies now mandate it.



PHOTO: KELLY BRACKEN

DAVID GRIFFITH
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Origin™ evolves from over 24 years of combat-proven heritage of the PARACLETE® name and redefines expectations of what's possible in body armor systems. Our new integrated platform goes above and beyond conventional tactical vests. Highly scalable, modular, and strategically designed to "armor up" from concealable to full tactical, the Origin System reduces bulk while maximizing mobility without compromising ballistic protection. This allows the operator to quickly configure their Origin platform to the immediate threat level through interchangeable components. These components offer maximum adaptability with the most technologically advanced ballistics available today. Learn more at **PointBlankEnterprises.com/origin**



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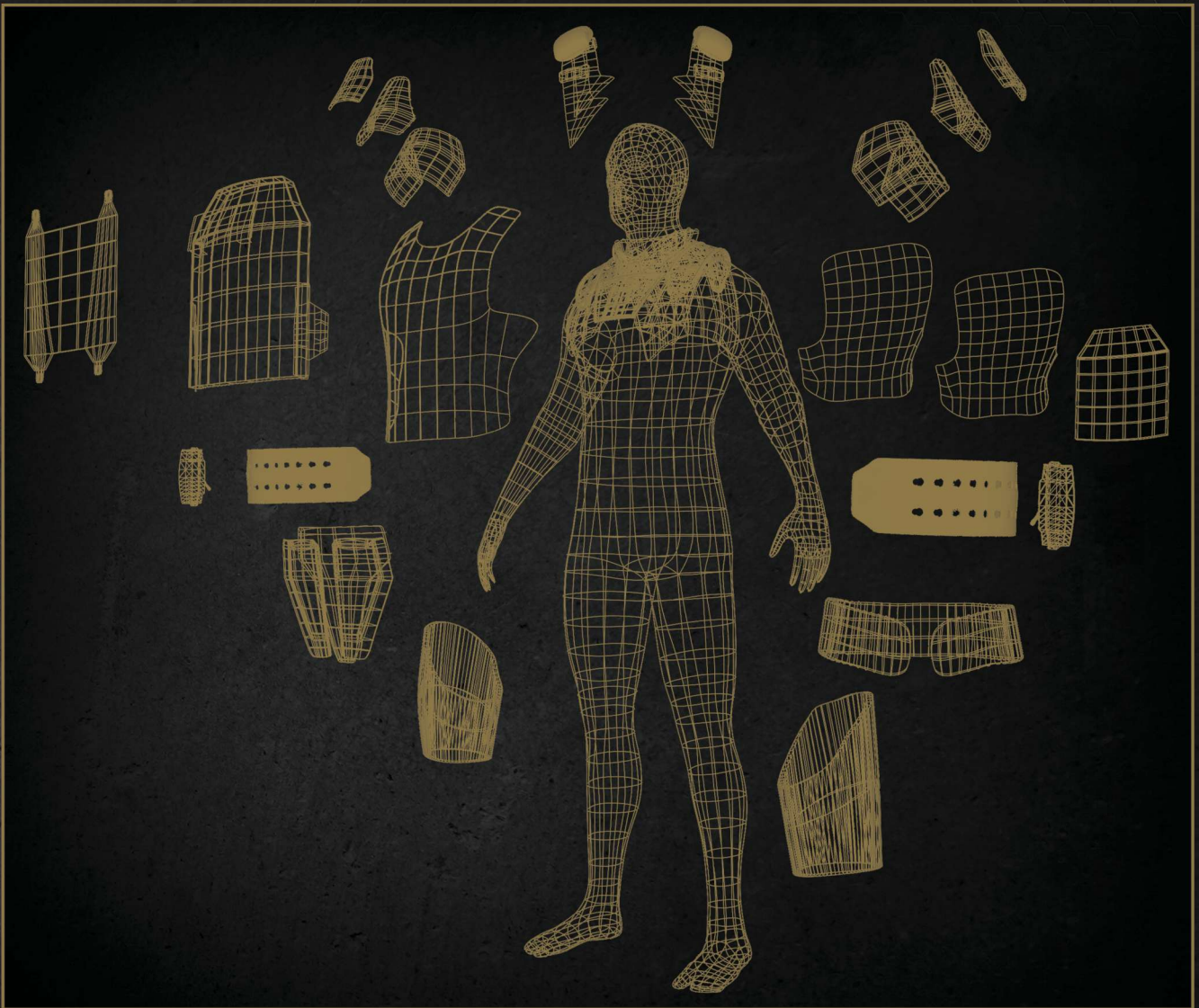


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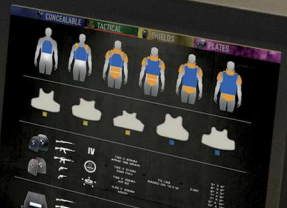
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OFFICER SAFETY AND ALTERNATIVE-FUEL VEHICLES

EVs and other alternative fuel vehicles are much more common on the road and more are coming. Do they present new hazards for law enforcement?

WAYNE PARHAM

As more alternative-fuel and hybrid vehicles hit the road, police and other first responders need to understand that they are no more dangerous than conventional vehicles. However, there are certain safety considerations every cop should know.

Capt. Chris Womack, of the Indianapolis Fire Department, travels the country teaching first responders about special considerations to keep in mind while dealing with alternative-fuel vehicles (AFVs). He and Michael Smyth formed AFV Educate several years ago to help better train first responders.

SILENT MOVEMENT

Some AFVs are almost silent. And that can lead responders at crash scenes to believe they are turned off when they are still running. An AFV that is on may pull forward when officers think it is off.

To demonstrate how accident scenes can present dangers to officers when a vehicle is silent but then drives forward, Womack shares a video of an incident that injured a New York firefighter about a year ago. An electric SUV had come to rest partially on top of another vehicle. As the firefighter was working inside the passenger door of the SUV, the SUV started driving forward.

The video shows the SUV becoming unstable and topple down, injuring the firefighter's leg.

That "silent movement" is something officers need to be aware could happen.

The video illustrates an important point — never assume that a vehicle is shut off when you don't hear the engine



PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES/MARKHATFIELD

running. Womack explains that with an electric vehicle, there would not be any engine sound, but also many gas-powered vehicles shut off when stopped to conserve fuel. They also may move forward if a driver takes his or her foot off the brake pedal.

In the case of police officers, Womack says they can often be called upon to check on a vehicle that has stopped with a person inside—whether that person is passed out, sleeping, or experiencing a medical condition.

"The first thing law enforcement or firefighters want to do is beat on the window to try to get the patient to wake up, and that's a bad thing to do. Because, if that person comes up, they're going to take their foot off the brake and there would be a lunge forward," he explains.

SPOTTING AN AFV IS NOT ALWAYS EASY

Womack points out that when electric vehicles first hit the market, they were more distinguishable from traditionally fueled vehicles, but that is no longer the case. Now, hybrid and AFVs basically mirror their conventional vehicle counterparts.

"That's why I tell people, when you come across any vehicle, you treat it like it's a hybrid electric or alternative fuel until you prove otherwise," he says.

Womack also points out aftermarket parts can convert older vehicles into hybrid or electric vehicles, such as an all-electric 1952 Chevrolet truck he said was displayed at a show several years ago.

MYTHS AND BAD INFO

Womack always opens his classes by discussing myths and misconceptions about AFVs and hybrids.

“When it comes to these cars, they’re not any more dangerous than a conventional vehicle and a lot of times they’re actually safer,” he points out, with a reminder to again be aware of silent movement. “Our tactics are a little different.”

He informs students that most AFVs incorporate safety features such as:

The high-voltage system in a car is shut down if there is airbag deployment. Impact detection will use inertia switches to also shut down the high-voltage system. A similar safety feature with inertia switches will shut down the fuel system in compressed natural gas (CNG) or propane vehicles. Fault detection systems also can shut down the high-voltage system in electric and hybrid vehicles if a battery heats up or if there is some type of damage. Simply turning the vehicle off disables the high-voltage systems in these cars as well.

So, in practice, safety systems should shut electric and fuel systems down.

However, Smyth points out that officers and first responders can never be 100% sure that has happened and therefore should use caution.

He points to how Womack and firefighters can at times respond to motor vehicle accidents in which an airbag did not deploy and with that scenario, any safety systems activated by airbag deployment may not have functioned.

Some AFVs are almost silent. And that can lead responders to believe they are turned off when they are still running.

FIRST ON SCENE

So, what should an officer do when arriving first at the scene of an accident involving AFVs?

“The biggest thing we tell them is turn the vehicle off. That’s all you have to do,” says Womack. “A lot of officers that come across an accident, adrenaline’s going, they don’t hear an engine, so they assume it’s already turned off. Make sure to look inside, turn the vehicle off, and make sure that it doesn’t get put in gear, reverse, or drive, or whatever the case may be.”

For hybrids and electric vehicles, there are also special towing considerations officers should keep in mind when they request a wrecker.

“These cannot be put on a pull-behind wrecker, they have to be put on a flatbed. They have to put them on a flatbed or a dolly to keep the wheels off the ground,” explained Womack.

The issue is with regenerative braking, which is used on both hybrids and EVs. If the vehicle is being towed with the tires on the road, it could be charging the battery, causing it to heat up, and that could possibly cause a fire.



PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES/SEFA OZEL

Officers may wonder why they could potentially be approaching an electric vehicle and smell gasoline after an accident. Womack explains that some electric vehicles do have a small five-gallon or so gas tank that can run a generator to recharge the car’s battery and extend its range when there is a scarcity of charging locations.

CHARGING STATION HAZARDS

“The biggest thing I tell law enforcement, and everyone in public safety, is know what a charging station looks like,” Womack says.

Why is that important? Because many are along streets or in parking lots and could be struck and damaged during an accident. Some in Indianapolis, he explains, are only about six inches from the curb. If damaged, they could prove a danger to first responders.

He suggests officers download free apps that will help them know where the EV charging sites and alternative fueling stations are located in their areas.

Womack says an officer’s concern with a charging station that has been hit by a car would be similar to his or her awareness if someone had struck a fuel pump. In either case an officer would not want to be “rushing in without knowing what’s going on.”

At the fire department, the approach when a charging station could potentially be damaged is to treat it like a downed power line. Some charging stations have shut offs, but some do not.

In the latter example, the only way to disrupt power would be for the power company to cut the flow of electricity. In all cases, officers should secure the scene and keep onlookers safely away. ⚡

Products and Directory



Paraclete

Vanguard Level III Shields

The Paraclete Vanguard shields from Point Blank provide lightweight level III rifle threat protection. Vanguard shields weigh 14.8 pounds in the 20x30-inch configuration, 16.8 pounds in 21x36 inches, 18.5 pounds in a 21x36-inch rectangular version, and 25.5 pounds in the 20x48-inch extra large version. The Vanguard's wide rectangular shaped ballistic viewport provides excellent viewing capabilities while the weapon index platform on each side allows the operator to position their weapon for accurate handgun or long-gun deployment.

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Point Blank Enterprises Inc. is a worldwide leader in the development, manufacturing, and distribution of high-performance protective solutions for the U.S. Military and Department of Defense, Federal Agencies, and both domestic and international law enforcement and corrections professionals. The Company has a strong portfolio of product brands in the industry, including: Point Blank Body Armor, Protective Products, Paraclete, Advanced Technology Group, The Protective Group (TPG), First Tactical, Point Blank Duty Gear, United Shield International Limited, and Protective Apparel. Products produced by Point Blank Enterprises include: soft body armor, hard body armor, shields, helmets, tactical apparel, holsters, and more.

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