

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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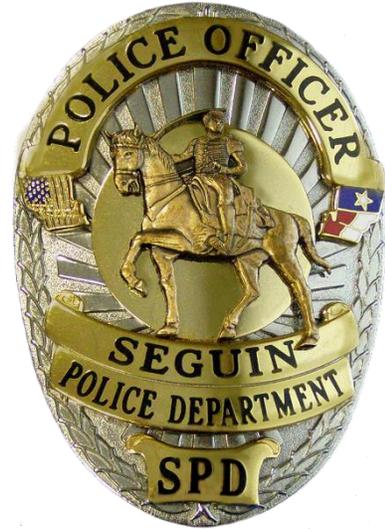
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## **New Technology Benefits Police, Municipal Court and Defendants**

### ***Automatic License Plate Reader and Electronic Citation Systems Now in Use***

**SEGUIN, Texas** – New technology is allowing the Seguin Police Department and Municipal Court to better utilize resources, provide quicker service, more effectively clear warrants and locate wanted suspects.

#### **Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR)**

An automatic license plate reader installed in a patrol vehicle went into use in late July. The unit consists of four cameras mounted to the roof and a computer inside the vehicle. The system instantly photographs, geo-tags and compares license plate numbers against a database as Seguin Police Officer Carlos Contreras is on routine patrol. The information is checked against a list of license plates associated with stolen vehicles, wanted suspects and warrants. Matches are instantly flagged to the officer.

“The camera system is connected to municipal warrants, stolen vehicles and AMBER Alert vehicles,” Officer Contreras said. “It’s very beneficial because as an officer you are always multitasking. The camera system is almost like having four other officers in the vehicle with you.”

During a period of five days, the unit read 13,835 license plates, resulting in 10 arrests and 31 warrants being settled. The warrants associated with suspects located by the ALPR total \$13,647. There are currently more than \$4 million in outstanding City of Seguin traffic warrants.

“The ALPR is also great on the investigative side of things,” Seguin Police Chief Kevin Kelso said. “We can drive the immediate area around a crime scene to record and geo-tag all the nearby license plates. That information can be useful later if a suspect claims they were not in the area when a crime occurred. We can simply pull up a picture with data that proves their vehicle was there.”

The ALPR system cost approximately \$20,000 and is currently installed in one SPD patrol vehicle.

### **Electronic Citation System (e-citation)**

The recent move to electronic citation technology by the Seguin Police Department has improved efficiency for law enforcement, the municipal court and defendants. The department now has 12 electronic citation writers that officers started using in July.

E-citation systems allow officers to electronically enter information into a citation by swiping a driver license into a handheld device. The officer can then wirelessly print the citation in the patrol vehicle. This expedited process increases officer productivity and helps prevent defendants from misreading handwritten citations.

The technology also prevents court clerks from having to hand enter citation information into the computer system. In the past, the Seguin Municipal Court hand entered approximately 13,000 cases annually.

“The electronic citations have taken a significant workload off of our court clerks,” Seguin Municipal Court Supervisor Landra Solansky said. “This allows our clerks to better utilize their time, reduces the need to add additional staff and speeds up the process for defendants.”

The new technology places citations in the court system the morning after being issued. Previously it could take up to a week for citations to be manually entered. Court dates are no

longer issued with citations. Defendants may now contact the court to schedule their own date. Many citations may now be handled at a municipal court window as opposed to in court.

“Scheduling court days as needed reduces wait time,” Solansky continued. “In the past court dates were set on Tuesdays and defendants would sometimes have long waits because of the amount of people scheduled on the same day. This change has significantly improved that situation.”

**About the City of Seguin**

Seguin, Texas is located off Interstate 10, about 35 miles east of San Antonio. Seguin is big enough to boast a top-rated university and a state-of-the-art hospital. More than 25,000 residents enjoy a range of cultural, recreational and employment opportunities. Seguin’s robust diversified economy features a steelmaker, a manufacturer of automotive parts and plants making roadside mowing equipment and building materials. In 2009, Seguin was proud to be selected by Caterpillar as the site of a major new engine manufacturing facility.

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