

Telegraph Herald - Dubuque, IA

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Saturday, June 28, 2008

T3s offer mobility, accessibility

Motorized devices were developed for law enforcement purposes

BY SYDNEY SMITH TH STAFF WRITER

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Photo by: Jeremy Portje

Dubuque Police Cpl. Joe Messeric (left) and Capt. Russ Stecklein are swarmed by children curious about the department's new T3s.

It might be environmentally friendly, but the Dubuque Police Department's new ride is designed to be tough on crime.

It's the T3, a three-wheeled electric personal assistive mobility device, and the department recently added two to its vehicular fleet -- thanks to a grant.

So far, T3s seem to be a big hit wherever they

go.

As the devices navigate downtown, swarms of neighborhood children curiously chase the vehicles and civilian cars pull over to take pictures and ask about the scooter-looking vehicles.

The T3, produced by the company T3 Motion, was developed for law enforcement purposes and to make police more accessible to the public. They reach average speeds of 8 to 12 mph, and maximum speeds of 25 mph, according to the company.

Hundreds of police stations throughout the country are ordering the devices to add to their community policing division.

Dubuque Police did just that in early spring when they spent approximately \$17,000 in grant money to purchase two of the vehicles, said Assistant Dubuque Police Chief Terry Tobin.

Capt. Russ Stecklein said, to date, the T3s have been used by police at large-scale events such as the America's River Festival.

Police plan to use them at festivals throughout the summer and the department hopes to implement use of the vehicles in the walking beat and perhaps in the Lower Main Street bar scene.

T3 Tidbits

- * The T3 is estimated to cost 10 cents per day to operate.
- * Operation costs are equivalent to 500 miles per gallon.
- * Fuel cost analysis estimates that the T3 saves \$23,000 to \$30,000 in fuel costs annually

Source: [t3motion.com/company.html](#)

Current Weather

Dubuque, IA

73° F / 23° C



Overcast

Wind: SW 10 MPH

Humidity: 87%

National Weather Service
Jul 8, 2008 9:53 AM

[Weather Forecast](#)

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A T3 Motion official said the devices come with plenty of working benefits for peace officers.

"(Police) have a raised platform from which they're working from (to) see above a crowd, which increases their omnipresence so the public can see that they're present," said Neil Brooker, president of the company. "The T3s have a zero-degree turning radius, access to walkways, and quick response time. Overriding all this is that they're clean technology."

The "clean" vehicle runs on a battery that charges within approximately three hours and will run for about 30 miles. T3 Motion estimates in relation to energy costs, the T3 costs around 10 cents per day to operate.

The city recognizes there might be an influx of similar vehicles in the community, whether for personal use or tourism, said Crenna Brumwell, assistant city attorney.

"So we wanted to be pre-emptive and have a regulation in place for that type of activity," said Brumwell of an ordinance passed at a June City Council meeting.

The regulations will allow consumers to operate the vehicles without license or registration, but the rider must be at least 16 years of age.

Whether the devices catch on as a personal usage device or remain a police vehicle, the department seems pleased with the possibilities and benefits of the T3.

"With (the T3s), we really maintain the approachability factor," Stecklein said of the department's community policing efforts. "Plus, it's so inexpensive, with little carbon footprint."



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Related Multimedia

[Police Ride T3s - Two Dubuque Police Officers patrol a neighborhood on their T3s and are swarmed by curious children.](#) June 27, 2008

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