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Local law enforcement gets new wheels



Don Prater | Opelika-Auburn News

With their striping and decals still fresh, the Opelika Police Department welcomed two new T3 Motion (t3motion.com) battery-powered electric vehicles to the force.

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By [DONATHAN PRATER](#)

Published: March 11, 2008

T3 vehicles look like stealthy, streamlined devices you might see in a science fiction movie.

But area police departments are hoping they will prove to be down-to-earth tools against crime.

With their striping and decals still fresh, the Opelika Police Department welcomed two new T3 Motion (t3motion.com) battery-powered electric vehicles to the force.

Each of the T3 vehicles is only 53.5-by-34.6-by-53.3-inches and has a top speed of 25 miles per hour. For what the three-wheeled vehicles may appear to lack in size, they more than make up for in maneuverability and enhanced visibility.

The set of T3s cost about \$12,000 each but didn't cost Opelika taxpayers a dime.

"The vehicles were paid for through asset forfeiture," Opelika police Capt. Allan Elkins said.

With a zero-degree turning radius and raised platform on which the officer would ride, the T3 will benefit law enforcement in several aspects.

"The vehicle solely uses battery power and is very quiet, so it's going to be beneficial to officers who are communicating with each other," Elkins said.

The officers of the OPD will begin a training program on the T3s later this week, according to Elkins.

The T3 might be something you'd expect to see in a larger metropolitan setting like an airport or mall, but Elkins said the pair of twin- battery operated vehicles the department has will primarily be used in to provide security in the City of Opelika Housing Authority properties.

And the OPD won't be the only local law enforcement sporting a pair of the T3 Motion vehicles.

Both the Auburn Police Division and the Lee County Sheriff's Office respectively have acquired T3 Motion vehicles as well.

"We received two (T3s) last week and they will primarily be used on the Auburn University campus and downtown areas to give us increased mobility during events like football games and other special events where crowds gather," said Auburn police Capt. Tom Stofer. "These vehicles will be another welcomed tool in our arsenal against crime. And as AU's campus becomes more 'pedestrianized,' the T3 will become a more valuable tool."