

## UTPA purchases electric scooters to help law enforcement

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EDINBURG - The University of Texas-Pan American police have a new tool in keeping the peace on campus: electric scooters.

The university purchased two scooters in February to help officers patrol the campus. Each scooter costs \$9,000 and runs on 110-volt batteries. When fully charged, the scooters can run almost 40 miles.

"We're getting a full eight-hour shift (out of the scooters)," said UTPA assistant police chief James Loya.

Besides saving the university energy and money, the scooters allow officers to cut through campus and ride inside some buildings to answer calls. Officers also can weave through crowds at university events on the scooters, Loya said.

That will come in handy when the university hosts HESTEC this fall.

"Over 30,000 people show up," Loya said.

The newest of the department's vehicles have caught students' eyes.

"We see students taking pictures," Loya said.

Officers who ride the scooters said the vehicles have made their job a lot easier.

Richie Dehoyos, a guard with UTPA Police, said the scooter has significantly cut down the time it takes him to patrol the campus parking lots. It would take him about an hour by foot. Now he can complete one trip around campus in about 20 minutes.

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