

MONTPELIER POLICE DEPARTMENT

Tire Deflation Device	Related Policies: Stops, Search and Arrest, Vehicle Pursuits, Use of Force
<i>This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i>	
Analogous Vermont Statutes:	
CALEA Standard:	
Date Implemented: September 12, 2023	Review Date: September 12, 2024

- I. Policy:** A stop stick device when properly used has the potential to save lives, reduce property damage, and reduce the potential for civil liability suits by reducing the hazards of police pursuits. Officers must be aware however, that any time the device is deployed, a vehicle – particularly a vehicle traveling at higher speeds – will lose some capability to effectively turn, stop, or accelerate. In making the decision to deploy a stop stick, an officer/supervisor must weigh the risk against that of allowing a pursuit to commence or continue.

The use of the stop stick must follow the department's established Use of Force and Vehicle Pursuit Policy.

- II. Purpose:** This directive is intended to establish a procedure for the deployment of a tire deflation device.

III. Definitions:

- A. Stopped Vehicle:** Any vehicle with four or more tires which has the apparent ability to be driven away from the scene of an incident.
- B. Moving Vehicle:** Any vehicle with four or more tires which is being operated in such a manner as to avoid the arrest of the occupant.
- C. Stop Stick:** Tire deflation devices are used by law enforcement agencies across the nation as a tool to end police pursuits by deflating the tires of the suspect vehicle. Stop Sticks are comprised of four 3-foot triangular segments with spikes that are connected and can be placed across a road. When a vehicle hits the strip, it injects metal tubes into the tires that cause them to slowly deflate. The tires do not blow out rather they slowly deflate in several seconds.

IV. Procedures:

A. Stopped Vehicle

- a. A stop stick device may be deployed when the possibility exists that a wanted or dangerous person may enter a vehicle and leave an area of containment.
- b. A stop stick device may be utilized to contain a suspected drunken driver who refuses to exit a vehicle and may attempt to drive away after being stopped by an officer.
- c. A stop stick device may be used when an officer, based on the information available at the time, feels it is prudent to prevent or significantly slow a vehicle which may leave the scene of an incident.

B. Moving Vehicle

- a. A stop stick device may be deployed when the operator of a vehicle is failing to stop for an officer who is attempting to stop and/or arrest the occupant.
- b. Prior to deploying the stop stick device, the deploying officer will advise the Dispatch (911) center of the location of the deployment. Once the suspect vehicle has passed over the device, the deploying officer will remove the device from the roadway and advise the Dispatch (911) center that the device has been removed.

C. General use of a stop stick

- a. No officer will be permitted to deploy a stop stick until they have been trained in the proper use of the device.
- b. A stop stick device shall not be deployed until authorization has been received from a Supervisor.
- c. A stop stick device will not be deployed to stop vehicles with less than four tires, vehicles carrying hazardous materials, or buses carrying passengers, unless the continued movement of the vehicle would result in an increased hazard to others.
- d. A stop stick device works best on paved surfaces.
- e. Officers must be always vigilant and recognize the dangers associated with high-speed vehicles, suspect behavior and trailing officers focus on the vehicle being pursuit and low light environment. An officer deploying the device shall use any available barriers, such as Guardrails, abutments, bridges, overpasses, or vehicles, to provide protection during deployment.
- f. A deployment location should have a good line of sight distance for the deploying officer.
- g. A stop stick device should not be deployed around curves, along roads with steep shoulders, blind turns or on bridges.
- h. The use of a stop stick may not force some individuals to stop.

D. Reporting

- a. Deploying officers shall document in the offense report anytime a stop stick is deployed, outlining the circumstances of the deployment and any damage which occurred.

- b.** Deploying officers will re-pack the stop sticks and place back into squad car and prior to the end of shift the stop stick will be inspected and any missing spikes will be replaced at that time. The fully functional device will then be rolled and returned to the squad.