

18.02 TIRE DEFLATION DEVICES

The Everett Police Department currently utilizes two types of tire deflation devices during the course of normal operations. These devices are known by their commercial names: "Stop Stick" and "Piranha". They are deployed in different situations and officers using them should follow these procedures and only after they are properly trained.

Use of Stop Sticks:

The preferred deployment of the "Stop Stick" is in a sleeve attached to a cord reel. It is primarily used as a tool to end police pursuits, by officers that toss it across the roadway and then pull it in front of fleeing vehicles. A supervisor, not actively involved in a police pursuit, must approve the use of the "Stop Stick". It shall be deployed into the appropriate lane of travel, at an angle perpendicular to the approaching vehicle. Officers will not use the "Stop Stick" on vehicles with less than four wheels.

The position of deployment shall be from a place of safety that takes into consideration the location, roadway, weather, vehicles and persons involved. The device shall be removed from the roadway as soon as the offending vehicle has passed or as soon thereafter as is safe.

An attempt shall be made to utilize the cord reel mechanism with care given toward exposed spikes, a tangled cord and other unforeseen dangers.

At speeds less than 35mph, the manufacturer of "Stop Stick" has determined that their product is not always effective. Unless unusual circumstances exist, it will not be used in these instances.

Personnel deploying "Stop Stick" shall advise, via the radio, their intent, location and portion of the roadway blocked as soon as possible and in all incidents prior to the arrival of the involved patrol cars.

Any use of these devices during a police pursuit shall be documented in a report (to include results of the action) and in a "Blue Team" entry. A used "Stop Stick" will be removed from service and returned to the equipment manager for replacement. The officer using the "Stop Stick" is responsible for the maintenance of the device if it is used.

The use of the "Stop Stick" should not be done in conjunction with a patrol vehicle blocking the traveled portion of the roadway and is not considered a roadblock.

*Added to Procedure
Manual 9/11/09*

Use of Piranha:

The "Piranha" is a small, lightweight, tire deflation device that measures less than four inches in length. It is used solely on stationary target vehicles before they become mobile. It is not to be thrown under moving vehicles. The device is placed underneath the tires of the parked vehicle so that the enclosed spikes on the "Piranha" will puncture the tires if the vehicle moves. They are designed to deflate the tire within five seconds.

Officers should obtain supervisory approval before deploying the "Piranha". The "Piranha" should only be used in situations where officers believe suspects might attempt to flee from law enforcement when contacted. Officers should not put themselves in undue danger when deploying the "Piranha". If the risk of placing the device underneath the tires of a target vehicle is too high, officers should not use it. Officers should consider factors such as the location, roadway, weather, vehicle, and suspects involved when considering whether or not to deploy.

If applicable and safe to do so, officers should warn the occupants of target vehicles not to drive away. That warning may be done verbally or with the use of emergency equipment.

The use of the "Piranha" does not eliminate the need for deploying officers to plan a tactical approach to the vehicle when the suspect returns. That approach should consider the safety of the officers and public, but also attempt to give the suspects an opportunity to comply with officers' orders. The Piranha should only be used for legitimate law enforcement functions where the flattening of the suspect's tires would be reasonable under the circumstances.

The "Piranha" will be assigned to the patrol vehicle, and officers should not remove them except for authorized use. In order to protect the device and maintain control of our inventory, it should be stored in the vehicle's glove compartment if room allows. This will also keep the "Piranha" safely secured in the event that the patrol vehicle is involved in a collision.

The "Piranha" should be removed from underneath the target vehicle's tires as soon as the operation is completed. Officers should not deploy the device underneath the tires and leave the area.

If the "Piranha" is deployed and a suspect drives over it, officers will take care in recovering it from the roadway. Sharp spikes may be exposed after this happens. The device should be removed from service and returned to the equipment manager for replacement. They should not be re-used. In these incidents a report should be completed documenting the use of the "Piranha". Absent other factors requiring such an entry, a "Blue Team" report is not required when a "Piranha" is used. The officer using the "Piranha" is responsible for its maintenance.