



City of De Pere Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

De Pere police now among first in area to utilize body-worn cameras

De Pere, WI: The De Pere Police Department implemented body-worn cameras for all of its 28 field officers starting on May 11, making it one of the first area law enforcement agencies to do so.

According to De Pere Police Chief Derek Beiderwieden, this new equipment should help strengthen his officers' already-strong work throughout the community.

"The idea is just to be as open as possible with the public, and it doesn't get more open than that. You get to see what the officers saw," Beiderwieden said.

De Pere's body-worn cameras (BWC) feature both video and audio capabilities, and are roughly the size of a small cellphone.

Body-worn cameras are generally worn on an officer's uniform front and the cameras will typically be utilized in all duty-related officer interactions with the public moving forward, except for a few exceptions. These limited exceptions include several routine, non-enforcement related activities such as report writing or attending Neighborhood Watch meetings; as well as barring their use during sensitive interactions, such as consoling or speaking with victims of sexual assault.

"We recognize that video and audio recordings of interactions between De Pere Police Department personnel and the public can provide a vital record of events," Beiderwieden said, noting "BWC video can provide additional information regarding enforcement and/or investigative activities, as well as assist in collecting evidence for use in criminal investigations."

While these benefits will be far-reaching for the department, Beiderwieden said footage will not replace tried-and-true methods for his staff, but rather serve as an added tool to supplement existing efforts.

"While valuable, any recordings provide a limited perspective of interactions, and must be considered along with all other available evidence – such as witness, victim or suspect statements; officer observations; forensic analyses; physical evidence collection; evidence photographs and other documentary information – when evaluating the video recordings," Beiderwieden said.



Currently, the Pulaski Police Department also has body-worn cameras, but otherwise the De Pere Police Department is one of very few area agencies to utilize them currently. It's important to note, however, that De Pere does not have dashboard cameras at present time, which is commonly utilized by other area law enforcement in their efforts.

According to Beiderwieden, the versatility of body-worn cameras was a contributing factor in choosing them.

"There's a lot of interaction in places where cars aren't – running, behind houses, in garages, backyards, things like that," Beiderwieden said. "These can go anywhere, and the advantage is you get the officers' perspective."

For more information on the De Pere Police Department, visit de-pere.org.

Caption: De Pere police officer Corey Rodewald stands near a squad car while wearing the department's new body-worn camera technology. The camera is the rectangular device clipped on the chest area of Rodewald's left-hand side.