

U of M-Flint security will test body cameras

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Recorder can capture any police encounter



By Lori Dougovito

FLINT (WJRT) -- (03/12/08)--We've all seen the dramatic pictures from cameras inside police cars. Now that same technology is going one step further in the fight against crime.

It's called a VIDMIC. It's a radio outfitted with a tiny camera and microphone. And right now police are testing it on a Mid-Michigan campus.

"It's cutting edge. This is new technology," said Chalmers Sanders, director of public safety at the University of Michigan-Flint. "I plan on buying five if it works."

They are shoulder radios complete with a camera and microphone. U of M-Flint police are testing one for the next month.

"We're trying them on day shift, afternoons, evening shift," Sanders said. "We want to see how it works in the real world, our real world."

"It's very simple to operate," said Officer David Hunter, who has used the VIDMIC this past week. "And then you're also able to review info."

Hunter says he thinks it'll help in the he said/she said instances.

"It protects officers as well as the citizens," Hunter said.

In August, new apartment-style dorms will house hundreds of students.

"All of a sudden we're a 24-hour campus," Sanders said.

The cameras could help if officers have to go inside the building.

"It puts them back on the street faster. I mean, they're able to do it right there without having to go back and get equipment," Hunter said. "Then just download it into computer. That's great, a great thing."

VIDMICs cost \$700 apiece.