



ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT  
PROCEDURAL ORDERS

**SOP 2-11**

**P&P Draft 05/03/2023**

**2-11 USE OF TIRE DEFLATION DEVICES**

**Related SOP(s), Form(s), Other Resource(s) and Rescinded Special Orders(s):**

A. Related SOP(s)

- 2-45 Pursuit by Motor Vehicle
- 2-53 Use of Force: Definitions

B. Form(s)

None

C. Other Resource(s)

None

D. Rescinded Special Order(s)

None

**2-11-1 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish requirements for using a tire deflation device. A tire deflation device is used to reduce a vehicle's speed by deflating the tire's air pressure at a controlled rate. The device may be used in proactive situations prior to an offender fleeing the scene in a vehicle, or in reactive situations to stop a fleeing vehicle. Tire deflation devices must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, department training, department policy, and/or the directions of supervisory personnel.

**2-11-2 Policy**

It is the policy of the Albuquerque Police Department (Department) to establish procedures, use considerations, roles, and responsibilities for the safe use of tire deflation devices.

**N/A 2-11-3 Definitions**

A. Certified Officer

Any officer who, for the purpose of this policy, has received Department-approved training and who is certified in using a tire deflation device.

B. Tire Deflation Device

A device that uses sharp, hollow spikes to penetrate the tires of a vehicle. The spikes remain in the tire(s) of the vehicle, allowing air to pass through the spikes for a rapid



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and controlled deflation of the tires. Tire deflation devices include Stop Sticks or Spike Belts.

**6** 2-11-4 **Procedures**

- A. Only sworn personnel who have successfully completed Department-approved certification training, by a certified instructor, in the proper use of the tire deflation device may use the device.
- B. Only Department-issued tire deflation devices shall be used, which include:
  - 1. Spike Belt; and
  - 2. Stop Stick.
- C. The tire deflation device may only be used:
  - 1. During pursuits that have been authorized by a supervisor;
  - 2. Where the vehicle pursuit would not be authorized but when the driver's detention would be lawful; or
  - 3. If feasible, on a stationary vehicle in order to reduce the vehicle's speed if the driver were to flee in the vehicle.
    - a. If the driver flees, sworn personnel are permitted to use a tire deflation device with authorization from a supervisor in order to slow the moving vehicle, to increase public safety, and to allow for apprehension of the driver who is fleeing.
- 1** D. The tire deflation device shall not be used on two- or three-wheeled vehicles, unless the use of deadly force is justified, as defined in SOP Use of Force: Definitions.

**6** 2-11-5 **Use Considerations**

- A. Using a tire deflation device in an attempt to stop a fleeing motor vehicle or prevent a stationary vehicle from fleeing is considered a seizure under the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.
- B. When determining whether to use a tire deflation device, sworn personnel shall consider the totality of the circumstances and the need for apprehension of an individual against the potential risks of the use of the tire deflation device.
- C. Motor vehicle pursuits inherently are dangerous and attempts by sworn personnel to bring a pursuit to a safe conclusion, including using tire deflation devices, carry with them additional risks and dangers. In order to reduce the risks to sworn personnel using a tire deflation device, the following safety issues shall be considered:



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1. Sworn personnel shall use the device from behind cover, which should provide them protection from a motor vehicle traveling at a high speed (e.g., bridge abutment, overpass pillars, concrete barrier, or large trees);
2. Certified sworn personnel shall not use a vehicle as cover when deploying the tire deflation device;
3. Deployment location should allow the officer to safely observe the suspect vehicle and other traffic as it approaches;
4. Certified sworn personnel shall always have a pre-planned escape route available when planning for deployment of the TDD;
5. Although low-light and dark conditions may provide an officer with a level of concealment, it may make judging distance and the lane position of a vehicle difficult; and
6. Certified sworn personnel shall allow for sufficient time for the proper placement of a tire deflation device, as rushed deployments often are ineffective and dangerous.

- 5 D. Certified sworn personnel shall not enter the roadway, or lanes of travel, in order to remove the tire deflation device until all vehicles involved in the pursuit have passed and it is safe to do so.

6 2-11-6 **Roles and Responsibilities**

A. The pursuing officer shall:

1. Ensure their actions are consistent with SOP Pursuit by Motor Vehicle;
2. Maintain communications with the TDD certified officer;
3. Decrease vehicle speed as they approach the tire deflation device location and proceed cautiously through the area; and
4. If the tire deflation device has not been removed from the roadway, sworn personnel involved in the pursuit should continue driving over the device. Do not attempt to swerve or come to an abrupt stop.

B. The TDD certified officer shall:

1. Notify the supervisor of the intended deployment of a tire deflation device and the location;
2. Ensure that they communicate with the pursuing sworn personnel regarding the exact location of the planned tire deflation device;



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3. Monitor radio transmissions of the ongoing pursuit; and
4. Determine whether the totality of the circumstances justifies the use of the tire deflation device at the time of deployment.

**C. Reporting Requirements**

1. Certified sworn personnel shall complete a Uniform Incident Report when a vehicle has struck the tire deflation device.
2. A supervisor shall ensure a report is submitted by the end of the officer's shift when a vehicle has struck a tire deflation device.

**D. Training**

1. All sworn personnel who want certification in a particular tire deflation device must complete the required Department-approved training by a certified instructor for the device prior to being issued the device and prior to using the device.
2. Tire deflation devices shall only be issued to TDD-certified sworn personnel and only certified sworn personnel are allowed to use tire deflation devices.



## 2-11 USE OF TIRE DEFLATION DEVICES

### Related SOP(s), Form(s), Other Resource(s) and Rescinded Special Orders(s):

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