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New Forensic Vehicle Makes Romeoville Police a More Efficient Department

The Romeoville Police Department has a new tool at their disposal: a forensic vehicle. This crime lab on wheels will help the police (and the people of Romeoville) in a number of ways. The vehicle will be deployed at major accidents and at major crime scenes. The simplest benefit of the new vehicle is transportation of police equipment. "This eliminates the running back and forth between the scene and the station," says officer Sean Wagner. "We had to do that with the patrol cars and now the process has been streamlined to make things easier." It is also great for transporting large pieces of evidence like furniture, mattresses, or box springs. Previously, the department would have to come up with some creative ways to transport these oversized items or borrow vehicles from Public Works.



It's not just about carrying things. It's also about **what** is being carried. Opening a side door reveals shovels, picks, and a pop up tent that can be used to shade the officers on a scorching summer day or to provide privacy while working on a sensitive scene. "These are large items that we can't normally keep in our squad cars," points out Wagner. Another one of those large items is a 3D scanner. The scanner can take in over a million data points (location of evidence, skid marks, tire tracks...) in one scan and be operated by one person. Previously, two person surveying equipment was used and the operators had to scan each point individually. "We'd scan probably 200 points before, but now we're collecting hundreds of millions of points," says Wagner. The vehicle sports numerous electrical outlets, an outdoor work station with an awning, indoor work stations, a place to conduct and record interviews, and full wi-fi capabilities. Having

access to the internet while in the field is essential for writing reports, faxing, scanning search warrants with the attorney's office, pulling up weather reports, or accessing any databases that officers may need for working a crime scene.

"Obtaining a forensic van has been a department goal for some time," stated Police Chief Mark Turvey. "The new forensic vehicle will further enhance the department's capabilities in responding quickly and effectively to major crime scenes and serious traffic crashes."

The vehicle also makes the department a better partner. The Romeoville Police Department is a member of the Will County-Grundy County Major Crimes Task Force. Sometimes they're assisting on a case in University Park or Crete, out where Will County borders Indiana. That's a long way from Romeoville, but with the forensic vehicle, they can still access everything they have in the station systems.

"The new vehicle makes the Romeoville PD a more efficient agency," said Mayor John Noak. "No tax payer dollars were used to buy this vehicle. It was completely paid for by funds seized from criminal activity." More equipment can be transported at one time and having a direct link to the station systems as well as the internet is invaluable. The 3D scanner alone has cut down on the amount of time the roads are closed for a crash. Officer Wagner estimates roads are being reopened hours faster. If you should see the forensic vehicle around town, now you'll know all about it.