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Deputies get new shields for patrol

El Paso County deputies get 60 Riggs Shields

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By: Patrick Nelson



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Donated Shields Designed to Better Protect Deputies

<https://www.koaa.com/news/covering-colorado/deputies-get-new-shields-for-patrol>

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EL PASO COUNTY — We're getting our first look at a new piece of equipment designed to protect deputies on patrol in El Paso County. Investigative Reporter Patrick Nelson shows us why the new shields are so important.

The sheriff's office now has 60 new handheld shields. The hope is these shields will be an extra layer of protection for deputies who have to patrol one of the largest and most populated counties in the state.

It's one of the most dangerous situations a law enforcement officer can find themselves in, being ambushed while sitting in their patrol vehicle. Now, El Paso County Sheriff's Office deputies will have ballistic shields by their side.

"They are specifically small. They are meant to cover the areas between the head, the neck. So anything that's not covered by a ballistic vest," said Lt. Mitch Mihalko of the El Paso County Sheriff's Office.

The Riggs Shields are capable of stopping most bullets and knife attacks.

"To keep an officer safe while they are negotiating with an emotionally disturbed person, or someone in crisis. The ability to safely clear a house, the ability to protect from an ambush type of attack from inside of a car," said Lt. Mihalko.

The shields are light weight and easily worn.

"it also has the ability to wrap around an arm so if you needed to use two hands, or go to a different tool you could do that also with the shield in place," said Lt. Mihalko.

County leaders say the new shields are an important added layer of protection for deputies who may not have time to wait for backup.

"So very often a sheriff's deputy is off in a very rural area on their own checking out some type of challenge or problem that we might have received with a call. So it's important that they have the best protective capacity possibly doing that as a single individual at that point in time," said El Paso County Commissioner Stan Vanderwerf.

The shields were donated by the El Paso County Sheriff's Office Foundation. Deputies will go through a training period before using them.

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