

**Vests Are Good**

12/31/09 90 W, 1 I - + 14 - 9

Saw this during our holiday travels. That's a patrol car stopping traffic on a four-lane highway, with two officers in dark uniforms (and flashlights) clearing debris from the roadway. The night was, the traffic was light. Drivers were attentive and had pulled to the right and stopped. Call this a safety alert, if you like, with location and agency concealed. Mostly it was surprising. Seeing just a single vehicle blocking traffic and with neither cones nor vests in, um, sight.



Some reflective vinyl on that car wouldn't hurt either. Not that I'm one to overuse vinyl on a vehicle, that is.

**Olson** - 12/31/09 - 15:27

I should note, there WAS reflecting striping and lettering on same. It has been digitally altered to conceal the identity of the agency. Let me restore the image with blurring, instead.

**Legeros** - 12/31/09 - 15:30

it does seem like our LE counterparts (and some FDs still) aren't complying with what boils down to good common sense, not to mention a Federal law. Why would you not put on a simple vest when it may aid to save your life? They certainly don't come to work without their vests on. Just like our FD brothers that still think that a bunker coat is sufficient. It's on the rigs, put it on.

**CFP 7021** - 12/31/09 - 15:57

Vests are good. Everyone should wear one. But a vest does not PROTECT you, it only makes you VISIBLE. When we are concerned with the cell phoning, text messaging, newspaper reading, make-up putting on, Angus burger eating motoring public, visibility is good, but obstructive protection, i.e. BLOCKERS, is much, much better.

**DJ** ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 12/31/09 - 22:58

Traffic vest \$20... Traffic cones \$22 each... Police car \$30,000... Ambulance \$150,000... Fire Engine \$450,000... Rescue Truck \$650,000... Ladder Truck \$850,000... Everyone going home at the end of your shift... PRICELESS!!!

**Donaldson** - 01/01/10 - 13:26

Just a perspective from an LEO:

I know here in Raleigh we are provided with the traffic vest that are compliant to the new law. I wear it probably 98% of the time when out in traffic. Some officers never wear it and that is on them. I know it can be kinda difficult remembering it throw it on in the rush of things, mainly

because with all of the other crap we have in the car, the vest is either in the trunk or in the back seat on a hanger.

Other departments leave it up to the officer to provide all of their gear. Alright, so a vest is \$20 or so, no big deal right? It is when you have to buy a \$500 or so gun, the leather duty gear and all of the accessories that equal to about \$1,000 and other expenses that are a little more important than your traffic vest. Oh, and don't forget about the SINGLE ballistic vest which can run up to \$1,200 (which can literally save your life versus the "more visible" vest).

I would LOVE to have cones in my police car but we don't have room for them. We already have trunks full of a spare tire, video recording equipment, jack, basic first aid kit, riot gear, basic "haz-mat" gear, reference books, assorted paperwork required out in the field, spike strips, shovel, brooms, crime scene tape, flares, tool kit, rain gear, extra ammo, shotgun..... So far that is all I can remember.

Now for the actual inside of the car: you have a computer on a console which takes up the entire center of the car, siren and light box, radio, a cage which limits your movement and storage space, and then a passenger seat full of your most used items (flashlights, extra ammo, citation pads, quick reference law guides, printer paper for the in car printer, license plate removal tools, gloves, hat, pens, etc.)

Plus, add in that we have a shotgun above our heads, a radar unit mounted to the dash, a printer mounted to the front of the dash, a radar antenna somewhere on the windshield, a video camera by your rear view mirror, and then the camera screen smack in the middle of the ceiling.

With all that said....my point is that we don't have a huge cab to store items that we use frequently and we don't have numerous large compartments to store extra gear. We also have to provide the majority of our "safety" items (cones, extra vests, flashlights, wands, etc). AND all of this has to fit in a police car that also needs to be able to handle well in high speed.....

As for the picture, I believe the officers are doing a great job with what they have available. Using the police car to BLOCK traffic and being aware of their surrounding by looking at oncoming traffic.

**RPD** - 01/01/10 - 21:58

Thanks for the comment, officer, and the welcome perspective.

To the credit of the picture, it indeed does depict good blocking.

I was equally surprised by just this lone patrol car, but that's probably the norm in most places, no?

Thanks again.

**Legeros** - 01/01/10 - 22:05

I agree that a vest is a great thing. However, when idiots are on the road rubbernecking, turnout gear in bright yellow, with 100% reflectivity isn't going to stop their car. That's why PROPER blocking is essential. We all had the pleasure of watching the video prior to getting our extra cones (at RFD). It was part of the grant process. Use the training from the video to block properly. Use your cones....all of them. If you're the blocking unit, get off!! You're in place to take a hit from another vehicle, why would you stay on?

The other day on the beltline between Six Forks and Glenwood, I was so impressed at how far we've come when it comes to highway safety, and how WE are priority, not the lanes being open. We slowed the traffic down to a crawl through our whole emergency scene. Pretty damn impressive, and great coordination/placement of RFD, Wake EMS, and RPD resources....and cones too. Stay safe!

**Silver** - 01/02/10 - 00:00

Safety vest are here for a reason, blocking is for a reason and the move over law was made for a reason!~ LEO have their hands full on the road just like we do! the average citizen cares, but a hand full don't! I think when LEO enforce the move over law the penalty should be higher! But that is me! Anyway brothers be safe in 2010! Last comment for me on this! The vest might not protect us physicaly but they might SEE us! The issue is we are issued them on the rigs and if you don't wear it you are negligent of wearing your PPE! enough said!

J

**Jason Lane** - 01/02/10 - 00:36

For us, property damage only wrecks get one car. That leaves all clean up duties to us Officers, unless there are fluids, which we then call RFD.

If I ever get to a wreck and know that I will be calling RFD, I wait for them to show up and do most of my investigation and clean up when they show up because of the fantastic blocking they do. So, THANK YOU for that!

I do wish that for accidents on 440 or 40, that we send two cars, one for blocking. I see that is a common thing done with fire when a call goes out on the highway (even if it's a medical call or clean up only call).

I do hate that for even the smallest amounts of fluid calling you guys and galls out, especially at ridiculous hours of the night/morning. But....gotta CYA if you know what I mean. I've been complained on before for leaving with fluids in the road and drivers calling in after the accident to report same still in the road, which of course is tied back to me through CAD.

**RPD** - 01/03/10 - 07:16

Name: (real name preferred)

E-mail: (optional)

Web Site: (optional)

Remember personal info?

Yes

No

Comment:

/ [Textile](#)

Comment moderation is enabled on this site. This means that your comment will not be visible on this site until it has been approved by an editor.

To prevent spam we require you to answer this silly question

**What are the FIRST TWO LETTERS of the word 'fire'?**

[\(Register your username / Log in\)](#)

Notify: Yes, send me email when someone replies.

Hide email: Yes, hide my email address.

**Small print:** All html tags except <b> and <i> will be removed from your comment. You can make links by just typing the url or mail-address.