

WisDOT: Conducts training session on automated vehicles for law enforcement, first responders

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The Wisconsin Department of Transportation conducted a training session for law enforcement officers and first responders on Connected and Automated Vehicle (CAV) Technology at the campus of Gateway Technical College in Racine Friday, September 9..

WisDOT presented the training in partnership with the city of Racine, Gateway Technical College and the University of Wisconsin-Madison Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory.

The training included a demonstration of the Racine Badger, the only fully automated vehicle operating on Wisconsin roads. Trainees received a demonstration and a chance to ride the Badger, which operates as a shuttle around the Gateway campus.

“We are focused on CAV because of its enormous potential to reduce crashes and fatalities on Wisconsin roads,” Joel Nilsestuen, WisDOT Deputy Assistant Secretary, said. “Most crashes are due to one extent or another to human error, such as inattentive or impaired driving, speeding and other reckless behavior. By eliminating these kinds of errors, CAV may one day dramatically reduce the number of crashes, saving many lives in the process.”

Along with the Badger demonstration, members of the state’s Traffic Incident Management training team and other law enforcement and first responders were trained on how CAV technology works, which Wisconsin laws apply to the vehicles, and how to approach them at traffic stops.

“Our training session today is a first step in ensuring that professionals throughout the state have the awareness and information they need to help Wisconsin transition to this transformative new technology,” Nilsestuen said.

The Racine Autonomous Vehicle shuttle, known as the “Badger”, represents the first municipal automated vehicle deployment in Wisconsin. The Badger is fully automated, connected, and electrified and is currently being tested on a short route around the Gateway campus, with a safety driver, to provide short, low speed trips in an urban setting for research and public exposure.