



Madison Police Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 1, 2021

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MPD launches first of its kind technology in state, seeks to improve communication with community

MADISON, WIS. — The Madison Police Department is launching a new tool to help improve communication between officers and the community, all through the touch of your fingertips.

Starting Wednesday, the department will use SPIDR Tech, a service that sends text messages to smartphone users who call 911 or the department's non-emergency line.

The Madison Police Department is the first agency in the state of Wisconsin to use this type of technology.

"Communication is key in building trust and closing the gap between our department and our community," said Capt. Matt Tye, who oversees the department's community outreach section.

All messages are generated automatically and do not require any additional work from dispatchers or officers. A victim acknowledgment message concerning some crimes will go out explaining the next steps in the investigation.

A key part of this platform happens after the initial call. People will be asked to provide feedback about their interaction with the department through a satisfaction survey.

The results will be analyzed and used to make changes within the agency.

"We want to hear from the people we serve. We need to hear from them in order to improve as a department," Madison Police Chief Shon Barnes said.

Messages will not be sent if they could put the caller or officer in danger. For example, calls covering sexual assaults, domestic disturbances and 911-hang-ups will not trigger a notification.

"Improving citizens' satisfaction with police services is a vital part of community policing. We are proud to partner with the Madison Police Department to help them do exactly that," said SPIDR Tech CEO Rahul Sidhu.

The messages will clearly state they are from the Madison Police Department and never ask for personal identifying information.