



FOUNTAIN POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chris Heberer, Chief of Police

222 North Santa Fe Avenue, Fountain, Colorado 80817



MEDIA RELEASE

To: All Media Contacts – For Immediate Release

From: Sergeant D. Scott Gilbertsen
Media Relations Officer / Professional Standards
Office: 719-382-6936
Cell: 719-368-0661
Email: scott@fountainpd.com

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RE: Fountain Police Department Launches U.A.V. “Drone” Program

Fountain, Colorado – In 2017, the Fountain Police Department launched its Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (U.A.V.) program or otherwise known as a “drone”. At the flight controls is Officer Eric Moore, who is the departments U.A.V. program coordinator and primary licensed pilot.

Prior to 2016, public safety agencies had to operate a drone with a Certificate of Authorization from the F.A.A. Then in August of 2016, the F.A.A. implemented 14 C.F.R. Part 107, which regulates the commercial use of U.A.V.’s or drones. Drone pilots must be certified under Part 107 and pass the qualification program. Pilots must have a legal understanding of the laws and regulations in regards to the F.A.A., as well as the city, county and state they are operating in. Of course, pilots must also have a basic understanding of drone flight operations and emergency procedures. The City of Fountain is currently within Class C and Class D airspace and requires coordination with Fort Carson and Colorado Springs air traffic control.

The drone program is based on the principal of public safety. It is much more affordable than a helicopter or aviation unit and is meant to help the department protect civilian and emergency responder lives. A drone can give first responders a live aerial view of incidents, while remaining public friendly and accomplishing the department’s mission.

Contrary to some beliefs, public safety drones are not used to “spy” on the general public. However, the departments drone program is used in a variety of public safety roles and lawful surveillance is definitely a component of the program.

Drones are a versatile tool that have a multitude of deployment types. In search and rescue operations, a drone can assist with locating a lost or missing person. During a search for a suspect, a drone can be invaluable when a search area is too large or too dangerous for officers. During crime scene processing, a drone can take photographs and video of the scene from the air, giving prosecutors a better perspective of the scene. In fire operations, a drone can give a larger real time picture of the incident and allowing fire commanders to see conditions beyond where firefighters can reach or typically see from the ground.

The Fountain Police Department has two drones in its inventory. The larger of the two drones is used for the search and rescue type operations, traffic accident photographing, crime scene photographing and searches of larger spaces. While the smaller of the two drones is used for tight or confined spaces, such as an attic space that is unable to be reached by officers.

The Fountain Police Department is excited to use this technology and we are looking forward to its deployment to save lives and assist us in solving crimes quicker.

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