About Flock Safety

Frequently Asked Questions

What is ALPR?

Automatic License Plate Readers (ALPR) have long helped law enforcement in solving crimes. ALPRs capture computer-readable images of license plates, allowing law enforcement agencies to compare plate numbers against those of stolen cars or cars driven by people suspected of being involved in criminal activities.

The information by ALPR cameras can help determine whether a vehicle was at the scene of a crime and to discover vehicles that may be associated with each other. Law enforcement agencies can choose to share their information with other agencies. The cameras can also integrate information from national or state crime databases to provide real-time alerts when a vehicle associated with a known suspect or a stolen vehicle passes the camera.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, when employed ethically and objectively, ALPRs are an effective force-multiplying tool for law enforcement. A 2011 study by the Police Executive Research Forum concluded that ALPRs used by Mesa, Ariz., Police resulted in "nearly 3 times as many 'hits' for stolen vehicles, and twice as many vehicle recoveries."

Flock Safety communities have reported overall crime reductions of over 70 percent after a period of time utilizing the ALPR system. In some areas, that included an over 60 percent reduction in non-residential burglaries, 80 percent reduction in residential burglary, and an over 40 percent reduction in robberies.

What is Flock Safety?

Flock Safety is a public safety operating system that helps communities and law enforcement work together to eliminate crime, protect privacy, and mitigate bias. We build devices that capture objective evidence and use machine learning to detect and deliver unbiased investigative leads to law enforcement. Flock Safety communities have reported crime reductions of up to 70 percent.

Today, there are over 1,500 Flock Safety communities; we partner with 1200+ law enforcement agencies.

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Who does Flock Safety serve?

Flock Safety serves HOAs, neighborhoods, business owners, law enforcement agencies, towns, and cities to provide them with the tools they need to increase the effectiveness of their public safety efforts, target crime efficiently and objectively, and help provide the information police need to stop crime.

Where is Flock Safety located?

There are now over 1,500 Flock Safety communities across the U.S. We can service customers almost anywhere across the U.S. with our local teams strategically located in cities across the country.

Flock Safety is headquartered in Atlanta and has over 300 employees across the U.S.

What is the Flock Safety Falcon?

The Flock Safety Falcon is a solar-powered, motion-activated and infrastructure free camera that leverages our proprietary Vehicle FingerprintTM technology to identify and take a snapshot of the critical details of a vehicle that passes by it. The Falcon captures the make, vehicle type, color, license plate (full, partial, or missing), state of the license plate, and the unique features of the vehicle, including damage and after-market alterations. They are connected to the cloud through LTE, like a mobile phone, and perform 24/7 in any weather.

Flock Safety cameras leverage the FBI's NCIC federal and state hotlist, which are updated at least every 24 hours, to send real-time alerts to nearby law enforcement officers when a wanted or stolen vehicle is detected. Officers can then verify that information with their dispatch to safely make arrests and recover stolen property. They can also be used in the event of an Amber or Silver Alert in the same capacity.

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What makes Flock Safety ALPR unique?

While traditional license plate reading (LPR) cameras are an effective crimefighting option, they are also extremely expensive. The $10,000-$40,000 price tag is unrealistic for many of Flock Safety's customers.

As a more affordable option, Flock Safety cameras employ best-in-class LPR and machine learning technology. Flock cameras have an intentionally short shutter speed, which allows the camera to start taking pictures in less than a tenth of a second following vehicle motion sensing, and to capture multiple frames of a car traveling up to 75 MPH. The motion sensing is not triggered by individual passerby or pedestrians.

The Falcon camera's infrared captures highly-accurate, clear images day or night. The machine learning allows the camera to capture vehicle information beyond the license plate – valuable evidence like vehicle make, type, color, and unusual characteristics.

In side-by-side tests, Flock Safety technology consistently performs above competitors. In a study conducted by the LA Sheriff's Department, Flock Safety produced 30% more accurate reads than the competition.

Additionally, Flock Safety ALPR is infrastructure-free, powered by solar and connected through LTE. The flat annual fee covers installation, maintenance, data, security, and customer service.

Lastly, Flock Safety is in the top echelon of the industry for privacy, transparency, and security. Flock Safety data will never be shared without permission, sold to third parties, or used for unpaid fines, unauthorized viewing outside of a legitimate crime-related event, or kept in a library. The footage is fully encrypted and stored in the cloud. All footage is deleted after 30 days on a rolling basis, unless a democratically-elected governing body or official legislates a different retention period.

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How does Flock Safety's ALPR help promote transparency and objectivity in policing?

Flock Safety technology is purpose-built to remove human bias from crime-solving. The ALPR cameras and machine learning technology are engineered to capture vehicle characteristics, types, and license plates, which are then checked against state and federal records to ensure accuracy and minimize errors.

Because license plate readers do not collect information on who is driving or riding in the vehicle, it is not considered Personally Identifiable Information (PII). Our technology does not capture images of pedestrians or passerby. The ALPR cameras take still images of cars passing through the lens (not video), and cannot follow or track vehicles once they leave the camera's view.

Flock Safety will never record names, phone numbers, or addresses and doesn't mark specific locations of where people have been. There is no capability in the system to mark or annotate locations of passerby.

Finally, Flock Safety is built to enable and encourage transparency, with several features that create robust audit capability. Both private and law enforcement customers must enter a reason for each search made through the Flock Safety system. That search history can be easily displayed for a community or law enforcement leadership to see what the Flock system has been used for.

Flock Safety has also created the first free, optional ALPR Transparency Portal to serve as a hub for a police agency's ALPR usage, data retention, and search policies. Any law enforcement customer can access the ALPR Transparency Portal.

Flock Safety is committed to building technology, tools, and a team that treat all people equitably, regardless of race, ethnicity, class, background, and orientation. We believe that everyone has a right to public safety.