

Printed tickets will protect officers

By Claire St. John

SUISUN CITY - Traffic stops will be a lot speedier in this city with new hand-held devices that can issue a ticket in under three minutes.

Purchased with a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, Suisun City police are the first in Solano County to try out the computers that save officers up to 15 minutes in writing out each detail about the stopped car and driver.

"The stop goes quicker and you can swipe the license instead of writing all the information down," said Sgt. John Pitts, Traffic Unit supervisor.

And this is only Phase I.

In Phases II and III, the hand-held computers will be able to access police records directly, saving dispatchers time, and finally, they'll send an e-mail to courts about the ticket, instead of police mailing a hard copy.

"The court likes it because of its accuracy," Pitts said. "It's very visibly clean for them."

The California Highway Patrol is also looking into grants for the hand-held ticket issuers and hopes to purchase more than 60 sometime in the future, Pitts said.

"If this works out good, the county, from my understanding, is going to introduce this and try to get other agencies involved," he added.

The new technology will allow officers to spend less time on paperwork and decrease their chances of getting hurt.

"The longer you stay on the road (out of their vehicle), the more chance something is going to happen," Pitts said. "A lot of the incidences where officers were hurt were on traffic stops."