



Austin Police bicycle officers get upgraded protective gear

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AUSTIN, Texas — Downtown officers on bicycles are cruising much safer after receiving new protective gear.

An Austin company, Parsley Energy, donated the funds to purchase BMX-style bike pads for the officers' elbows, knees and shins.

The new gear also includes a tougher helmet to reduce the risk of head injuries in a fall. The full-face helmet shields the officer's jaw and dips lower in the back to provide more protection.

The 50 officers equipped with the new gear will use it when patrolling through large crowds like a march, protest, or popular city event.

Chief Brian Manley said the officers also underwent additional training.

Before getting the gear, Corporal Chris Carlisle said his officers were coming back from big events injured.

"When the officers wreck or fall down from getting pushed, even if its inadvertently from a crowd, the injuries are happening on their legs from the gears of the bikes," said Corp. Carlisle. "I was filling out workman's comp requests and injury reports on these officers. Since we've had the gear, we haven't had to fill out an injury report yet."

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