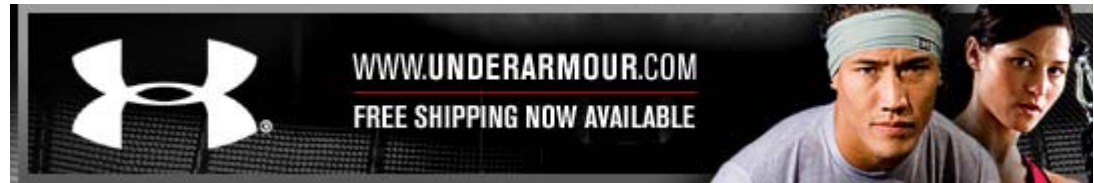




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## HOLLYWOOD

**Hollywood cops have high-tech ride for beach patrol**

Posted on Wed, Aug. 01, 2007

[email](#)[print](#)[reprint or license](#)[del.icio.us](#)[Digg it](#)BY ANI MARTINEZ  
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The Hollywood Police Department's newest wheels are the envy of youngsters on Hollywood beach.

The three-wheeled scooters, complete with sirens and flashing lights, roam the Broadwalk in a battery-powered glide of up to 25 mph, zipping neatly around pedestrians, bicyclists and in-line skaters.

"Papi, I know my birthday passed, but can I get one for Christmas?" asked 7-year-old Sara Rozo. "They look good. They don't have pedals so you don't have to do anything to move."

Standing atop the cushioned platform of her T3, Officer Kari Fuge is the queen of Hollywood beach. She becomes a mini-celebrity during every shift on one of the two T3s purchased for the beach patrol by the Hollywood Beach Community Redevelopment Agency.

"This is absolutely amazing," said Ed Vasquez of Orlando, who was vacationing in Hollywood on Tuesday. "I could see this in City Walk or Downtown Disney."

Passersby snap pictures with their camera phones, and pepper the officers with questions about how they work and whether they can get one.

"Sure it's a little sexier, but there's a crime-prevention side to it," said Capt. Tony Rode, a spokesman for the Hollywood Police Department. "It enhances officers' visibility and mobility. They can whip in and out of traffic."

The T3s proved their worth on their first outing, during the Fourth of July fireworks display



CANDACE WEST/MIAMI HERALD STAFF

Hollywood police officers Jeffrey Lebron, left, and Kari Fuge patrol the city's beachfront Broadwalk riding T3s. The battery-powered vehicles are made for police, government and security work only and can reach speeds of 25 mph.

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at the beach.

"There were so many people out that day. It was really easy to move through the crowd," Fuge said.

"You feel so much taller, it's easy to see everything. That means a lot for our response time."

Hollywood may be the first South Florida police department to use the vehicles, but they've been on the streets of Birmingham, Ala., Orange County, Calif. and some British cities since 2006.

California-based T3 Motion makes several models for police, government and security work, but none for personal transportation.

"We are trying to persuade the Downtown CRA to purchase two more for downtown, but funds are tight," Rode said. "The department is considering allocating money, because we'd like to see them in the downtown area around Young Circle."

Nearly three years ago, many police agencies adopted the Segway Personal Transporter, a two-wheeled scooter released with a high-profile publicity campaign.

The Broward Sheriff's Office uses Segways for large public events such as concerts or parades, and as patrol vehicles in certain neighborhoods, said Mike Jachles, a BSO spokesman.

"It's easy to maneuver around pedestrian traffic," Jachles said.

Officers who have used the Segways and the T3 say that with two batteries, the T3 goes 12 hours between charges -- longer than the single-battery Segway -- but the T3's stability gives the three-wheeler an edge.

The 300-pound T3 vehicle is not likely to tip over, said Hollywood Officer Jeffrey Lebron.

The Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport is exploring the purchase of some type of scooter as well.

"It's much better for patrolling," Lebron said. "We are more visible than being on a bike. If we are on a bike, we usually blend with the crowd."

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