

# Body cameras due in western Louisville next week

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After six weeks of testing in the city's fifth police division, body cameras are due to hit many western Louisville neighborhoods next week.

The Second Division — home to the Algonquin, California, Parkland, Shawnee, Chickasaw, Park Hill and Park DuValle neighborhoods — should receive the cameras next week, pending a shipment from the TASER Company, said Louisville Metro Police Chief Steve Conrad.

The chief addressed a group of about 15 community members at a body camera forum Tuesday evening at Central High School in the Russell neighborhood hosted by Metro Council President David Tandy and seven council members.

Followed by the First (Butchertown, Downtown, Phoenix Hill, Portland and Russell neighborhoods) and Fourth (Churchill Downs, Fairgrounds, Germantown, Old Louisville, Smoketown and South Louisville neighborhoods) divisions, the rollout is expected to last two weeks in each division, Conrad said.

At that pace, he added, he anticipates training in all divisions to be complete by the end of 2015.

The forum included much of the same information that was shared at a similar forum in the Fifth Division on June 2.

He reiterated that specialty units, including the VIPER, Canine and River Patrol units will eventually be equipped with cameras, while division detectives and undercover sworn members will not.

When speaking about his belief that the cameras will provide an impartial piece of evidence that will increase transparency, accountability and trust, Conrad said the recent shooting of Deng Manyoun by an LMPD officer illustrated the importance of video.

"The cameras will hold us immediately accountable," Conrad said. "Had there not been the video there from the smoke shop, I think we would have had some serious problems here in our community."

Departmental policy on the body cameras is being tweaked to reflect lessons learned in the last few weeks. Such changes will address early challenges officers had with the cameras, Conrad said, including charging the units and categorizing them promptly.

The University of Louisville is also conducting a study to evaluate the \$4.28 million contracted body camera program and its effects in the community, Conrad said.

When the body camera pilot was first announced, many who demanded LMPD equip its officers with the devices questioned why it was not piloted in patrol divisions where more minorities and residents who allege police abuse reside.

Conrad responded at the time, saying that he wanted to test the cameras in a less busy division to work out any kinks in policy and procedure.

Everett Phillips, a Shively resident, said the forum helped him to better understand how the cameras are going to be used and their potential to connect community with the police.

"The officer himself is going to be aware of how he conducts himself," Phillips said. "I don't think it has anything to do with stopping the violence, but it should help officers catch criminals more quickly."