

About Flock Safety

Frequently Asked Questions

What is ALPR?

Automatic License Plate Readers (ALPR) have long helped law enforcement in solving crimes and recovering stolen vehicles. 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.

Probably the most recognizable example of ALPR usage is on marked police cars, usually equipped with 1 to 4 corners, or attached to public intersections in conjunction with traffic lights and redlight cameras.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, when employed ethically and objectively, ALPRs are an effective tool for law enforcement, cutting down on the time required for investigations and acting as a force multiplier for agencies with limited budgets. In 2011, a study by the Police Executive Research Forum concluded that ALPRs used by the Mesa, Ariz., Police Department resulted in “nearly 3 times as many ‘hits’ for stolen vehicles, and twice as many vehicle recoveries.”

Flock Safety has found that our suite of products can reduce crime by over 70 percent. In some areas, that included an over 60 percent reduction in non-residential burglaries and over 40 percent reduction in robberies.

What is Flock Safety?

Flock Safety is a public safety operating system that helps communities and law enforcement in 1200+ cities work together to eliminate crime, protect privacy, and mitigate bias. We build devices that capture objective evidence and use machine learning to create and deliver unbiased investigative leads to law enforcement. Our proprietary devices and cloud-based software reduce crime by up to 70%.

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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?

Over 1,200 cities and thousands of neighborhoods across the U.S. use Flock Safety. Flock Safety 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 270 employees.

What is the Flock Safety Falcon camera?

The Flock Safety Falcon is a solar-powered, motion-activated and infrastructure free camera that leverages our proprietary Vehicle Fingerprint™ 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 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 better than its competitors?

Flock Safety has several categories of competitors. Most often purchased by cities or police departments, traditional license plate reading (LPR) cameras are a sophisticated and effective option in this category.

Unfortunately, traditional LPR cameras are extremely expensive, costing anywhere from \$10,000-\$40,000, which is unrealistic for many of Flock Safety's customers.

Though 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 wake up and start taking pictures in less than a tenth of a second, and to capture multiple frames of a car traveling up to 75 MPH.

The Falcon camera's infrared captures highly-accurate, clear images day or night. Our machine learning is constantly updating, so the camera learns to capture vehicle information beyond the license plate, like make, model, and unusual characteristics that help law enforcement quickly identify leads when there is a crime.

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 is infrastructure-free, powered by solar and LTE. Our flat annual fee covers installation, maintenance, data, security, and customer service.

Lastly, Flock Safety is in the top echelon of the industry for our strict protocols on privacy, transparency, and security. Our 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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Could Flock Safety or LPR technology contribute to police bias?

Flock Safety technology is purpose-built to remove human bias from crime-fighting. Our cameras and Vehicle Fingerprint™ technology are engineered to capture vehicle characteristics and license plates, which we cross-check against state and federal records to ensure data 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). Upwards of 70 percent of crime is committed with a vehicle, so Flock Safety is confident that a clear, accurate photo of a license plate is the most effective piece of information to help law enforcement solve crime.

Our cameras take still images of cars passing through the lens, and cannot follow or track vehicles once they leave the camera's view.

Flock Safety does not and will never include facial recognition or footage of passerby or pedestrians. Flock Safety will never record names, phone numbers, or addresses and doesn't mark specific locations of where people have been. We do not engage in predictive policing or make predictions or judgements on specific locations, neighborhoods, or areas.

Finally, Flock Safety is built to allow for a transparent, robust audit capability. Both private and law enforcement customers must enter a reason for each search made through the Flock 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 provides an optional ALPR Transparency Portal to serve as a hub for a police agency's ALPR usage, data retention, and search policies.

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.