



Fhp Trying Out New Lights, Sirens

Agency's Aim Is To Improve Ways For Troopers To Attract Motorists' Attention.

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If the flashing blue [lights](#) and blaring siren of a state trooper's vehicle aren't enough to catch your attention, the state is hoping some of its new equipment will.

For the first time in about 55 years, the Florida [Highway](#) Patrol is adding red to its traditionally blue and clear light bars to help drivers better see the lights.

The agency is also lowering the tone of its sirens to make it easier for [drivers](#) to hear inside well-insulated vehicles.

"The reason behind the light is for added safety to the trooper and the public when a patrol car is on the side of the road, at a scene or trying to stop a violator," said Trooper Larry Coggins, an FHP spokesman.

An FHP study published last year found that "with flashing lights, twice the amount of blue light energy is needed in daylight to be perceived as bright as red. At night, though, the situation is reversed."

"There are cases all over the place where people are not able to see the lights well," Coggins said.

A computer will automatically turn the red lights on during the day and the blue lights at night.

Coggins said the new light bars are being added to all new patrol cars and will slowly make their way into Central Florida. Some are already on the streets in South Florida.

"Eventually, everyone will have one as their car comes up for trade," he said.

Instead of having traditional bulbs, the new lights are equipped with light-emitting diodes, known as LEDs.

LEDs burn brighter and much longer than traditional lights.

The new lights will keep the FHP from having to replace burned bulbs and faded lenses.

The lights are "probably the most high-tech light bar in law enforcement today," Coggins said.

But the new equipment doesn't come cheap.

The light bars will cost the highway patrol about \$2,100 each, Coggins said. With about 1,800 vehicles, the agency will pay about \$3.7 million for the equipment.

Traditional light bars cost about \$1,700 to \$1,800, Coggins said.

But the extra expense will be worth it, Coggins said, because the costs of maintaining LEDs aren't as high as traditional lights and the equipment will help keep troopers safe.

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