Woodburn's Flock Safety Cameras:
Questions and Answers

A. How the Cameras Work

- ***What are Flock Safety cameras?***
  Flock is a network of license plate reading cameras (automatic license plate recognition – ALPR) that can recognize vehicle characteristics such as license plate numbers, make, model, color, and body style to help law enforcement agencies identify and locate vehicles related to police investigations.

- ***How do they work to fight crime?***
  Flock cameras are placed in strategic locations to capture key traffic areas in a city. An officer can then search all Flock captures over the data retention period (for Woodburn the last 30 days) for a vehicle of interest to an investigation. Flock can help officers identify complete license plates from partial plate searches, determine the direction of travel of a vehicle from a crime scene, and even immediately locate a vehicle from a Flock alert.

- ***How many agencies use Flock Safety cameras?***
  Over 5,000 different law enforcement agencies nationwide have Flock camera systems.

- ***How are Flock cameras installed, and who maintains them?***
  Flock installs and maintains the cameras during the life of the contract.

- ***What information is captured and searchable in Flock?***
  Flock cameras record license plate information (plate and state, temporary or permanent), vehicle characteristics (make, model, color, accessories), and date, time, and direction of travel of a vehicle. They do not have facial recognition and cannot be searched for biometric data.

- ***How do Flock alerts work?***
  When a Flock camera identifies a match with certain criteria, it notifies officers with an alert via SMS, email, or the Flock Safety mobile application. Law enforcement agencies can individually control which alert types are enabled, such as Stolen Plate Alerts, Stolen Vehicle Alerts, and NCMEC Amber Alerts. Officers can also create Custom Hotlists with vehicle criteria (such as vehicle license plates, make, model, or color) that are of interest to an investigation. Once activated, Custom Hotlists trigger alerts to specific personnel when a Flock camera identifies a match.

- ***Do Flock Safety cameras detect speeding?***
  While Flock offers a transportation line of products that can detect speed, Flock Safety cameras are primarily designed for license plate recognition, not traffic enforcement. Woodburn's Flock cameras are not equipped with speed detection.

B. Security and Privacy Concerns

- ***Who has access to search in Flock?***
  Access to law enforcement Flock networks is limited to other law enforcement agencies by 1:1 agreements, or via sharing permissions that are enabled by that agency. While private businesses with Flock cameras are only able to search their own system, they can choose to share their cameras with law enforcement.

- ***Is the Flock camera system secured from unauthorized access?***
  Flock uses TLS 1.2 and AES for encryption on its data and requires Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) by all users.

- ***Do Flock cameras record biometric data or use facial recognition?***
  No, Flock cameras do not record biometric data and are not equipped with facial recognition.

- ***How long is the information retained by Flock?***
  Woodburn's Flock network has a 30-day retention period for photos, after which they are automatically deleted from the system.

- ***Is there an audit trail for searches?***
  Yes: an audit trail is created for every search conducted in the Flock system, whether by Woodburn or by outside agencies. This search data is accessible via the Insights portal of an agency's Flock website.

- ***Do Woodburn's Flock cameras capture driver's faces?***
  Woodburn's Flock cameras are positioned to capture the rear of vehicles for license plate recognition. Since Woodburn's Flock cameras photograph public streets, the front of vehicles may be captured; however, vehicle occupants are not generally identifiable in the photos. Flock cameras do not provide facial recognition, and biometric data is not searchable.

- ***Do Flock cameras record video in Woodburn?***
  Woodburn's Flock cameras use motion detection to take groups of photographs of a passing vehicle. They do not record or retain any video footage.

C. Woodburn's Flock Camera Network

- ***When was Flock installed in Woodburn?***
  Woodburn's first Flock camera was installed on March 3, 2025, and the second on May 26, 2025. By July 12, 18 of 25 planned cameras had been installed. New cameras continued to be added throughout the city until October 1, 2025, when Woodburn reached a peak of 23 installed cameras out of a planned 25 prior to city-wide mechanical deactivation on November 13, 2025.

- ***How long did Woodburn Police have access to Flock?***
  Woodburn Police had access to Flock for an eight-month period starting on March 3, 2025, and ending on November 11, 2025, when access was removed for officers. The Woodburn Police Department gradually rolled out access to the Flock system to its officers over that period following initial training and certification.

- ***How much did the program cost?***
  The first-year cost of Woodburn's Flock camera program was $96,000, with a recurring yearly cost of $84,000. The funding amount for the program was approved in the city's Fiscal Year 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 budget.

- ***What types of investigations did Woodburn Police search in Flock?***
  The types of criminal investigations that most benefited from Woodburn's use of Flock were thefts, followed by Unlawful Use of a Motor Vehicle cases, Unlawful Use of a Weapon cases, and assault cases.

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- ***Did Flock help solve crimes in Woodburn?***
  Over the entire duration that Flock was available to Woodburn Police, officers used Flock for 354 (or 18.53%) of the 1910 total police department's investigations. Of those 354 investigations that used Flock in some way, 115 stated what the outcome of using Flock was, with 70.43% showing that Flock contributed to the investigation.

  The use of Flock also directly led to 16 arrests, 9 recovered stolen vehicles (approximate $40,000 value), and the seizure of 2.1g of fentanyl, 15.5g of methamphetamine, and 2 items of drug paraphernalia.

  Additionally, Woodburn saw a decrease in both reported felony (581) and misdemeanor (1416) crimes for the period that Flock was available to Woodburn Police officers, compared to the same time period in 2024 (felonies: 693; misdemeanors: 1474), even though the volume of calls for service remained level (16,209 in 2025; 16,199 in 2024). It's unknown whether Woodburn's Flock camera system or some other factor contributed to the decrease in reported crime.

  In certain investigations, Flock and partner ALPR systems were instrumental to effecting an arrest, identifying suspects, or obtaining key evidence. Flock searches or alerts directly lead to arrests, suspect identification, or the location of evidence. Examples include a DV Assault II/Robbery I case where the suspect severely assaulted the victim, but was located and arrested due to a Flock alert on his vehicle; a set of Assault II/Hit and Run/Felony Elude investigations, where the suspect drove over his ex-girlfriend with a car and evaded arrest for six months, until a Flock alert directly lead to his arrest and the closure of several open investigations; a set of shoplifting investigations culminating in Organized Retail Theft, where a Flock license plate reading directly lead to the identification of all three involved suspects; and a felony Hit and Run case where a driver fatally impacted a pedestrian and fled, and an out-of-state ALPR system helped lead to the successful location of the suspect's vehicle in Minnesota.

- ***Who benefited most from Woodburn's use of Flock?***
  The majority of victims whose investigations benefited from Flock were of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity (68.42%) and male sex (59.65%). The ethnicities referenced correspond to the standard used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)'s Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR).

- ***How has Flock's deactivation affected investigations?***
  The deactivation of Flock in Woodburn has hindered police investigations. Examples include a recent homicide where the suspect vehicle could not be immediately tracked or located (the suspect vehicle was later found after a substantial delay); a felony Hit and Run of a Woodburn High School student; an armed Robbery of a Woodburn business; a felony assault that rendered the victim unconscious; and a runaway juvenile who was missing for over a month. Each of the above instances contained specific vehicle information that would have been readily searchable in Flock.

- ***How many outside agencies searched Woodburn's Flock network?***
  During the entire period of search activity (January 15, 2025 – November 13, 2025), 3,318,618 total searches were conducted on Woodburn's camera network by 4734 law enforcement agencies (including by Woodburn Police). Of those 3,318,618 searches, 0.78% were conducted by (non-federal) Oregon agencies, including Woodburn; 99.04% by (non-federal) out-of-state agencies; and 0.18% by federal agencies. A search of any kind in Flock does not mean that results were found, only that a network was searched for matches.

  The overwhelming majority of searches (99.99%) did not search Woodburn exclusively; they cross-searched multiple agency networks at the same time. Only 306 of the 3,318,618 total searches uniquely targeted Woodburn, and they were conducted by Eugene Police Department (OR), Springfield Police Department (OR), and Woodburn Police Department.

- ***Did Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) or US Border Patrol search Woodburn's cameras?***
  In 2025, Flock granted broad search capabilities to federal agencies during a trial period. None of the searches conducted by federal agencies targeted Woodburn, but they included Woodburn as one of numerous agencies searched at the same time. HSI and US Border Patrol were among those federal agencies that searched Woodburn's Flock network. HSI did a total of 175 out of the 3,318,618 total searches, while US Border Patrol did 209. No federal agency searches occurred after June 24, 2025. Of note, the Woodburn Police Department did not receive notification of a federal agency pilot program that allowed federal agencies, such as US Border Patrol and HSI, to conduct National look ups within the Flock system. Once WPD was made aware on or around October 23, 2025, the National Lookup feature was disabled. WPD also learned that the federal agency pilot program had seemingly ended on or around June 24, 2025.

- ***Did any outside agencies use "immigration" as a reason for Flock searches?***
  Yes: Several Out-of-State (non-federal) agencies searched "immigration" across a wide variety of networks, none of which were searches exclusive to Woodburn. From available data effective August 8, none of those searches returned results on Woodburn's Flock network.

- ***What has the city done to make information regarding the use of Woodburn's Flock camera system available to the public?***
  On February 2, 2025, the Woodburn City Council released several key documents as part of its continued commitment to transparency and open communication with the community. The materials were intended to ensure residents have access to the most current information regarding the City's role in federal immigration enforcement and the use of public safety technology. The released documents included two legal opinions related to the City's role and responsibilities in response to federal immigration enforcement, including guidance on Oregon's Sanctuary Promise Law; and an Impact Assessment of the City's Flock Safety Camera system, which described the outcome of an intensive internal audit of Woodburn's Flock system. The documents serve to inform the community, address questions and concerns, and provide up-to-date information about the City's role in federal immigration enforcement.