



WESTPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Foti Koskinas
Chief of Police

Press Release

Westport Police Department Testing New Drone Technology **“Flatten the Curve Pilot Program”**

(Westport, CT) First Selectman Jim Marpe announces today that the Police Department is testing state of the art technology that may help Westport combat the spread of the Coronavirus. Police Chief Foti Koskinas and Captain Ryan Paulsson, head of the department’s drone program, are testing new drone technology called “Flatten the Curve Pilot Program.”

The Police Department is partnering with Draganfly, a leading drone company, as first responders are looking for effective ways to monitor social distancing, ease the spread of COVID-19 and keep their communities and personnel safe. The ‘Flatten the Curve Pilot Program’ and associated technology may prove to be an innovative tool in helping the community practice safe social distancing, while identifying possible coronavirus and other life-threatening symptoms.

One of the major problems managing and responding to a pandemic is determining how wide the disease has spread and protecting first responders. According to Police Chief Koskinas, “Using drones remains a go-to technology for reaching remote areas with little to no manpower required. Because of this technology, our officers will have the information and quality data they need to make the best decision in any given situation.”

The drone software uses biometric readings to understand population patterns and allows quicker reaction time to ongoing events or potential health threats. The goal is to provide better health monitoring support for potential at-risk groups, including seniors, as well as for gathering crowds at beaches, train stations, parks and recreation areas, and shopping centers. It will not be used in individual private yards, nor does it employ facial recognition technology.

“Westport and its first responder network is one of the most progressive public safety advocates in the nation. They are real pioneers when it comes to adopting and integrating new technology to protect its community,” said Police Chief, Koskinas. “This pandemic has opened up a new frontier and urgent need for the use of drones. Draganfly is the first in the U.S. to implement this state-of-the-art technology to capture and analyze data in a way that has been peer reviewed and clinically researched to save lives.”

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Mr. Marpe stated, “We know that social distancing is working to flatten the curve and ultimately saving lives. In an effort to continue safeguarding the citizens of Westport during the COVID-19 outbreak, and as we position ourselves to gradually return to our routines, we should explore ways to prevent a possible resurgence of the virus. I am proud of how Westport’s first responders are handling COVID-19, and how the Westport Police Department in particular is committed to discovering smart solutions for current and future health emergencies.”

For those seeking additional information about Draganfly, the first link below is to the company’s official website. The second link is to the company’s press release relative to the technology which will be utilized here in Westport as has been detailed above.

<https://investor.draganfly.com/press-release/>

<https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2020/04/21/2019221/0/en/Draganfly-s-Pandemic-Drone-technology-Conducts-Initial-Flights-Near-New-York-City-to-Detect-COVID-19-Symptoms-and-Identify-Social-Distancing.html>

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