

Law Enforcement views on front license plates:

The concept of the front license plate draws overwhelming support from law enforcement officers. They support it because it makes the officer on the street more effective.

The front license plate puts identifying information on the front of every car registered in the state. In two-way traffic, which is the norm in Montana, the license information on the front plate of each oncoming car clearly presents itself to the officer. *Officers instinctively check front plates on approaching vehicles!* For this reason, keeping the license information on the front of the car is extremely important.

Real life applications of this theory:

On December 22, 1998, Patrolman Patrick Chubb of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Police in Hogansburg, NY became suspicious when he saw a vehicle with a Virginia plate coming towards him on a dead end road. He ran the plate number off of the front plate, and arrested the two occupants. They were wanted for murder in Virginia. They were driving the victim's car.

Officer Sherief Ibrahim of the University of California Berkley Police Department responded to a woman's screams while on foot patrol. He noted the front license plate number of a vehicle leaving the scene. Moments later a woman reported being assaulted and robbed. The license number led to the arrest of two ex convicts wanted in three car jackings, robberies, and violent assaults.

Most major crimes involve the use of a motor vehicle either during or immediately after commission of that crime. The front plate is very important to law enforcement in quick identification and apprehension of these dangerous criminals.

How others use the front plate in fighting crime:

The front plate is an easy way for citizens to help police without putting themselves in danger. Neighborhood watch groups are a good example. Anybody can take that information without confronting a suspicious, possibly dangerous person.

For victims of crime, the front plate is a way of identifying the person or vehicle that was a part of that crime. Convenience store robberies are an example. Very seldom does a criminal back into a parking space.

Crash investigation:

Many hit and run crashes are solved when the police recover the front license plate of the "run" vehicle at the scene of the crash. In multiple vehicle crashes, the impression of the front plate from one vehicle on the body of another vehicle is very helpful in determining locations of the vehicle on the roadway at the time of impact.

Traffic Complaints:

License plate numbers are usually part of the identifying characteristics given to 911 centers when citizens call to complain about dangerous or drunk drivers. Law enforcement officers will usually respond to intercept the vehicle, not attempt to catch up from behind. The front plate is critical in these cases.

Illegal school bus pass complaints are almost always successfully followed up on due to the presence of a front license plate. Enforcement of this law will definitely suffer if the front license plate is eliminated.

There are many other examples available of how front plates are important to law enforcement officers. To supply them all would be overkill. However, if you would like further information or have questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

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