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Quotes from the article:

Device puts law officers on the skids

by Anne Grundon

A \$40,000 device that mounts to a car's suspension has been added to the Southwest Virginia Law Enforcement Academy's training inventory and will be used to help police officers throughout the region sharpen their driving skills.

The hydraulically controlled device simulates loss of tire traction much like that experienced when driving on roads slickened by snow, ice or rain, said Dane Pitarresi, president of SkidCar Systems Inc.

More than 100 of the units are being used by police agencies across the nation, he said.

"These things are being used by the Secret Service, the FBI, state police and very small agencies," Pitarresi said. "Virginia is installing one in each of its regional police academies. The whole idea is to teach drivers to drive less - to use their eyes when they drive and not to drive by the seat of their pants."

Most drivers make the mistake of doing too much when in a skid, often turning the steering wheel and slamming on the brakes, he said.

"If you hit the brakes while the wheel is straight, this doesn't happen," he said.

Before SkidCar was available, training was done by putting an oily substance in the road, said Ron Davis, director of the local academy. The new training method is safer and can simulate a wider range of conditions, he said.

Deputy Training Director Dave McIlwain agreed.

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