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Yuma police taking to the streets on new motorcycles

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Photo by Randy Hoelt/Yuma Sun

New motorcycles

Yuma Police Department motor officer Nate Williams puts a shine on the department's new Victory Commander motorcycle before introducing it to the public at an event Thursday at YPD headquarters.

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black and having better safety features to protect officers. He also likes that it has larger storage compartments, which allows officers to carry more equipment.

He explained that each of the department's seven motorcycle officers will be assigned to ride the Victory for a month and complete an evaluation comparing it to the Harley Davidsons.

"Once they complete their evaluation, it will give us an idea on how the officer feels about the motorcycle compared to the Harleys, whether it is good, as good, better or worse," Egan said. "It will give us a better idea about whether it's going to work or not."

While there is always a possibility the police department could eventually switch to riding Victory motorcycles, Egan said all he is interested in now is trying out the bike to see if his officers think it is a motorcycle they can work on.

"I'm just hoping to buy more motorcycles. We have five other 2011 model motorcycles that need to be replaced,"

Posted: Sunday, February 21, 2016 3:54 pm | Updated: 8:48 am, Mon Feb 22, 2016.

By James Gilbert, staff writer

One of the Yuma Police Department's newest motorcycles stands out from the pack. Two motorcycles, 2015 Harley Davidsons, have glossy black and white paint and shiny chrome. But the third, the 2016 Victory Police Edition motorcycle, looks stealthy and futuristic.

Sgt. Eric Egan said the money to buy the motorcycles was provided last year through a grant from the Arizona Governor's Office of Highway Safety. Two other grants were used to purchase five portable breathalyzers, the calibration stations for them and two Lidar speed detection devices.

Egan explained that the grant for the motorcycles was for \$84,000, and the department could spend only \$28,000 per motorcycle. While the two Harley Davidsons, without the decals and police equipment installed, cost \$28,400, the Victory, fully decked out, cost only \$27,000.

"The Victory, as it sits, compared to the Harleys, as they sit, is \$2,600 cheaper to put on the road," Egan said. "The cost factor makes a big difference. The five-year warranty is also impressive."

The three new motorcycles are all in service now and have replaced the three 2011 model Harley Davidson motorcycles in the fleet that have the highest mileage. Those motorcycles are now being used for training.

Egan describes the Victory's new look as being all flat

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Egan said. "They are ridden hard and heavily maintained. The cost is starting to become prohibitive."

Officer Nate Williams, who is currently assigned to the Victory, is highly impressed by the motorcycle's power, handling, storage and rider comfort. He added that the motorcycle will do everything asked of it.

Williams said one of the things he really likes about the Victory is the seating position, which is lower than on a Harley Davidson and gives the officer a better center of gravity for maneuvering.

"It is a really cool bike. It is like you're riding in the bike instead of on it," said Williams, who will be permanently assigned to the motorcycle after every officer has completed their evaluations. "Both bikes weigh about the same, but the Victory doesn't feel like it when you are maneuvering it."

As for the motorcycle's safety features, Williams said he likes the fact that the floorboards don't fold up should the bike go down.

"They stay nice and sturdy so as long as you keep your feet up you don't have the risk of the floorboards folding up on your ankles, which can cause breaks, which is something I know about," Williams said

As for the public, Egan said most of the reactions he has received while riding the Victory have been favorable and people seem to want to talk about it.

"Even when you pull someone over with it, the conversation turns from the ticket or warning to, 'What

are you riding?'" Egan said.

The Victory has drawn so much attention that Egan said that shortly after the department got the motorcycle, a member of the community called the mayor and reported that someone was riding around on a black motorcycle impersonating an officer.

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