



**MOBILE POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
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*BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS TO PREVENT THE NEXT CRIME*

## **NEWS RELEASE**

# **POLICE USE TASER FOR LAST-MINUTE RESCUES**

*February 2, 2005*

Shortly after midnight today, police confronted a woman in a west Mobile apartment holding a knife above her head and threatening to kill herself. Officers repeatedly asked the woman to drop the weapon. But instead she raised it above her head and pointed it at her chest, at which time an officer drew his Taser gun and deployed it long enough to disarm her and take her into custody.

These kinds of scenarios are becoming more frequent as it becomes increasingly clear that the Taser gun can be a safe and effective weapon for law enforcement. “We are saving lives and reducing injuries,” said Police Chief Sam Cochran. “Unfortunately, the public doesn’t see the hundreds of incidents that de-escalate from a potentially violent level.”

Only two weeks ago, police subdued another dangerous subject without injury, again by use of a Taser gun. In this incident, police were summoned mid-afternoon to an apartment in Orange Grove. A woman reported that her husband, armed with a gun, had threatened her earlier in the day, kicked in a door and was destroying furniture and other property.

Police arrived on the scene to find a 28-year-old man wielding a knife in an apartment littered with broken furniture and glass. As police tried to talk him into surrender, he refused and threatened to use the knife on himself. Police deployed the Taser and were able to bring the 200-pound individual into custody.

Statistics tell the story of how the Taser gun has provided needed options for volatile situations. Use of force remained almost constant in 2004 over the previous year. But Taser use increased from 91 to 159 from 2003 to 2004, a result partly of the availability of the Taser gun, which was distributed to all patrol officers mid-year.

For the same two year periods, the number of times police had to wrestle subjects into custody was cut almost in half, a factor that clearly reduced the injuries associated with physical restraint incidents.

A Taser is an electronic gun that delivers 50,000 volts of electricity, causing muscles to contract and lock up temporarily.

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