



FULLERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESS RELEASE

JON RADUS, CHIEF OF POLICE

Kristy Wells
Public Information Specialist
Office (714) 738-6779
Cell (714) 732-2183
kwells@fullertonpd.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Subject: Collision Involving Police Vehicle

Date: June 13, 2024

At 12:04 AM on June 13, 2024, a Fullerton Police Officer was managing traffic at the intersection of W. Orangethorpe Ave and Courtney Ave following a deadly traffic accident earlier in the evening. The police vehicle had its emergency lights on, and several flares were placed on the road when a blue Tesla crashed into the police vehicle, which was blocking traffic.

Thanks to the quick reaction of the police officer, who spotted the oncoming vehicle and swiftly moved to the side of the road, along with the police dispatcher who was riding with him, a potential disaster was averted. This incident underscores the importance of alertness and responsible driving, even in situations where the road is blocked, and emergency lights are on.

The driver of this Tesla admitted to engaging his vehicle's 'self-drive' mode while using his cell phone, a clear violation of responsible driving practices and California law. Self-driving mode can be convenient, but always remember the importance of staying alert and ready to take over at any moment. While there are no laws against the "self-drive" mode, all rules and laws of the road still apply to the driver while controlling the vehicle.

Distracted driving is dangerous. According to the *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)*, distracted driving claimed 3,308 lives in 2022. Distracted driving is any activity that diverts attention from driving, including talking or texting on your phone, eating, and drinking — anything that takes your attention away from the task of safe driving.

The Tesla driver remained on the scene and is cooperating with the investigation, which is active and ongoing.

