

Ohio county jails employ body scanners to catch inmates with contraband

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Inmates trying to sneak contraband into Ohio's Stark County Jail inside their body cavities will have a much harder time succeeding now.

The jail, located in Canton, started using a body scanner in lieu of a judge-issued search warrant on February 26, according to the *Canton Repository*. In its first week of use, the scanner helped deputies catch four newly-booked inmates trying to sneak drugs, drug paraphernalia and other objects into the jail.

"It's unfortunate that we need it, but it's a good tool to have," Stark County Sheriff George Maier told the *Canton Repository*.

The RadPro SecurPass digital security system scanner takes just eight seconds to scan a prisoner in the booking area of the jail. The scanner produces X-ray-like photos while giving off low radiation. The photos show officers foreign objects an inmate has in his or her system, including joint replacements and screws inside the body, the *Canton Repository* reports. (Cite this?).

Lt. Rick Ady, Stark County Jail's assistant administrator and training officer, says that some inmates have snuck drugs into jails in the past and have given them to other prisoners. These drugs, especially heroin, have contributed to overdoses within the prison population.

"In 8 seconds, hopefully we're saving lives," Maier told the *Canton Repository*.

Other county jails in Ohio are following suit. In January, *WTOL* and the *Medina Gazette* reported that the Wood County Jail and the Medina County Jail would be employing scanners imminently.

"We're being proactive," Wood County Sheriff Mark Wasylyshyn told *WTOL*. "We really don't have much of a problem with things coming into the jail that shouldn't be here, but we want to be proactive. We book and release four thousand inmates a year."

Louisville Metro Corrections installed a \$250,000 body scanner in 2013, according to *WLKY*. The scanner has caught inmates smuggling contraband such as drug paraphernalia and even a container of clean urine for drug tests. When faced with the scanner, some inmates have even confessed to hiding an object inside their body and have attempted to withdraw it.

"Every day, we are catching something," Louisville Metro Corrections Director Mark Bolton told *WLKY*.

More recently, the Merced County (Calif.) Jail began using a body scanner in October to scan all inmates being processed into the jail, according to the *Merced Sun Star*.

“It’s paid huge dividends in reducing the amount of contraband coming in,” Capt. Greg Sullivan, commander of jail operations for Merced County Jail, told the *Merced Sun Star*.

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