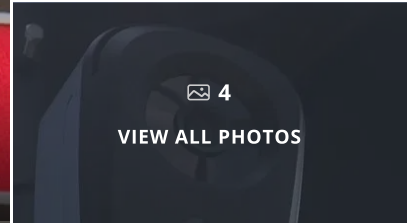


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Sherwood stop sparked after Flock camera misread plate by one letter as stolen

by Christopher Gay | Wed, March 18, 2026 at 8:51 PM



License plate readers are increasingly being installed at intersections and major roads across Arkansas, and some Arkansans are concerned. (Photo: KATV)

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Sherwood, Ark. (KATV) — License plate readers are increasingly being installed at intersections and major roads across Arkansas, and some Arkansans are concerned.

There are reportedly well over 100 of these license plate readers throughout the state, and they're called Flock cameras.

These cameras are often found at intersections and major roads, and they record the license plate numbers on passing vehicles, checking them against a list of reported stolen vehicles. However, the development of these cameras is still in its infancy, and there have been issues.

In February, a Flock camera in Sherwood flagged a Black Chevrolet Tahoe as stolen. An officer pulled over the car in a Kohl's parking lot, drew his weapon, and detained the driver.

Another officer also arrived, and the female passenger in the back of the vehicle was also detained. She was in the backseat next to a 1-month-old child.

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According to the incident report, the camera system flagged the vehicle with the plate "APX 55Y"--which was the plate of the stolen vehicle in its system. However, the vehicle that was pulled over was not the same car; the Flock camera was off by one letter.

Once the officers realized the mistake, they promptly released both individuals.

Attorney Michael Soyfer with the Institute of Justice says Flock cameras make mistakes.

"It's horrifying, and that's only going to become more common as these license plate readers proliferate."

He says the situation the Sherwood couple faced is not completely uncommon, as he says there have been "a bunch of cases where people have been pulled over because flock cameras read their license plates incorrectly and triggered a hot list alert."

Soyfer also says officers should do more to prevent any mistakes.

"Most police departments have policies that you're supposed to check the license plate manually, compare it against what's on the hot list, but in reality, sometimes officers don't always do that."

There have been other accounts of Arkansans having issues with Flock cameras. In 2025, the Institute of Justice represented Charlie Wolf and his family of Cleburne County, who fought to have a Flock camera removed after it was placed in front of his property.

Even nearly a year after the camera's removal, he still has problems with them.

"They're doing a catch-all. It's lazy police work," he says.

"It basically fingerprints a vehicle, showing stickers, dents, paint, scuffs, whatever. So, it's not a license plate reader," he adds.

Once the images are captured by the cameras, what happens to them?

According to Soyfer, each Flock customer sets their own data policies.

"Each police department, each flock customer gets to set its own policy. They can choose to share one-to-one; they get a request from a police department, they click accept, they share their data, the police department shares their data back, they can opt in to a nationwide database, they can opt into a statewide database."

Soyfer says these images are eventually deleted, but he claims that law enforcement holds on to them for at least 30 days, and potentially even longer.

"Every department sets its own deletion policy. Some departments hang on to license plate reader data for up to a year."

He also says there have been cases of Flock data being used incorrectly.

"There has been some reporting about Flock using its customer's images, so the pictures of cars its cameras take, to train its AI models. But in general, most of the images are deleted."

After that February incident in Sherwood, the Sherwood Police Department established a transparency portal for Flock safety. The portal states that Flock data is retained for 30 days, and all system access requires a valid reason.

The site also reports that there are currently 14 license plate readers, along with 2 other unspecified cameras in Sherwood. The portal goes on to say that this data is prohibited to be used for immigration enforcement, traffic enforcement, harassment or intimidation.

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There are reportedly 80,000 Flock cameras across the country, capturing over 20 billion license plate images each month.

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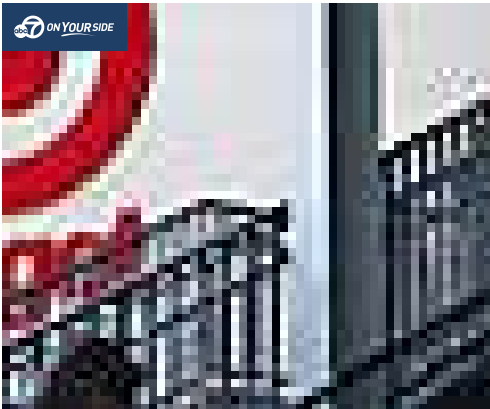
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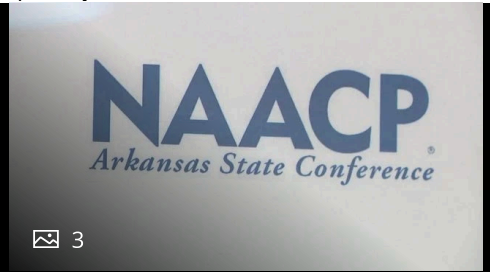
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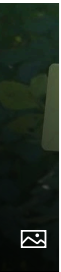
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