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Flock cameras stir concerns

Opponents worry about privacy and police misuse

N'dea Yancey-Bragg
USA TODAY

License plate readers have been shot at in Tennessee, hit with a truck in California, beaten with a baseball bat in Virginia, cut down with a saw in Texas and splattered with paint in New York. And they've been regularly blocked by a protester in Florida.

There also has been bipartisan criticism of a coast-to-coast network of cameras that continues trying to track the movements of vehicles.

People are raising privacy concerns as well as others about misuse, mistakes and road safety in city council meetings, lawsuits and a planned national week of action in late August.

Chad Marlow, senior policy counsel at the American Civil Liberties Union who focuses on privacy, surveillance and technology issues, said the technology triggers concerns about government overreach on the right and worries about who is being targeted on the left.

"For people in the center or the nonpolitically engaged are even like, 'I don't want to be tracked everywhere I go,'" he

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Flock cameras like this one on a utility pole in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, collect vehicles' license plate, make, model and color, information that is searchable by law enforcement agencies.

PAUL EDWARD PARKER/PROVIDENCE JOURNAL FILE; GRAPHIC, GETTY IMAGES

Food aid supports storm recovery

Jane Imbody
Zanesville Times Recorder
USA TODAY NETWORK

Families affected by recent storms in Perry County received food and household supplies during a recovery distribution event held Aug. 19 through a partnership between HAPCAP and the Southeast Ohio Foodbank.

The organizations expected to assist about 300 families during the event, according to a community announcement. More than a dozen AEP Ohio employees volunteered to help distribute food and supplies. Residents received food items including canned chicken, canned vegetables, pork and beans, peanut butter, jelly, shelf-stable milk, cereal, pancake and waffle mix and other pantry essentials.

Disaster funding supports recovery efforts

Food distributed during the event was funded through a grant from the AEP Ohio Foundation and purchased through the foodbank purchasing network from Fresh Connect Central, a wholesale food distributor operated by Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana.

The distribution was part of a broader \$50,000 disaster relief commitment from the AEP Ohio Foundation. According to the announcement, the funding included:

- \$25,000 for the American Red Cross-East Central Ohio Chapter to support sheltering, emergency assistance and recovery services.
- \$25,000 for HAPCAP and the Southeast Ohio Foodbank to provide emergency food assistance and relief services for families affected by the storms, including the Aug. 19 distribution event.

Local agencies said the funding is intended to help meet immediate needs as storm recovery continues across the region.

This story was produced with the assistance of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Journalists were involved in every step of the review, editing and publishing process. Learn more at cm.usatoday.com/ethical-conduct.

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