



17800 N. 85<sup>th</sup> St • Scottsdale, Arizona 85255 • [www.TASER.com](http://www.TASER.com)  
Phone: 480.991.0797 • 800.978.2737 • Fax: 480.991.0791

## **TASER® Technology – Changing the World and Protecting Lives**

TASER International, Inc. provides safer use-of-force options for use in the law enforcement, military, private security and personal defense markets. TASER technology saves lives every day and numerous independent medical studies conclude that TASER Electronic Control Devices (ECDs) are among the safest and most effective use-of-force options available. TASER technology dramatically reduces injury rates to suspects and officers, thereby lowering liability risk and improving officer safety and community security. TASER technology is revolutionizing law enforcement and changing the world with safer, effective and accountable tools for citizens, law enforcement, military and private security.

### **TASER Electronic Control Devices**

TASER devices use proprietary technology to quickly incapacitate dangerous, combative or high-risk subjects who pose a risk to law enforcement officers, innocent citizens or themselves. TASER ECDs utilize compressed nitrogen to project two small probes up to 15, 21, 25 and 35 feet (citizens can only buy the 15-foot Air Cartridge) at a speed of over 160 feet per second. These probes are connected to the TASER system by insulated wire. An electrical signal is transmitted through the wires to where the probes make contact with the body or clothing, resulting in an immediate loss of the person's neuromuscular control and the ability to perform coordinated action for the duration of the impulse while allowing an instant recovery once the cycle ceases. This effect is a state-of-the-art Neuro-Muscular Incapacitation (NMI) technology that temporarily overrides the nervous system, taking over muscular control. This NMI technology temporarily debilitates even the toughest individuals with minimal risk of injury.

TASER International markets the ADVANCED TASER M26; ADVANCED TASER M18 & M18L; TASER® X26; TASER® X26<sup>C</sup> Citizen Defense System and the newly introduced TASER C2 Personal Protector.

### **Quick Stats**

- Over 11,500 law enforcement, correctional and military agencies in 44 countries deploy TASER devices
  - Of this over 3,500 agencies deploy to all of their patrol officers
- Over 278,480 TASER brand devices have been sold to law enforcement since February 1998
- Over 160,000 TASER brand devices have been sold to citizens since 1994 (legal in 43 states)
- TASER ECDs for citizens are prohibited in DC, MA, RI, NY, NJ, WI, MI, HI and certain cities and counties. CT and IL are legal with restrictions
- TASER International's headquarters and manufacturing facility is located in Scottsdale, AZ and was founded in September 1993
- TASER International trades on the NASDAQ under the trading symbol TASR

## **TASER Safety and Medical Studies**

Independent medical and scientific experts have determined TASER devices to be a safer use-of-force option compared to traditional use of force tools. Field studies have reaffirmed the life-saving value of TASER devices. Independent studies - including an extensive, multi-million dollar three-year study conducted by the British Associations of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) in consultation with the British Police Scientific Development Branch (PSDB), the British Defense Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL) and the British Defence Scientific Advisory Council Sub-committee on the Medical Implications of Less-lethal Weapons (DOMILL), as well as a U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) study involving approximately 20 medical and research doctors from a dozen academic, government and private institutions - have reaffirmed the overall safety and effectiveness of TASER's life-saving technology. In January 2005, the Pacing and Clinical Electrophysiology (PACE) Journal published the results of a cardiac safety study of TASER technology and stated, "There has been no report directly related to its risk of inducing ventricular fibrillation (VF), although preliminary findings suggest that the likelihood of inducing VF by neuromuscular incapacitation (NMI) discharge is extremely low. We hypothesized that the induction of VF would require significantly greater discharge levels than delivered by electrical NMI devices fielded by law enforcement agencies."

- Dr. Richard Luceri, a renowned cardiac rhythm specialist and member of the Scientific and Medical Advisory Board for TASER International concluded, "The PACE article, using pigs of comparable human weights (66 to 257 lbs), confirms the extraordinarily wide safety margins for fibrillation induction in TASER-like products. Average fibrillation induction required 28 times the energy of commercially available TASER products, far greater than the safety margin of most cardiac drugs approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. These data add scientifically validated support to the large database of favorable TASER outcomes collected in the field," concluded Dr. Luceri. For a comprehensive look at the safety of TASER technology, please visit [www.taser.com/savinglives](http://www.taser.com/savinglives).

### **About TASER International, Inc.**

Co-founders Rick Smith and Tom Smith formed AIR TASER, Inc. in 1993 with the initial TASER inventor Jack Cover. In 1998 AIR TASER, Inc. became TASER International, Inc. in response to the Company's international expansion and increased market share. TASER International, Inc. became a public company in May 2001, and began public trading on the NASDAQ stock exchange under the symbol TASR. TASER International's state-of-the-art 100,000 square-foot corporate headquarters and manufacturing facility are located in Scottsdale, AZ.

For further corporate and investor information, please visit [www.TASER.com](http://www.TASER.com) and select "Investor Relations" or contact Investor Relations at (800) 978-2737 or [IR@TASER.com](mailto:IR@TASER.com).



## TASER<sup>®</sup> TECHNOLOGY SUMMARY WITH Q&As

**Synopsis:** The TASER<sup>®</sup> X26 (TASER X26C and TASER<sup>®</sup> C2 for citizens) and the ADVANCED TASER<sup>®</sup> M-Series (M26 for law enforcement/military and M18L and M18 for citizens) are the electronic control devices (ECDs) that can immediately stop a truly aggressive, focused, combat trained attacker. Suspects can recover immediately as electricity cannot be stored by the human body.

**Range:** 15-35 feet for law enforcement and military, 15 feet only for citizens. Depending on the TASER Cartridge, the TASER ECDs can be deployed from 0 to 35 feet (0 to 10.67 meters). TASER Cartridges are available in cartridges with ranges of 15, 21, 25 and 35 feet.

**Method of Incapacitation:** TASER ECDs utilize a state-of-the-art Neuro-Muscular Incapacitation (NMI) technology that temporarily overrides the nervous system, taking over muscular control. This NMI technology temporarily debilitates even the toughest individuals with minimal risk of injury. Existing stun systems stimulate sensory neurons and can be over-ridden by a focused individual. The TASER devices directly stimulate motor nerve tissue, causing incapacitation regardless of mental focus, training, size, or drug induced dementia.

### Accountability with Dataport Systems:

- The **TASER X26** stores time, date, duration, temperature & energy cell status of over 1,500 firings. Data accessed through USB into encrypted secure “.x26” file format on Windows<sup>®</sup> PC (Windows<sup>®</sup> 2000, XP, or ME).
- The **ADVANCED TASER M26's** on-board memory can download the time and date of its most recent 500+ uses to protect officers from unfounded charges of misuse of force.

**M26 Power Supply:** AA Nickel-Metal Hydride batteries 1.2 volts  
AA Hi-Output Alkaline (i.e., Duracell<sup>®</sup> Ultra) batteries 1.5 volts

**X26 Power Supply:** Digital Power Magazine (DPM) with lithium energy cells and digital memory. 6-volt output, 10-yr shelf life.

**C2 Power Supply:** C2 Lithium Power Magazine lithium energy cells and digital memory. 6-volt output, 10-yr shelf life.

**Power:**  
**M26:** 26 watts; 0.50 joules per pulse into load; and 3.6mA avg. current  
**M18L/M18:** 18 watts; 0.50 joules per pulse into load; and 3.6mA avg. current  
**X26:** 5 watts; 0.07 joules per pulse; and 2.1 mA average current  
**C2:** (approximately): 5 watts; 0.07 joules per pulse; 2.1 mA average current

**Training:** The TASER devices use similar hand motions and muscle memory as standard semi-automatic pistols, reducing the amount of time required to train and increasing accuracy under stress. Minimum recommended law enforcement user training is 6 hours; certified instructor training is 16 hours.

### **What is a TASER electronic control device?**

A TASER device is an electronic control device that is a safer use-of-force option for law enforcement, private security, military and personal defense. The advantages to TASER technology are dramatic reductions in injuries to both suspects and law enforcement officers. No other law enforcement tool has undergone as extensive international scientific testing and scrutiny as TASER technology. Although, no use of force device is risk free including TASER technology, medical experts and recent independent comprehensive reports from the governments of Canada, United Kingdom and the U.S. have concluded that TASER systems are among the safer use-of-force alternatives to subdue violent individuals who could harm law enforcement officers, innocent citizens or themselves."

"The advantage is that TASER technology can truly immobilize a suspect who can overcome pain, might be on dangerous drugs like cocaine or methamphetamine or even emotionally disturbed, whereas other use of force tools rely upon pain compliance. The TASER system doesn't use pain compliance but immediately stops any coordinated action by the subject only while the TASER system's current is flowing. Recovery is instantaneous so the TASER system only provides a window of opportunity to temporarily stop someone's dangerous actions."

### **How does a TASER device work?**

TASER devices utilize compressed nitrogen to project two small probes up to various ranges of 15, 21, 25 or 35 feet only 15 foot cartridges are sold to citizens) at a speed of over 160 feet per second. These probes are connected to the TASER device by insulated wire. An electrical signal is transmitted through the wires to where the probes make contact with the body or clothing, resulting in an immediate loss of the person's neuromuscular control and the ability to perform coordinated action for the duration of the impulse.

### **Why use a TASER device?**

TASER devices save lives and are generically known as electronic control devices. TASER brand devices are among the safer use-of-force options available today. TASER systems use proprietary technology to immediately incapacitate dangerous, combative or high-risk individuals who pose a risk to law enforcement officers, innocent citizens or themselves. TASER devices have been proven statistically to dramatically reduce injury rates to suspects and officers and increase officer safety and community security compared to any other use of force option.

### **Are TASER devices safe?**

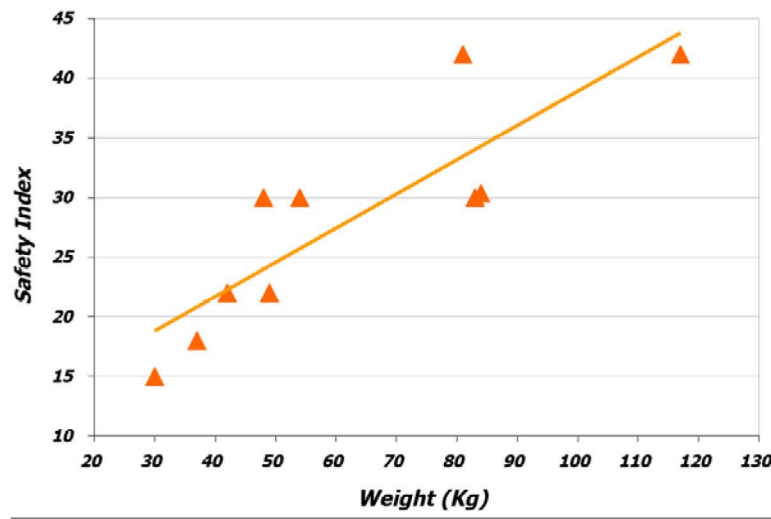
TASER technology is not risk free, but Independent medical and scientific experts have determined that when used properly, TASER technology is among the most effective use-of-force interventions available to law enforcement. No other law enforcement tool has undergone as extensive international scientific testing and scrutiny as TASER technology.

Numerous recent independent studies - including an extensive, multi-million dollar three-year study conducted by the United Kingdom's Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) in consultation with the British Police Scientific Development Branch (PSDB), the British Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL) and the British Defence Scientific Advisory Council Sub-committee on the Medical Implications of Less-lethal Weapons (DOMILL), as well as a U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) study involving approximately 20 medical and research doctors from academic, government and private institutions - have reaffirmed the life-saving value of

TASER technology. A peer reviewed study by Journal of Pacing and Clinical Electrophysiology (PACE) suggest a safety margin of greater than 20:1 for human adults greater than 100 lbs -- Acetaminophen has an 8:1 safety margin.

- Peer reviewed study used adult pigs chosen to simulate range of adult human body weights between 30 and 120 kg (66 lbs. and 264 lbs.)
- Peer reviewed study used adult pigs chosen to simulate range of adult human body weights between 30 and 120 kg (66 lbs. and 264 lbs.)
- Results suggest a safety index > 20:1 for human adults > 45 kg (100 lbs.)

### PACE Study



For more information on TASER safety, or to download copies of independent medical studies, please visit [www.TASER.com](http://www.TASER.com).

### What about accountability?

TASER International has taken it upon itself to implement numerous measures to ensure that its electronic control devices are among the safest and most accountable, use-of-force alternatives in the world. These accountability measures include the development of an on-board computer called the dataport system that records a set of data each time the trigger is pulled. No other use of force option provides this level of accountability through documentation and deployment data.

In addition, we recently developed the TASER CAM™ which is an integrated video system that records more than 90 minutes of audio and video during a TASER X26 deployment providing yet another layer of accountability. No other law enforcement tool can claim such unique and proven accountability systems that provide a check and balances system in place for each local law enforcement agency.

For citizen accountability, each TASER cartridge is serialized and registered to its user and includes a tracking program that disperses dozens of confetti-sized film at the scene under our Anti-Felon Identification (AFID) program.

To citizens to purchase a TASER X26C or a TASER C2 it comes down three factors: Registration, verification and tracking.

**TASER X26C:** At the time of purchase, we gather extensive personal information to verify the identity and background of the prospective buyer with the understanding that we will not release the information and it will be kept confidential. This data maintains the integrity of our Anti-Felon Identification (AFID) system as private unless a TASER device is used in the commission of a crime in which we can trace the identity of the unit and the owner of the device through the confetti that is deployment any time our TASER devices are deployed. Online purchases of TASER X26C units require a valid Social Security Number in which ChoicePoint verifies this information and reviews for felonies, terrorist watch lists and proof of age. The device can then be purchased via credit card which is also verified.

**TASER C2:** The TASER C2 Personal Protector is the first device to incorporate a revolutionary new public safety background check technology called CheckLok™. Next generation background check technology ensures full compliance with user identification and screening. The TASER C2 ships in a locked state and can only be unlocked by with an activation code received upon successful registration with a identification verification and background check approval from the privacy of using a secure web site or a toll-free number.

After completing the background check, the user is issued an activation code unique to their serial number. The TASER C2 will work only after entering the activation code. CheckLok ensures compliance, registration, and provides corporate responsibility.

### **How does the TASER CAM™ work?**

The TASER CAM provides enhanced accountability above and beyond the TASER Dataport system. The TASER X26 provides an audio/visual black and white MPEG 4 video of any activation. The monochromatic lens can record video in complete darkness. The system activates whenever the safety is placed in the “off” position and stops when the system is stopped by placing the safety to the “on” position. Now, an officer's report not only is corroborated by its internal audit system but it captures the event on video. Imagine seeing the suspect's behavior and hearing the officer's verbal commands. We are all about effectiveness, accountability and safety.

### **What is the AFID program?**

TASER International's unique Anti-Felon Identification (AFID) system enforces accountability for each use of the TASER device via the dispersal of tiny unique coded tags every time the device is fired. When police are called to investigate a use of a TASER device, they can locate these tags and contact TASER International for a complete trace on the serial number.

### **What is the difference between the TASER X26 and the TASER X26C?**

TASER X26C: The main difference in the X26C vs. X26 law enforcement model is that the X26C model uses a 10-second cycle vs. a 5-second cycle and the range. Citizens have 15 foot range versus 25 foot range for law enforcement. Moreover, the X26C trigger can be triggered several times to create a 30-second cycle. The user can then deploy the X26C, squeeze the trigger 3 times quickly to create a 30-second cycle (3 x 10 second cycle = 30 seconds), place the X26C on the ground and depart a dangerous scene while the X26C safely disables the intruder. The law enforcement version cannot be squeezed multiple times to create back to back cycles. The law enforcement X26 uses a 5-second cycle. It can be overridden by the user but the instant the finger is off the trigger, the cycle stops. Multiple trigger pulls will not change the 5-second cycle either.

### **Who do I contact for more information?**

For more information on TASER technology, please contact TASER International, Inc. headquarters at: 1-800-978-2737 or [info@TASER.com](mailto:info@TASER.com).

[http://www.rockymountainnews.com/drmn/local/article/0,1299,DRMN\\_15\\_5683690,00.html](http://www.rockymountainnews.com/drmn/local/article/0,1299,DRMN_15_5683690,00.html)

## Deputy would have been justified using lethal force

By Julie Poppen, Rocky Mountain News  
August 27, 2007

BOULDER, CO – The sheriff's deputy who was first on the scene would have been justified using lethal force against a knife-wielding man at the University of Colorado who cut a student's neck, stabbed himself and terrorized observers on the morning of the first day of class Monday.

Boulder County Sheriff's Office Division Chief Dennis Hopper said Deputy Stuart Holt, a veteran officer, had to make quick decisions as the incoherent suspect – whom CU police identified as 39-year-old Kenton Astin of Boulder, waved a steak knife over his head and said he had a bomb.

"The officer used restraint," Hopper said. "If deadly force was used it probably would have been justified."

Hopper said if the suspect had begun approaching other students instead of stabbing himself, the outcome could have been much different.

Hopper said Holt was off-duty working traffic patrol on his day off at a parking lot nearby when he walked to the University Memorial Center – described as the nerve center of student life on campus – to get some water. That's when he saw freshman Michael George Knorps holding his neck near the sidewalk in front of the UMC and realized the young man had been slashed.

Holt drew his gun as terrified students looked on, Hopper said. Astin babbled about "the end of the world", stabbed himself about six times in the chest and began counting down as if he was planning to detonate a bomb with a cell phone in his hand.

That's when Boulder police officer John Smith, a 21-year veteran with the department, arrived. He was returning to the intersection of Euclid Avenue and Broadway to do traffic control on his motorcycle when he heard unusual shouting coming from the direction of the UMC.

It was 9:43 a.m.

Two female students walked past him and asked, "Is that real?" as they motioned over their shoulders. They didn't say anything else when Smith asked for more details. Another pair of students told him a student had just been cut.

Once he got to the scene, Smith indicated to Holt, who was standing at the bottom of a set of stairs from Astin, that he had a Taser.

After a few tense moments, Astin dropped the knife but continued making suicidal statements, such as, "Go ahead and kill me" and "Make me do the floppy," Smith said in an interview Monday afternoon at police headquarters. When Astin continued to refuse to follow commands and began walking toward him, Smith fired the Taser at his chest as Astin continued his countdown.

"I remember thinking, 'Do I Tase him before he gets to 1? I think I did Tase him before he got to 1.'"

Still, it took about six people to wrestle Astin to the ground and get his hands behind his back, Smith said.

He was transported for medical treatment and listed in serious condition at Boulder Community Hospital. Witnesses attended to Knorps, who was laying on a bench, until paramedics arrived.

The finance major underwent surgery Monday afternoon to repair tissue and muscle damage. He was conscious and talking as he went into the operating room and was expected to fully recover. His parents were en route from Illinois to Colorado.

Chancellor G.P. "Bud" Peterson said he talked to Knorps before surgery and when told the chancellor wanted to talk to him, Knorps quipped, "Who's the chancellor" or "What's the chancellor?"

"He seemed to be in good spirits," Peterson said.

His, parents, though remained concerned.

"They want to know how this could happen," Peterson said. "They're very concerned for their son, for his safety and his health."

School officials said Knorps, who lives in Darley Towers at Williams Village, was expected to be released to relatives in Boulder and able to attend classes today.

Knorps is the sixth of seven children in a tight-knit family. Knorps chose the CU in part because his older sister and brother live in Boulder, said Knorps' uncle, Leon Knorps, of Naperville, Ill. He described his nephew as an active and athletic young man who played basketball in high school. Knorps also said his nephew was "a real smart kid" who had a variety of colleges from which to choose.

*Rocky Mountain News staff writers Rosa Ramirez, Justin Coons and Erika Gonzalez contributed to this report.*



<http://www.daily-journal.com/archives/dj/display.php?id=401855>

## Illinois student injured in knife attack on University of Colorado campus

2007-08-28

BOULDER, Colo. (AP) -- An incoherent man slashed the throat of a University of Colorado student during the first day of classes, then began stabbing himself, school officials said.

Michael George Knorps, 17, of Winnetka, Ill., underwent surgery to repair damaged tissue in his neck but was doing well, university spokesman Bronson Hilliard said.

The freshman was conscious after the attack outside CU's student center and had spoken to family members by phone, Hilliard said.

The suspect, identified as 39-year-old Kenton Drew Astin, worked at CU last year as a cashier at the Alferd Packer Grill at the student center, school officials said. He was arrested and hospitalized Monday with serious stab wounds, the school said.

Astin was sent to a state mental hospital in 2001 after being accused of stabbing a 21-year-old Longmont man. Court records show Astin pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity on charges including attempted first-degree murder in that case.

Hilliard said there was no sign the school had performed a background check on Astin, who was hired through a program run by the county mental health center. Astin left his job in April because his temporary contract was over.

"Had we been aware at that time, obviously that would have been a huge red flag," he said of the charges.

CU Chancellor Bud Peterson said the school would immediately change its policies on background checks.

The university said Astin drove to the campus, walked to a terrace outside the student center and then showed a knife while talking or yelling incoherently.

He grabbed Knorps from behind and cut his throat before the student was able to break free.

A Boulder city police officer and a sheriff's deputy who were nearby rushed to the scene and campus officers arrived shortly after that, Hilliard said.

When officers ordered Astin to drop the knife, he began stabbing himself, so police stunned him with a Taser and arrested him, the school said.

The university used its new emergency text-messaging service to alert students to the attack, Hilliard said.



## BUSINESS

### Taser over the shock of safety questions Stun weapons in hands of 10,000 police officers

March 12, 2007  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taser International Inc. co-founder Tom Smith has never understood the hostility directed at his company's stun guns.

#### Demonstration.

Stephen Tuttle of Taser International demonstrates the Taser X26, the company's standard police-issue model. AP

Taser's electroshock weapons were created to reduce injuries, Smith said. Police no longer need to hit people with billy clubs or shoot them with bone-cracking rubber bullets.

"I figured the people that were going to lead the parade for us would be Amnesty International and the ACLU," Smith said. "Instead they're our biggest detractors."

Human rights groups continue to warn that Tasers may cause heart attacks. But two years after its stock price plunged under the weight of intense government scrutiny, wrongful death lawsuits and a storm of negative press, Taser is back on the rise.

The sleek, battery-powered weapons are now strapped to officers' hips in more than 10,000 of 18,000 law enforcement agencies in the United States.

Internationally, Taser sales have exploded, with products now sold in 44 countries.

Though its stock remains flat and well below its peak in 2004, analysts have big expectations this year. Taser has boosted profits each of the past four quarters as Smith aggressively defended his weapons in the media and the courtroom. Taser paid for research into the health risks of stun gun shocks, and, on occasion, has sued coroners who included Tasers as a possible cause of someone's death.

Matthew McKay, an analyst with Jefferies & Co., predicts Taser will be Wall Street's top performing stock in 2007. McKay expects Taser to record \$105 million in sales this year and its stock to more than double in value as investors realize the company isn't going away.

"You've got a company that a lot of people have written off," McKay said.

In May, Taser will begin selling a smaller version of its police weapons to the public. Available in a variety of colors including metallic pink, the Taser C2 can stop people from 15 feet away "allowing you to protect yourself and your family from a safe distance," according to the brochure.

Taser also plans to expand its product line to the military, a market with a potentially huge interest.

Smith said he envisions a day when U.S. Marines can shock insurgents from 100 feet away using a wireless Taser tucked into a shotgun shell. He sees national borders and embassies protected by a mine-like Taser device that shoots electrically charged darts at people who come too close. Neither of those products is on the market yet.

"The military is a big part of where we think the business is going to go," Smith said.

Inside Taser's futuristic glass-and-steel headquarters in Scottsdale, employees still bristle when someone brings up Amnesty International or the day in 2005 when the company's reputation began to unravel.

Smith, a lifelong sci-fi buff, founded Taser with his brother, Rick, in 1993, in hopes of ushering in a new generation of weapons. He figured people would eventually see Tasers as he did -- as science's best attempt at the Star Trek "phaser" gun, which could incapacitate a target without killing.

"We can send a man on the moon, talk on cell phones, all of these things. But really the technology to defend yourself, which is one of those needs back to the caveman days, hasn't really advanced other than inflicting more pain," he said.

The brothers hired Jack Cover, an aging inventor who had dabbled in electroshock weapons. He called his invention the Thomas A. Swift Electric Rifle (Taser) after a series of adventure novels.

The company developed a number of different stunning devices in the 1990s, including an unwieldy and expensive "Auto Taser" stun club that fastened to steering wheels to shock would-be car thieves.

In 2003, Taser started gaining momentum on Wall Street as the Smiths peddled their M26 and X26 stun guns to police. The guns shoot two barbed darts attached to wires that deliver up to 1.3 watts of electrical current for several seconds, temporarily immobilizing people from a safe distance.

"Sales were going through the roof," Smith said. "Virtually no one was competing with us."

But on Jan. 6, 2005, a letter from the Securities and Exchange Commission rolled into Taser corporate offices. The federal agency said it was looking into the company's safety claims and a \$1.5 million sale that appeared to inflate the company's sales to meet annual projections.

Taser had previously brushed aside claims from human rights groups that its weapons were potentially lethal. Now the government was going to take a look.

"I was infuriated," Smith said. "We knew the perception was 'Wow, they must have done something wrong.' "

Taser's stock plunged 30 percent the following day to \$22.72 per share. Within a few months, it was worth \$8.09.

Shareholders weren't happy. They filed class action lawsuits, claiming company executives misled shareholders about Taser's business practices and the guns' general safety. Taser eventually paid \$20 million to settle with its shareholders while not admitting fault.

Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard also started asking questions about Taser's safety claims in 2005. His office ended its inquiry several months later after Taser changed its promotional materials.

Instead of "non-injurious," Taser's Web site now characterizes its guns as "generally safe."

The SEC completed its investigation into Taser at the end of 2005 without recommending any enforcement against the company. Another federal investigation, this one by the Department of Justice, is ongoing.

Steve Tuttle, Taser's vice president of communications, said he's tried to learn from the experience.

The company's public information staff now encourages police departments to publicize incidents when stun guns are helpful. Taser sends reporters e-mails whenever the stun guns helped stop suicide attempts or prevent brawls, or when the company has video of its guns being used in a positive way.

Taser's PR department also has armed itself with stacks of research reports -- some of which the company paid for -- showing that Taser stun guns pose only limited, if any, health risks.

Taser contends that its weapons have never been the primary cause of somebody's death, and so far nobody has been able to prove the company wrong in court. Taser boasts it has won 37 straight wrongful death or injury lawsuits, with the judge either dismissing the case or ruling in favor of Taser.

"It's extremely difficult" to prove Taser responsible, said John Dillingham, a Phoenix attorney who lost a wrongful injury lawsuit against Taser in 2005.

Dillingham represented a retired Maricopa County sheriff's deputy who said he was injured by a Taser in a training exercise. Lawyers for Taser said the stun gun wasn't to blame for the deputy's hurt back, pointing out he was suffering from osteoporosis.

The Maricopa County Sheriff's Department later became one of Taser's biggest clients.

Dillingham said it would take a victim who had been in perfect health to beat Taser in court: "A teen or someone in their 20s who is in a crowd and who is inadvertently hit with a Taser and dies," he said. "There's no drugs. There's no alcohol. That person just died."

Meanwhile, human rights groups say they've watched Taser's rise with dismay.

Amnesty International estimates that 232 people have died in the United States and Canada after being shocked by Tasers, but its researchers admit the tally is totally unscientific, based mostly on media reports. Taser says it has offered to settle the matter by co-sponsoring research on the health risks of stun guns, but Amnesty has refused.

"It's a matter of huge dispute as to whether or not the Tasers directly cause deaths, and there are many cases where the coroner has not found a link," said Angela Wright, a researcher in London who collects information on stun gun deaths for Amnesty International.

Tuttle, who has spent much of last year burnishing the company's image in the media, said a lot of people don't realize this.

"In 2005, it felt like I was in a boxing match with one glove behind my back," Tuttle said.

"It was brutal," he added. "Now we're not getting bombarded everyday with a crisis."

## After scrutiny over safety, Taser rebounds with profits, good outlook

10:00 PM PDT on Sunday, March 11, 2007

By **CHRIS KAHN**  
The Associated Press

SCOTTSDALE, ARIZ. - Taser International Inc. co-founder Tom Smith has never understood the hostility directed at his company's stun guns.

Story continues below



AP photo

Stephen Tuttle, vice president of communications at Taser International Inc., demonstrates the Taser X26 at company headquarters in Scottsdale, Ariz.

Taser's electroshock weapons were created to reduce injuries, Smith said. Police no longer need to hit people with billy clubs or shoot them with bone-cracking rubber bullets.

"I figured the people that were going to lead the parade for us would be Amnesty International and the ACLU," Smith said. "Instead they're our biggest detractors."

Story continues below



TASER C2

Human rights groups continue to warn that Tasers may cause heart attacks. But two years after its stock price plunged under the weight of intense government scrutiny, wrongful death lawsuits and a storm of negative press, Taser is back on the rise.

The sleek, battery-powered weapons are now strapped to officers' hips in more than 10,000 of 18,000 law enforcement agencies in the United States. Internationally, Taser sales have exploded, with products now sold in 44 countries.



TASER X26

Though its stock remains flat and well below its peak in 2004, analysts have big expectations this year. Taser has boosted profits each of the past four quarters as Smith aggressively defended his weapons in the media and the courtroom. Taser paid for research into the health risks of stun gun shocks, and, on occasion, has sued coroners who included Tasers as a possible cause of someone's death.

Matthew McKay, an analyst with Jefferies & Co., predicts Taser will be Wall Street's top performing stock in 2007. McKay expects Taser to record \$105 million in sales this year and its stock to more than double in value as investors realize the company isn't going away.

"You've got a company that a lot of people have written off," McKay said.

In May, Taser will begin selling a smaller version of its police weapons to the public. Available in a variety of colors, including metallic pink, the Taser C2 can stop people from 15 feet away "allowing you to protect yourself and your family from a safe distance," the brochure says.

Taser also plans to expand its product line to the military, a market with a potentially huge interest.

Smith said he envisions a day when U.S. Marines can shock insurgents from 100 feet away using a wireless Taser tucked into a shotgun shell. He sees national borders and embassies protected by a mine-like Taser device that shoots electrically charged darts at people who come too close.