



## IMPD looks at high tech crime-fighting 'ears'

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[Rich Van Wyk](#)/Eyewitness News

Indianapolis - Metro police are looking at yet another high tech weapon in their fight against rising violent crime. Other cities are already using electronic "ears" to hear crimes and catch those responsible.

When shots are fired, it's difficult for police to tell where they came from. The answer could be a sophisticated listening system that IMPD's top brass is looking at. It's called ShotSpotter.

With in seconds of hearing gunfire, ShotSpotter puts a red dot on a map superimposed and satellite photograph displayed on a police dispatchers computer screen. The California company says the system is accurate with in 75 feet.

Chief Michael Spears looked impressed. "Obviously the technology is very interesting. It could certainly help us here in Indianapolis," he said.

Three years ago, Columbus used the technology to capture the notorious interstate sniper. Minneapolis recently installed the listening devices. Police say they are seeing results. "allowing us to respond to shots fired, within a minute of any one of those calls that we're getting," said Minneapolis Police Chief Tim Dolan.

A network of microphones can listen to whole neighborhoods. The system is designed to filter out the background noise of a city and focus in on the specific sound of gun fire. Connected to Indianapolis' new crime watching cameras, it could aim cameras at the sound, catching the gunman's picture.

During a demonstration at the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police shooting range, ShotSpotter "heard" the gunfire, mapped the gunman's position, and snapped a photograph in less than five seconds.

Company Vice President Jack Pontious claims customers see violent crimes drop by as much as 30 percent.

"Obviously gunfire is related to violent crime," said Chief Spears.

It would cost nearly \$300,000 to cover just two square miles of downtown. If police decide go high tech, they will have to find a way to pay the high price.

IMPD says all of its [17 crime watching cameras](#) are up and running. However a monitoring center where police can control and record the cameras it taking longer than expected and won't be ready for several more weeks.



A red dot superimposed on a map shows where the shot originated.



The demonstration took place at the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police shooting range.