

Cop detector may not be legal long

By CARL STODDARD

\$80 device that squawks like a wounded duck within range of police radar. Ryan Jenkins, also of Southfield, distributes a device called "The Fuzzbuster", which goes for \$100 and flashes a red light when approaching radar in operation.

All was well for both businessmen, what with the federally-imposed 55 m.p.h. speed limit and Americans' penchant for speeding. Then, a man living in Berrien Springs (a small town near Benton Harbor) was arrested by State Police and charged

with equipping his car with an illegal device. A local district court judge found nothing illegal about the device and the matter seemed to be ended. The Berrien County Prosecutor's Office had other ideas. An appeal by the prosecutors in circuit court will attempt to reverse the lower court's decision.

"WE WOULD APPRECIATE a clear-cut decision on this," said Robert Jenkins of Southfield Distributing Company, the Southfield company that markets Fuzzbuster.

"This publicity has hurt us. Naturally, a lot of people are afraid to buy it."

Although sales are down, many people are still plunking down the money for the little black box, he said, with many of the devices going to people about to drive to Florida. The device is legal from here to the Sunshine State, he said.

According to Solomon Bienefeld, first assistant attorney general, state law says motorists may not equip vehicles with devices that pick up police radio broadcasts.

"These Fuzzbusters and other devices are capable of picking up police

frequencies," Bienefeld said. "But the question is, is it a radio receiver." The state attorney general's office hopes to get a ruling on the legality of the devices, he said. At present, they are waiting for the outcome of the Berrien County prosecutor's appeal. A ruling from the county circuit court is expected in late March.

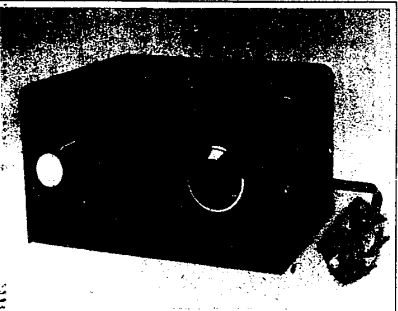
If the circuit court judge goes along with the lower court ruling, Bienefeld suggested that the attorney general's office may take further actions to ban the devices.

"I'M AFRAID at the moment, each person who is arrested (with a radar detecting device) will have to test the legality in local court," Bienefeld said. "Local prosecutors would be at the liberty of deciding whether to prosecute and it would be up to the court to decide on each matter."

All that would change, he said, if there is a state-wide decision on such radar-detecting devices.

Both the Fuzzbuster and the Snoper attach to the dashboard and are powered by standard 12-volt automotive electrical systems.

Distributors of the Fuzzbuster claim the device can detect police radar in operation from as much as two miles.



This box, called "The Fuzzbuster," is one of two devices marketed by Southfield residents that has come under the eye of Michigan courts recently. A ruling could ban these and other devices that are used to detect police radar.

He says fixing it can save money

By SHIRLEE IDEN

Ken Shute of Redford Township has 27 years of appliance repair experience he can call upon when he teaches his class for Southfield Community Schools.

Shute's class in small appliance repair meets Tuesday evenings from 7-10 p.m. at Southfield High School beginning Jan. 23. For a small investment of \$18, participants can learn some useful skills and easily make up what they pay for class fees.

"If they just repair two small appliances," he said, "they have their money back."

Shute, who replaced a former teacher when a friend recommended him for the job, said his classes average 12 to 15 students each semester. He already has taught two semesters for Southfield Community Schools.

He said the average person can learn to put a plug on a cord and even advance to detecting or repairing any problem with a small appliance.

"If they can't repair it, they can diagnose the trouble and easily get it fixed," he said. Shute teaches his students to make their own test light which they keep when the class ends.

"I HAD TWO women in each of my classes last year and they did fantastically well," he said. "One girl excelled over the men; she was terrific."

Shute said the students bring in their own appliances to work with in class time.

"In two semesters, we repaired 142 appliances," he said. "Lots of people just chuck out small appliances that get broken, when for a dollar or two they can get it out and repair them with not too much effort."

"One of my students got so inspired with small appliances, he tackled his clothes dryer and saved lots of money."

Shute claims that even people who are not mechanically inclined can learn in his class. "It's mostly actual working experience," he said.

"In the first two classes I demonstrate with two appliances that are taken apart and mounted on a board. I show them how to test out each component part."

Students are expected to bring some basic tools such as pliers, screw drivers and small wrenches. "They are all things most everyone has at home," Shute said.

Among the more unusual appliances that have been repaired in the classes are several antique waffle irons and toasters.

"They were more than 25 years old," Shute said. "The fact that the parts are unavailable is not important because I can teach the person how to fabricate the parts. They also learn to solder and silver solder."

Shute works during the day for Detroit Edison as an appliance repairman.

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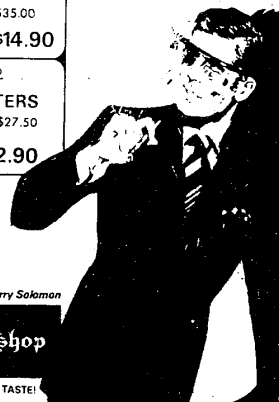
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