

Moore County utilizes programs to combat jail overcrowding

by Drew Powell | Thursday, September 20th 2018

DUMAS, Texas (KVII) — A problem that's plaguing a number of counties in Texas is the growing population of inmates in jails. Moore County has turned to two programs to help alleviate crowding in its jail. One of the programs is called SCRAM, Secure Continuous Remote Alcohol Monitoring which is available for select repeat DWI offenders age 17 and over.

"SCRAM is paid for by the offender, the offender pays for the program as part of their agreement," said Tommy Brooks, Moore County EMC.

DUMAS, Texas (KVII) — A problem that's plaguing a number of counties in Texas is the growing population of inmates in jails. Moore County has turned to two programs to help alleviate crowding in its jail. One of the programs is called SCRAM, Secure Continuous Remote Alcohol Monitoring which is available for select repeat DWI offenders age 17 and over.

"SCRAM is paid for by the offender, the offender pays for the program as part of their agreement," said Tommy Brooks, Moore County EMC.

"This SCRAM device monitors their blood alcohol level twenty four hours seven days a week," said Morgan Hightower, Chief Deputy Moore Co. Sheriff's Office. "If there's any question its back to court and then more likely back to jail."

If a person in the program decides to remove the device which is strapped to an ankle, it activates an alarm notifying authorities.

"If it's removed it automatically sends a strap alert to us," said Brooks. "I've searched the internet trying to find ways to defeat SCRAM and every website I went to, the first thing it said is "Don't Even Try."

The county is also utilizing a work release program for non-violent misdemeanor offenders. Four days a week for up to 32 hours the offenders are assigned various jobs helping to keep the county clean.

"They help with cleaning the courthouse," said Brooks. "They go over and help clean the police department and do odd jobs. They also go to animal control and pick up around the kennels."

The number of people housed at the Moore County Jail fluctuates due to five different law enforcement agencies that make arrest and book people there. The maximum occupancy is 62. Some weeks inmates have to be farmed out to other facilities in Dalhart and Childress to help with overcrowding.

For people who fail to complete the work release program a warrant is issued for their arrest and they spend the rest of their time in jail.



Two programs in use help reduce the number of inmates staying at the Moore County Jail in Dumas (Drew Powell ABC 7 News)