

K9 Storm vs Other Ballistic Vest Brands

Below are a few quick points that can help you explain the difference between the K9 Storm Patrol Swat Vest and their competitors, and the value that wearing a K9 Storm Vest can bring to the departments K9 unit.

1. **Custom Fit:** Each K9 Storm Vest is truly custom fit to each dogs specific measurements. This is the **single most important factor** that separates K9 Storm from anything else available. Because the Patrol Swat will fit your dog like a second skin, they will have a full range of mobility and agility and be able to wear it for all calls of service. They hold Canadian and American Patents on the design of their custom fit K9 Storm Vest. No matter how light something is, if it is flopping around or doesn't fit properly, the dog will have to exert more energy to work with it on. Even with their original Patrol Swat Vest from 1997 that weighed 6-10 lbs., they learned that dogs could effectively work in it because they fit perfectly.

Many handlers that have been given other ballistic vests in the past have believed that vests are "too hot" for the dog and tired them out. In reality, many of these dogs tired out because of the vest fitting so poorly and needing to expend so much more energy to work in it.

2. **Lightweight:** The K9 Storm Vests weigh on average 3.5-5 lbs. (depending on the size of the dog). They have gone to great lengths to make their vests as light as possible of the years, including improvements in their fabrics and manufacturing processes. This weight is evenly distributed over the dogs entire body. For comparison, the common leather muzzle weighs just under 2 lbs. and this weight is completely concentrated on the dogs snout.

3. **Allows the Dog to Maintain their Natural Cooling Mechanism:** Dogs cool themselves much differently than humans. Their primary way to cool is through panting, the paws of the feet, and the tips of their ears. The K9 Storm Vest does not block any of their natural cooling mechanisms. Remember, dogs are completely covered in fur. Just like insulation stops your home from getting too cold in winter, it also keeps it from overheating in summer. Their fur is the exact same and is a natural regulator of heat too.

4. **During Extremely Hot Days:** There will be times in the dead of summer where temperatures are deadly for humans and animals alike. With or without a K9 Storm Vest, the handler needs to monitor their dog and give them lots of water and shade when possible. These vests can be put on in less than 30 seconds, and taken off in less than 10 seconds. When working in extremely hot days or if the shift is not busy, they can take off the vest in-between calls. When a call comes in, pull over and put their Patrol Swat on FIRST, then go to the call. Having said this, in the back of an air conditioned truck with water the dog will be fine wearing their Patrol Swat Vest the entire day, and most handlers leave it on the entire shift regardless of the temperature.

5. **Assessing the Primary Threat:** When working, a handler has to decide what is their primary threat. Are you most worried about your dog overheating? Or is it more likely that they will be stabbed chasing a fleeing suspect from a gas station robbery? The reason they started K9 Storm is to minimize the target areas on your dog, while allowing both the dog and handler to do their job and come home safely. If you can give your dog even 1 extra second to defend themselves during an attack, it give the handler critical added time to react to the danger and protect themselves. In the last year, we could easily name 10 dogs that have died of violent attacks. In the last 10 years, we can't name 1 dog that has overheated and died while wearing a vest.

6. **Actual Recorded Saves:** K9 Storm is proud to have actual recorded saves of dogs being shot or stabbed in their Patrol Swat Vest. One of their favorite saves is actually of K9 Olaf (K9 Storm's founder's K9), the first dog to ever wear a K9 Storm Patrol Swat Vest. He was on a track in an urban area at night in

our city of Winnipeg and jumped over a fence after a fleeing criminal. On the other side of the fence, unknown, was a small garden with tomato plants wrapped around rebar sticking straight up from the ground. Olaf's chest landed square on the top of the razor sharp rebar. Because he was wearing his Patrol Swat Vest, he bounced right off the rebar, completely unscathed, and continued the track. While this is not a "glamorous" or high profile save consisting of weapons, it really highlights the importance of wearing it for all calls of service. Without the Patrol Swat Vest on, Olaf would have been impaled right through the heart. **Just like wearing a seatbelt, nobody anticipates getting in a car crash, but it can mean the difference between life and death in a split second that something goes wrong.**

If you can commit the 6 talking points above to memory, you will be prepared for all of the common questions that people will ask you. At the end of the day, we never want to FORCE a vest on someone. There is nothing worse than giving someone a gift that they are ungrateful for, do not value, or do not want to use. All it does is a disservice to those who have donated money to make it happen.