

## University visitors can buy personal parking meters

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Binghamton University is attempting to make on-campus parking easier for visitors by offering personal parking meters.

The meters are small yellow devices that hang from a car's rear view mirror and have 50 hours for users to distribute as needed.

They cost \$40 -- which includes a \$10 refundable deposit -- and can be used at any lot on campus, except paid lots and parking garages.

They also can be used at parking meters.

Visitors to BU's campus usually either park in paid lots or at meters.

Parking permits are also available for \$106 per calendar year. An expired meter slaps motorists with a \$20 ticket. Parking in a lot without a permit gets a driver a \$25 ticket.

BU is using the most basic version of the device in the pilot program, said Dan Chambers, the university's deputy chief of police.

More advanced versions allow drivers to buy as much -- or as little -- time as they want.

"A lot of community members come to walk to the track or the nature preserve," Chambers said.

"They don't have a registered car on campus and it costs \$5 a day to park, but they're only here for an hour."

Binghamton University is the first college in the Northeast to use the devices.

Other colleges that use them include the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of California-Santa Barbara.

The city of Buffalo began using the devices four years ago after eliminating free parking for disabled residents, said Leonard Sciolino, the city's director of parking violations.

The city began offering the devices to the general public shortly afterward.

"You should offer more than one mode of parking in a city to offer people different choices," he said.

In Buffalo, users can buy cards to activate the meters in denominations of \$25, \$50 and \$100.

Chambers said motorists who use the personal meters will not overcrowd parking lots.

"They're going to come anyhow," Chambers said. "All it does is save them the unfortunate \$5-a-day parking pass."

Visitors to the campus who use the track and nature preserve usually park in the outlying areas of the campus, away from the university's academic buildings, he said.

"How many people always have enough change to feed the meter?" Chambers asked.

After the pilot is finished this semester, parking services will decide if they will implement the device, Chambers said.

**The full article can be found at**

**<http://www.stargazettenews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060923/NEWS01/609230328>**