

BORDER

New technology might help with Arizona's border security

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TUCSON - A unique underground surveillance system called 'Helios' might make its way into Tucson.

The technology was developed by Fotech Solutions, a company based in England, where it's already being used to monitor things like dams, pipelines, bridges, and highways with the use of lasers and acoustic sensors.

President of Zonge Engineering in Tucson, Scott Urquhart, wants to bring the technology to Southern Arizona's Border.

Urquhart said, "We would be able to get information about where people are crossing, not just try to stop them."

It would work with a fiber optic cable that's buried about two feet underground, and if anything that moves crosses over that cable, it's automatically detected.

Applications Engineer Hays Allen says the detection is displayed by a computer monitor.

Allen said, "The vibration energy from the footsteps is transmitted through the earth and is picked up by the fiber."

If everything goes as planned, Helios would supplement the existing border fence, and according to engineers, it has a small price tag.

Urquhart said, "The primary cost is actually in the trenching to put the fiber in."

The idea would help border security above ground by adding a futuristic tool underground.

Customs and Border Protection released a statement saying they cannot comment on the new technology until it has been evaluated by the Department of Homeland Security.

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