



CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Chatham County Police Department to Begin Using School Zone Speed Cameras

Chatham County, GA (July 29, 2021)—The Chatham County Police Department will soon begin using school zone speed cameras in an effort to increase the safety of high-traffic areas near several area schools.

“Speeding is a serious problem, and when it occurs in a school zone it can quickly lead to a tragedy,” said Chatham County Police Chief Jeff Hadley. “The goal of these cameras is to get motorists to pay close attention and use extreme care whenever they’re driving in a school zone. Nothing is more important than the safety of our children, and these cameras will be a valuable tool in motivating people to slow down.”

The cameras will be activated on Monday, August 16, 2021, in school zones around Georgetown K-8, May Howard Elementary, Coastal Middle and Marshpoint Elementary, and St. Andrews School. Warning tickets will be issued for the first thirty days, and citations will be issued beginning September 16, 2021.

The cameras will be activated one hour before the start of school, will remain active throughout the school day, and until one hour after the final school bell. It is important to stress that the cameras will be active the entire school day – not just when students are traveling to and from the school building.

Motorists will know the cameras are in place because proper signage will be displayed at the approach to the speed zone cameras. This gives drivers the opportunity to slow down to the lawful speed before entering the enforcement zone.

Drivers will not be issued a ticket until they are going more than 10 miles per hour over the posted speed limit. A Chatham County Police Department officer will review each violation before a citation is mailed to the registered owner of the vehicle. The citation information will include a picture of the vehicle, tag, and the speed the vehicle was traveling.

The ticket is a civil issue and will not take any points off of a license, but will result in a fine. The fine is set by state law and is \$75, plus a \$25 processing fee for the first offense. Any

subsequent offenses will carry a fine of \$125, plus a \$25 processing fee. Motorists will pay the fine online, and will also have the opportunity to appeal the citation to a judge.

“There will be ample warning and ample opportunity for motorists to slow down before they enter the speed enforcement zone,” said Hadley. “Our hope is that we don’t write any tickets. The goal here is to change the behavior we’ve monitored in a number of school zones in our community.”

A speed study was conducted before the Chatham County Police Department decided to implement the school speed zone cameras. The research found that 92,837 vehicles traveled through the school zones during school hours over a five-day period. During that time 10,714 speed violations occurred.

“Clearly, this is an issue that needs to be addressed,” said Hadley. “I never want to have to tell a parent that their child has been hurt or killed by a speeding driver in a school zone. We hope these cameras will lead to a new awareness among drivers, and change potentially deadly behavior.”

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