



CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Chatham County Police Department School Zone Speed Cameras Reduce Violations by 86 Percent

Chatham County, GA -- (October 25, 2021) — The Chatham County Police Department's School Zone Speed Cameras reduced violations by 86 percent in the first six weeks of the program.

“Our one goal when we installed these cameras was to slow down the thousands of people who speed through school zones every day,” said Chatham County Police Chief Jeff Hadley. “The impact of this program is clear. Our school zones are now safer for children because we have drastically reduced the number of speeders. We expect the number to continue to decrease in the weeks ahead.”

The program had a significant impact before the cameras were turned on, or the first warning ticket was issued. The Chatham County Police Department began a public awareness and education campaign on July 29, 2021, to alert drivers that the cameras were on the way. Between July 29, 2021 and August 15, 2021, speeding was cut by 63 percent.

When warning citations were issued between August 16, 2021, and September 15, 2021, speeding decreased an additional 23 percent for an 86 percent decrease overall.

“These numbers show that most drivers clearly want to do the right thing and slow down in a school zone,” Hadley added. “When children are crossing the street or walking or biking to school, the motorists driving through the school zone have a responsibility to be as cautious as possible. Clearly, the huge reduction in speeding we’ve seen shows most drivers agree.”

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Chatham County Police Department School Zone Speed Cameras Fact Sheet

Background:

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.

Location and Times:

The cameras are in school zones around Georgetown K-8, May Howard Elementary, Coastal Middle and Marshpoint Elementary, and St. Andrews School.

The cameras are activated one hour before the start of school, remain active throughout the school day, and until one hour after the final school bell. **Please note that the cameras are in operation for the entire school day – not just when children are going to and from school.**

Violations:

The cameras enforce the posted speed limit, which may change to a lower speed during school arrival and dismissal times (and is indicated by signage in the school 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.

Results:

Initial Study: 10,714 speeding violations in a five-day period.

August 15, 2021 (End of public awareness and education campaign): An average of 994 violations in a five-day period – down from 10,714. (63% decrease)

September 15, 2021 (End of 30-day warning period): An average of 380 violations in a five-day period – down from 994 the previous month. (23% decrease)

Bottom line: Before the camera program, 10,714 speeding violations happened in school zones in one school week. By the end of the 30-day warning period, 380 speeding violations occurred in school zones during one school week. That's an 86% decrease in speed violations in school zones.

Consequences of Citations:

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.

It is important to note that under Georgia law, failure to pay these citations will result in the vehicle owner being unable to renew the vehicle registration or sell the vehicle until all fines are paid.

Questions and Appeal Information:

If you have a question about your citation, or would like to appeal the citation, please call 1-855-252-0086.

To view the monthly school zone speed camera report, please visit the Chatham County Police Department website at police.chathamcountyga.gov or click here:

<https://police.chathamcountyga.gov/Crime/SpeedCameraReport>