



Common Questions Answered on Traffic Cameras

The Las Cruces Police Department, in conjunction with Redflex Traffic Systems, will begin issuing citations March 31 for violations at the intersections already equipped with photo enforcement cameras.

The photo enforcement cameras have been operational since Feb. 28. To date, red light or speeding violators have been subject to only a warning during a 30-day grace period.

The Las Cruces Police Department has fielded several calls asking for a better understanding of the photo enforcement cameras and what constitutes a violation. Here are some of the most frequently asked questions along with their respective answers:

Q: What are the photo enforcement cameras looking for?

A: The Redflex cameras are set to record vehicles that pass through the intersections after the traffic signal has turned red or vehicles that pass through the intersection in excess of the posted speed limit.

Q: Will I receive a citation for turning right on a red light at one of the intersections?

A: No, as long as your vehicle comes to a complete stop before the white stop line and you are otherwise clear to make the turn.

Q: Will I be cited if I am turning left at the intersection, waiting for oncoming traffic to clear, when the light turns red?

A: No, as long as your vehicle is already past the white stop line at the intersection. The camera is triggered when a vehicle passes the white stop line after the light has turned red.

Q: How much are the citations from one of the photo enforcement cameras?

A: Effective June 19, 2009, fines are \$100 for either running a red light or speeding. Vehicles caught speeding and running a red light may receive citations for both violations (two separate \$100 Citations).

Q: Are the fines the same as if I were cited by a police officer?

A: No. The fines for an officer-initiated citation are \$161 for running a red light and begin at \$110 for speeding.

Q: Will a photo enforcement citation appear on my driver's record?

A: No. Photo enforcement citations are considered civil penalties and are not reflected on Department of Motor Vehicle records.

Q: Will the citation go against my driving record, raising my insurance rate?

A: No. Violations are treated in a similar fashion as parking tickets and do not go against your driving record.

Q: Can I contest a photo enforcement citation?

A: Under the ordinance, individuals may pay the penalty, or appeal the citation to an independent hearing officer. The hearing officer's decision can be appealed through district court.

Q: What if I receive a citation in the mail but know that I was not the driver who committed the violation?

A: Simply furnish the police department with the proper name of the driver who committed the violation and the citation will be changed to reflect that driver.

Q: Is there an increased danger of rear-end collisions at photo enforcement intersections?

A: No, crash data from other cities does not indicate an increase. The basic rule of thumb for drivers is to travel at least two seconds behind any vehicle that's in the same lane. The two-second rule is useful as it works at any speed. By maintaining a two-second gap between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you, you're likely to have sufficient room to brake if necessary.

The City of Las Cruces entered into a five-year contract with Redflex Traffic Systems of Phoenix, Ariz., to operate the photo enforcement camera system.

The Redflex cameras are operational at three intersections: Lohman Ave. at Walnut St.; Solano Dr. at Main St.; and Valley Dr. at Avenida de Mesilla. A fourth intersection, Lohman Ave. at Telshor Blvd., will have a photo enforcement camera system installed and operational in the near future.