

What is the best way to improve the safety on our streets?

Studies show that most traffic law violators are residents of the neighborhood. These drivers can be reached through neighborhood association meetings and newsletters, PTA meetings and at community social gatherings. Speeding is a behavioral issue and there is no simple solution to address this problem. Keep the following points in mind...

- Posted speed limits are the maximum speed under ideal conditions...if conditions are not ideal, then slow down! Less than ideal conditions include adverse weather, darkness, lack of familiarity of the roadway, and the presence of pedestrians and/or bicyclist. Be a responsible driver and set a good example.

- With limited funds, law enforcement needs to be able to target their enforcement to higher risk areas. So be patient if you have requested their help with speed enforcement.

- Sidewalks play an important role in pedestrian safety. Drivers are generally more alert to the potential of pedestrian interactions if sidewalks are in view. Walking in the street right-of-way increases your risk of being involved in a pedestrian/vehicular crash. Encourage the installation of sidewalks in neighborhood areas.

- Children should never be permitted to play in the street. This only breeds disrespect of the potential hazards of the roadway.

- Speed limits that are set to be reasonable for a majority of the traveling public allows drivers to pay more attention to their surroundings and less attention to controlling their speed.

- The most effective means of controlling speed is by designing the roadway for the desired speed. This is accomplished through engineering and installation of traffic calming measures. This is more easily done at the time of construction of new streets, but can be done at anytime.

Codes and jurisdictions of enforcement relating to speed limits within the region:

Indiana State Roads (Code §9-21-5):
Setting speed limits: INDOT (812-895-7309)
Enforcement: Indiana State Police and local law enforcement agencies.

- **Vanderburgh County** (Code §10.16):
Setting speed limits: Vanderburgh County Engineer's Office (435-5773)
Enforcement: Vanderburgh County Sheriff Department (435-5713)

- **City of Evansville** (Code §7.71.01):
Setting, Installation and Enforcement Coordination: Evansville Board of Public Safety (436-7897)

- **Warrick County** (Code §70.01):
Setting speed limits: Warrick County Highway Department (897-6094)
Enforcement: Warrick County Sheriff (897-6180)

Kentucky State Roads (Code §189.390):
Setting speed limits: KYTC (270-824-7080)
Enforcement: Kentucky State Police and local law enforcement agencies.

- **Henderson County** ()
Setting speed limits: Henderson County Highway Department (826-8843)
Enforcement: Henderson County Sheriff (270-826-2713)

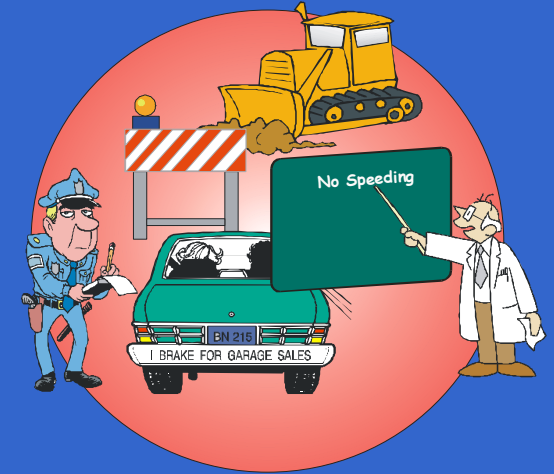
- **City of Henderson** (Code §22.11)
Setting speed limits: Henderson City Engineer (831-1200)
Enforcement: Henderson Police Department (831-1295)

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April, 2009

Neighborhood Speed Control



It's a matter of

Education
Enforcement, and
Engineering

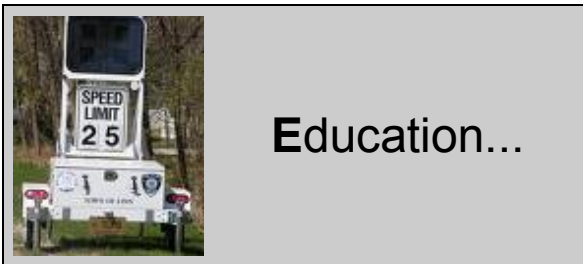
Speed limits can and should provide motorists, law enforcement agencies and traffic courts with information on the maximum speed that will facilitate the safe and orderly flow of traffic under favorable conditions.

This pamphlet is intended to answer the most commonly asked questions concerning speed limits, and should aid in the education efforts.

Isn't a lower speed limit always safer?

Lower speed limits do not necessarily improve safety. Posting speed limits lower or higher than what the majority of drivers are traveling produces two distinct groups of drivers—those who attempt to observe the limit and those who drive at what they feel is reasonable and prudent. It is the difference in speeds that may result in increased crashes. And, the greater the speed difference...the worse the accident.

Posting inappropriately low speed limits also fosters disregard for other regulatory signs. This can be particularly hazardous if a speed limit has been reduced in an area where an elevated potential for risk has been identified.



Most drivers go 5 to 10 mph over the speed limit. Why not set the speed limit 5 to 10 mph lower?

While some drivers will always drive faster than the speed limit, this is not true of everyone. Experience shows that 85% of drivers will obey reasonably established speed limits. This is what is called the 85th percentile speed. This is the speed at or below which 85% of the traffic moves on a given roadway segment.

Why not post a lower speed limit and have law enforcement ticket speeders?

Posting speed limits lower than the 85th percentile speed does not result in voluntary motorist compliance unless there is strict, continuous and visible enforcement which is unrealistic. Like other governmental agencies, our local law enforcement runs on a strict budget. Traffic enforcement must be targeted at higher risk locations. Unfortunately, higher risk locations tend to be on higher volume roadways and not in residential neighbors.



Why not install "Slow—Children at Play" signs to make neighborhoods safer for children?

Installing signs is only effective if a hazard is not already obvious to a reasonably safe driver. Drivers are generally aware that they are in a residential area and do not require signs to notify them that children may be present. Additionally, too many unnecessary signs may cause drivers to disregard warning signs that are imperative to avoid specific hazardous conditions.

Why not install Stop signs, traffic signals, or speed bumps to reduce speeds?

Traffic control devices such as Stop signs and traffic signals are installed to solve a particular problem. When they are misused for speed control purposes, they are ineffective and may create a hazard. For example:

- Stop signs are designed to control traffic at busy intersections or to reduce broadside crashes. When installed where they are not warranted, motorists can become frustrated by being required to stop for no apparent reason. This breeds disrespect for Stop signs in general and encourages drivers to "roll" through them and speed up afterward to make up their time delay.

- Traffic signals are designed to control large volumes of traffic at very busy intersections. If misused, they may cause drivers to speed up to "beat the light" and can actually increase the number of crashes.

- Speed bumps are hazardous to all vehicles, but especially emergency vehicles, bicyclist, motorcyclist, school buses and snow plows.

