



Police Department

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

ROME, GEORGIA BEGINS AUTOMATED ENFORCEMENT OF SCHOOL ZONES

For Immediate Release

Rome, GA - The City of Rome Police Department has commenced a thirty-day Warning Period to notify and help drivers adjust to Automated Enforcement of School Zones. The initial school zone cameras are installed at the school zone for Rome High and Rome Middle schools. During the Warning Period, the City will be mailing Warning Notices to drivers. New signage alerting drivers of the stepped up enforcement have already been installed.

The program was instituted after a nationwide spike in pedestrian fatalities over the past decade in which Georgia became one of the 5 deadliest states for pedestrians, with the seventh highest fatality rate. The City authorized a traffic study and found 274 drivers exceeding more than 10+ miles per hour over the posted speed limit during a single school day. More than seventy (70) of those drivers exceeded 60+ miles per hour during the low-speed flasher times, when students are coming and going from school.

Automated Enforcement is endorsed as a safety tool by the Governor's Highway Safety Association, AAA, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and the National Safety Council. Assistant Chief Debbie Burnett hopes the cameras will reverse dangerous safety trends and encourage drivers to slow down. "We have high hopes that Automated Enforcement will encourage drivers to slow down and obey the law," Assistant Chief Burnett said. "Traffic fatalities are the number one cause of death for children aged 5-14 and for young adults (aged 15-29). Very minimal reductions in speed make the roads a lot safer, especially for children."

Numerous publications have documented how slower speeds can save lives. One definitive study ([link](#)) by the AAA Foundation found that children and young adults have less than a 10% risk of serious injury or death in an accident at 15 mph, but that the risks climbed substantially with each 5 mph increment. At 35 miles per hour the risk of severe injury or death is greater than 50%.

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The Rome program will target the most egregious speeders exceeding more than ten (10+) miles per hour over the posted speed limit in school zones. The cameras will operate from one hour before school until one hour after school, only on school days. A sworn officer reviews and approves each violation before a ticket is issued. A thirty day warning period is in effect before any citations are issued. Citations issued are civil infractions and do not count as points against a driver's record.

The new program will be fully operational and issuing real citations on September 7. Residents with questions may call the Rome Police Department at 706.238.5111.