



## **Red Light Enforcement Program Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q: Why was Naperville's Red Light Enforcement Program created?**

**A:** The City of Naperville's red light program has always had safety as its primary goal. In 2007, the City Council endorsed the following goals for the program:

- Reduce the number of injury crashes through the reduction of right angle and turning collisions
- Reduce the total number of crashes at an intersection
- Reduce the number of red light violations at an intersection

Fines are only issued for a violation of the law. If there are no red light violations, the city receives no fine revenue.

### **Q: Where are Naperville's red light cameras located?**

**A:** Naperville currently has red light enforcement cameras located at the intersection of North Aurora Road and Route 59. At its July 21, 2009 meeting, the Naperville City Council approved the placement of red light enforcement cameras at two additional intersections in Naperville: Route 59 and Diehl Road and Ogden Avenue and Aurora Avenue. It is anticipated these cameras will be operational later this fall.

### **Q: Does the public support Naperville's Red Light Enforcement Program?**

**A:** According to the 2006 Naperville Transportation Survey, the public desires an increase in compliance at traffic signals, with more than 77 percent of respondents indicating that they were

“extremely” or “somewhat” supportive of this initiative. This solution had the highest approval rating of the choices that were offered.

**Q: Have red light cameras reduced the number of accidents at the intersection of North Aurora Road and Route 59?**

**A:** After six months of the cameras being operational at the intersection of North Aurora Road and Route 59, significant improvements in various crash statistics have occurred. When data is compared with the same time period for the three previous years:

- There has been a 33 percent reduction in injury crashes
- There has been a 75 percent reduction in angle/turning crashes
- There has been a 19 percent reduction in total crashes
- There has been an 8 percent reduction in rear end crashes

The City of Naperville made a concerted effort to educate the public regarding the cameras, including signage at the intersection, the institution of a 30-day warning period, and an extensive public awareness campaign.

**Q: Why was the intersection of North Aurora Road and Route 59 chosen as the location for these cameras?**

**A:** The City of Naperville conducted a thorough evaluation to determine the best location to install red light photo enforcement cameras. As a first step in the evaluation process, the city determined which signalized intersections experienced the most right-angle and turning crashes, as red light cameras are most effective in reducing these types of injury-causing crashes. Using this initial list of candidate locations, city staff identified four high-priority intersections for further consideration. The city’s red light photo enforcement vendor then conducted a detailed analysis of these four intersections that included a 16-hour violation field survey, a detailed review of crash history and the feasibility of camera installation. After reviewing this report, city staff determined that the highest priority locations for red light cameras are northbound Illinois Route 59 at North Aurora Road and eastbound Illinois Route 59 at North Aurora Road. The city will continue to collect data regarding crashes, violations, and injuries at photo-enforced intersections to evaluate their effectiveness.

**Q: Isn't conventional police enforcement sufficient? Why are cameras necessary?**

**A:** The city's red light camera program has safety as the primary goal, not revenue. It is against Illinois State Statute to disobey a red traffic signal. The red light enforcement program is a legal mechanism to enforce this existing law. Traditional traffic law enforcement is intensive and high-risk. Police Departments rely exclusively on the presence of officers to observe violations and cite offenders, which is limiting. Officers cannot be everywhere. When officers observe a violation, it is not always possible to safely stop the violator because to make the stop the officer may have to speed to run a red light. This can endanger motorists and pedestrians as well as police officers. Red light cameras are designed to identify traffic law violators without depending on the presence of police officers, allowing communities to focus on other enforcement needs.

**Q: What constitutes a violation?**

**A:** Citations will be issued to registered vehicle owners who run red lights without stopping; make right turns against red lights without stopping; and stop after crossing the limit line/stop bar while making a right turn against a red light, forcing a pedestrian into the roadway.

Tickets are *not* issued if:

- A motorist stops after the stop bar (unless they force a pedestrian or bike from the crosswalk)
- A motorist stops and then proceeds forward to get greater sight distance and completes the right turn
- A vehicle enters an intersection on a green light that turns to red before they have the chance to make a left turn
- A vehicle enters the intersection on yellow

**Q: Why does the City of Naperville photo enforce right turn on red violations?**

**A:** Turning right on red (where permitted) without stopping is a violation of the law. While crashes from right turning violations are typically less severe than crashes associated with left turn or through movement violations, they do occur. In addition, motorists that fail to stop where right turn on red is permitted have a negative impact on the bicycle and pedestrian environment. Pedestrians and bicyclists become apprehensive about entering the intersection although they have the right of way because right turning vehicles often fail to make the required stop and yield. Red light enforcement of right turns is a tool that can be used to help the motorists pay

more attention and respect to alternative modes of travel. There are also legal implications to selectively enforcing violations of only certain movements.

**Q: How does the ticketing process work?**

**A:** Once the red light cameras capture a potential violation, the file is transferred to Redflex's Chicago office via a secure DSL connection. (Redflex is Naperville's vendor for the red light photo enforcement program.) Upon the initial review, a Redflex representative checks the potential violation (photographs and video clip) against criteria that has been pre-established by the Naperville Police Department. Events that meet the criteria are matched to the vehicle's owner by referencing the license plate number. These violations are then reviewed by a second and third Redflex representative prior to sending the file to Naperville Police Department personnel for official review via a web interface.

Once submitted to the Naperville Police Department, an officer reviews the violation. If the required criteria have been met, the violation is approved. Within three days of police approval, Redflex generates a printed citation that is mailed to the registered owner of the vehicle in the photo. Violators can also view an online video clip of their vehicle as it goes through the intersection with the signal indications visible.

**Q: What are the benefits to having an administrative hearing process at the Municipal Center for violators to contest a citation?**

**A:** There are several benefits to this process, many of which include cost-savings to both the impacted motorists and the city. This process is in place to ensure everyone receives an impartial hearing, should he or she choose to contest a violation in person. These benefits include:

- Reduced costs (a \$25 administrative fee versus \$50 court costs)
- Reduced costs for the city (two officers required for administrative hearings once per month versus multiple officers needed to attend DuPage County Circuit Court over multiple dates per month)
- Easier access for local motorists (violators can attend the hearing in the Naperville Municipal Center on a Saturday afternoon, versus violators being required to be present at the DuPage County Courthouse in Wheaton on a weekday)
- Reduced burden of additional cases on the DuPage County Court docket
- Expedited enforcement
- No prosecutors required to attend the administrative hearing process

Each person that receives a ticket has the right to contest his or her violation in person and plead his or her case before an impartial hearing officer. Should the violator disagree with the hearing officer's ruling, the violation can be appealed to the DuPage County court system.

**Q: How is the administrative hearing system funded?**

**A:** The costs to implement an administrative hearing system will be completely offset by the \$25 administrative fee paid by defendants that are found liable. Long-term, the cost may result in a significant cost-savings since only two police officers will be required to be present during the administrative hearing, versus providing multiple officers to the Circuit Court over multiple court dates per month.

**Q: Is driver behavior being impacted by the installation of red light cameras at the intersection of North Aurora Road and Route 59?**

**A:** Yes, driver behavior is being impacted by the red light cameras located at the intersection of North Aurora Road and Route 59. Including warning notices and citations, 5,579 red light violations have been mailed as of the end of June. The crash data that shows a decrease in all types of crashes shows this program is impacting driver behavior.