

PHOTO ENFORCEMENT

Update: July 7, 2020

Frequently Asked Questions

The Photo Enforcement Program

The City of St. Albert uses laser instead of photo radar. What are the key differences?

- In July 2014, the City of St. Albert replaced its photo radar operation with laser. The radar system was a tool that optimally would capture violations across four lanes of traffic within a range of 28 to 78 metres.
- The Lidar Laser System technology is vehicle specific and does not use a flash.
- The laser speed camera system uses digital photography which produces a clearer image and can capture violator images in excess of 300 metres from the Unit.
- This photo enforcement technology is more effective in determining what has been happening on our roads by expanding the range of photo enforcement. It provides us with a truer representation of driving habits throughout the community.
- New Intersection Safety Device (ISD) systems have replaced the inductive (magnetic) loop, flash and film camera system that had been in use since 2001

What is included in photo enforcement operation?

- Three mobile photo speed enforcement units are moved throughout the city to various locations each week. (Generally, pickups and vans but in reality, may be adapted for use in any number of vehicles).
- Mobile units focus on the following areas:
 - **High-risk locations** are those where the safety of citizens or police officers or peace officers would be at risk through conventional enforcement methods.
 - **High-frequency locations** are those where data indicate drivers are ignoring or breaking transportation laws on an ongoing basis.
 - **High-collision locations** are those where data indicate a greater frequency of property damage, injury, or fatal collisions.
 - **High-pedestrian volume locations** are those where data indicate a high volume of pedestrian traffic.

How many photo enforcement sites does St. Albert have?

- The City of St. Albert has 168 RCMP approved photo enforcement sites. These include:
 - 68 School and Playground Zones
 - 100 additional Mobile Enforcement Sites based on the following criteria:
 - Areas or intersections where conventional enforcement is unsafe or ineffective
 - Areas or intersections with an identifiable, documented history of collisions
 - Areas or intersections with an identifiable, documented history of speeding problems
 - Intersections with an identifiable, documented history of offences
 - Intersections near schools, post-secondary institutions, or other areas with high pedestrian volumes
 - School and playground zones or areas
 - Construction zones
 - Areas where the public or a community has expressed concerns related to speeding

Do you enforce all locations?

- Although high volume locations receive greater emphasis, each site, which is RCMP approved, is visited during the year. Generally, half of the enforcement day is scheduled site specific enforcement. The rest of each enforcement shift, the operators are free to monitor any of the pre-approved sites.
- [Site of the Day notification](#), which is communicated via the City's social media channels at 6 a.m. daily, includes placement for two of the three mobile photo enforcement locations. Previously, one photo enforcement location was communicated via the City's social media channels.

Where are the Intersection Safety Device cameras located?

- The Intersection Safety Device (ISD) program currently has six fixed camera systems (speed on green and red-light enforcement) at the following intersections:
 - St. Albert Trail SB at/near Giroux Road
 - St. Albert Trail SB at/near McKenney Avenue
 - St. Albert Trail SB at/near Gervais Road
 - St. Albert Trail NB at/near Hebert Road
 - St. Albert Trail NB at/near Bellerose Drive
 - St. Albert Trail NB at/near Boudreau Road
- These locations were chosen from sites where the most frequent injury or fatal collisions occur. Intersections are areas where traditional traffic law enforcement is difficult or unsafe to implement.

Where does the money from photo enforcement go?

- Money from the Automated Traffic Enforcement Program is set aside in reserve, and is used in the following manner (as per Council Policy C-FS-1 Financial Reserves):
 - Lifecycle maintenance/upgrades related to the program (i.e. replacement of loops, line markings).
 - Technology upgrades to existing Speed on Green/Red Light Camera infrastructure.
 - Intersection/Traffic Corridor analysis/study to determine safety issues and best mitigation practices.
 - Infrastructure improvements as may be recommended through the above noted analysis/studies.
 - Other capital investments that work towards improving community traffic safety.
- The remaining fine revenue is accounted for within the Policing Services department budget and helps reduce the overall tax burden on residents for the expenses associated to policing the community including the RCMP contract costs.

Type of Photo Enforcement Used in St. Albert

How does photo laser operate?

- The laser unit used in the Photo Laser speed system emits a laser light beam that strikes the suspected speeding vehicle. The light beam is reflected to the laser receiver and a distance calculation is made. The unit takes several readings over an interval of time and uses those readings to determine the speed of the vehicle. If the calculated speed exceeds the designated speed limit, a digital image is captured. The image is displayed on a tablet and the operator visually confirms that the image on the tablet matches the vehicle that was observed and targeted. The laser beam is very narrow making it vehicle specific. The laser unit has a “sight” used to aim at the vehicle being targeted.

What type of photo laser system is used in St. Albert?

- Global Traffic Group has chosen the LTI 20/20 Tru Speed and mated it with a Canon Digital Camera and Lens system. The Lidar component is a class 1 laser product. The laser beam produced by this model poses no safety or health risk when used in accordance with the manufacturer’s specifications

How do we know this unit is accurate?

- Units are certified by the manufacturer and re-certified as per the manufacturer's specifications. Daily testing prescribed by the manufacturer is performed at the beginning and end of each shift to ensure the unit is accurate and functioning correctly. Prescribed tests are conducted at the start and end of each deployment (site).

What type of Intersection Safety Device is used in St. Albert?

- Global Traffic Group uses the KRIA T-EXSPEED ISD. It is one of the newest and most innovative digital systems for detecting and capturing vehicle speed and red-light violations.
- ISD does not require additional sensors (inductive loops, radar or lasers).
- ISD acquisition units are equipped with digital, infrared, sensitive and colour cameras (no flash which might distract other motorists).
- It detects the vehicle trajectory directly from images taken by multiple high definition cameras and provides a detailed documentation of any alleged violation.
- The system has been tested and tried in Alberta Courts and is in use in other jurisdictions.

Photo Enforcement Operators

Who operates the photo enforcement units and what are their qualifications?

- Global Traffic Group supplies employees who are appointed under the Alberta Peace Officer Act as St. Albert Community Peace Officers.
- Each Operator has successfully completed a recognized (Alberta Solicitor General approved) training program.
- Global Traffic Group has established a set of procedures and checks that are based on established best police practices. Global employs several former Police Officers and capitalizes upon their experience and expertise to focus program delivery and performance.

Can photo enforcement vehicles park in contravention of the Traffic Safety Act and idle for extended periods of time?

- Yes, Section 64(2) of the Use of Highway and Rules of the Road Regulation (AR 304/2002) authorizes Peace Officers to park in contravention of the Provincial Act and the Municipal Traffic Bylaw. This includes No Parking zones, boulevards, shoulders and overpasses. The vehicles must be kept idling to provide the electrical power required to operate the system.

What do I do if I get a Photo Enforcement Ticket?

How will vehicle owners be notified of a photo enforcement violation?

- The images capturing the violation are reviewed and verified before a violation notice is prepared and mailed to the registered owner of the license plate. The process can take one to two weeks, but is usually completed within days (much quicker than the previous process involving traditional wet film image processing).

What options do I have if I receive a photo enforcement violation ticket?

- The violation ticket will set out options for the Registered Owner of the vehicle captured in the violation. Options include:
 - Voluntary in-person payment of the fine at a Registry Office or Provincial Court.
 - Payment by mail or online.
- There may be a service fee if you pay online or at a Registry Office, but not if you pay in person, at the Court House or by mail.
 - Appear before a Justice at the address on the ticket to plead guilty or not guilty.
 - Plead not guilty by mailing the notice as per the instructions on the ticket. (Traffic Court in St. Albert is held every 4th and 5th Tuesday of the month).