

S A F E T Y F O C U S

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CAMPAIGN HOSTS STOP ON RED WEEK EVENTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING LIT IN RED, YELLOW AND GREEN

This year's events in Phoenix, Baltimore, Anaheim and Los Angeles were a great success.

The news events in all three cities were extremely well attended by the media and generated important news coverage and public awareness of the dangers of red light running. We hope they will lead to further reductions in red light running crashes and expanded efforts to enable the use of red light photo enforcement across the state.

The "Get Home Safe" theme was well-received by the media and the public. The mobile billboards at each event looked wonderful, and it was very meaningful to watch fans at the games admiring their posters and getting them autographed to take home. The Campaign hopes to expand Stop on Red Night at the Ballpark to even more cities next year.

The Campaign was also successful in our efforts to light up the Empire State Building in a red, yellow and green stoplight pattern in honor of National Stop on Red Week. We hope to repeat this stunning visual reminder next year and to enlist support from New York City Mayor Bloomberg.

A detailed re-cap of the Campaign's Stop on Red Week activities can be found on Page 4.



Empire State Building with traffic signal lighting, September 4.

**AN EMPIRE STATE BUILDING SCREEN
SAVER WILL BE SENT TO ALL CAMPAIGN
MEMBERS SOON.**

**VISIT
WWW.STOPREDLIGHTRUNNING.COM
FOR MORE DETAILS.**

KEEP EYE OUT FOR RED-LIGHT CAMERAS

by Catherine Wright

Reprinted with permission from the Chapel Hill Herald, September 2, 2003.

I'm seeing red today. And I hope you do, too, or you might find yourself with a traffic citation in the mail. Well, actually it would be just a warning this week — a bit of a grace period so red-light runners can get used to the idea of being caught on film.

Chapel Hill's first two traffic light cameras were supposed to start snapping pictures this week on Airport Road and U.S. 15-501.

I say, "Hip, hip, hooray!" I know others don't. But, like I told my husband, I'm tired of being afraid to go on green because somebody might hit me.

Yet that's what's happening. If you're first in line at a major intersection when the light turns green, you'd better be sure to look both ways and then still cautiously proceed. That's because too many people seem to think yellow means "hurry up and get through that intersection" and red means "not for me."

My husband's big concern was that people — in other words, he — might get caught in an intersection when the light turns red and receive a citation.

But Chapel Hill's traffic engineer has said drivers won't be cited if the light was yellow when they drove over the strip of paint that shows people where to stop. Plus the N.C. Department of Transportation is adding extra time to the yellow lights at intersections getting cameras.

Some people say the cameras are an invasion of privacy. Take Chapel Hill Mayor Kevin Foy, who told this newspaper, "Cameras recording people's actions in public places seem to me to be undesirable."

Actually I remember my friends and me getting a good laugh at the picture one of these friends received in the mail along with a traffic citation in Germany. The picture showed him and another friend with mouths wide open singing as they ran a red light.

Of course, a picture of someone picking his nose might be cause for embarrassment, but the cameras Chapel Hill is using are aimed to take pictures only of license plates.

Chapel Hill will make some money from the cameras — \$ 2 from each of the first 1,750 fines collected per month. The remaining \$ 48 from each fine would go to a private company that installed and is operating the cameras.

However, if the goal were for the cameras to be a moneymaker, there were other intersections the town could have chosen that likely would have resulted in more citations.

These first two intersections — the northbound lanes of Airport Road at Estes Drive and U.S. 15-501 at Sage Road/Scarlett Drive — were chosen based on traffic volumes, accident reports, speeding citations and complaints as well as a study of the number of red-light violations.

"Our main goal is to change bad driving behavior and reduce the seriousness of accidents," said the town's traffic engineer, Kumar Neppalli.

And I believe — or maybe I'm just naively hopeful — that will be the result of the cameras as they'll provide people with extra incentive, in the form of a hit to pocketbooks, to stop at red lights.

One thing's for sure: We'll find out whether that goal is reached since the town has agreed to a "before and after" study of the effectiveness of the cameras. If the Institute for Transportation Research and Education, based at N.C. State, finds otherwise, then the cameras should go.

But I'll still see red, and I hope others will, too.

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STUDY FINDS TRAFFIC TICKETS COULD HAVE LIFESAVING BENEFITS

A study published recently in *The Lancet* found that receiving a traffic ticket reduces a driver's risk of dying in a crash by 35 percent in the weeks following the citation. The study, conducted by researchers from the University of Toronto and the University of Stanford, looked at public records of 8,975 drivers who had been involved in fatal crashes in Ontario between 1988 and 1998.

The researchers' data suggest that for every 80,000 tickets issued one life is saved. Additionally, one emergency room visit is avoided for every 1,300 tickets issued and approximately \$1,000 in societal costs is saved for every 13 tickets issued. Individually, the researchers found the highest lifesaving benefits occurred when a driver received a conviction that carried a \$100 fine and three penalty points against their driver's license. The protective effect lasted for two months and was insignificant after four months.

The researchers note these findings should apply in the United States as well because of the similarities of U.S. and Canadian traffic laws. The researchers also note that lack of public support is the major impediment to enforcement of traffic laws: "Unlike when receiving preventative health care, individuals commonly resist [traffic] convictions with deception or argument."

The study was led by Donald Redelmeier, MD, professor of medicine at the University of Toronto. Robert Tibshirani, Ph.D a researcher from the Stanford School of Medicine, and Leonard Evans, a researcher at Science Serving Society, a Michigan-based think-tank, collaborated with Dr. Redelmeier. The study was funded by grants from the Canadian Institutes for Health Research, the Ontario Ministry of Health and the University of Toronto.

The National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running has submitted a research request to the AAA Foundation to have a similar study performed in the U.S.

POINT/COUNTERPOINT

Each month we will address one misconception of automated enforcement frequently cited by opponents. It is our hope that with more education opponents may begin to recognize the benefits of cameras.

Opponent Point: As surveillance cameras of any kind become more ubiquitous, a further desensitization of privacy rights is inevitable.

Campaign Counterpoint: Red light cameras are not a form of surveillance. These cameras only record vehicles running red lights. Law abiding citizens are unaffected by the use of this technology since it only activates when the light is being run.

NEW AUSTRALIAN STUDY SHOWS SPEED CAMERAS SAVE LIVES

Preliminary results from an independent evaluation released in September by the New South Wales, Australia Roads and Traffic Authority show a significant drop in deaths and casualties in 28 areas where speed cameras are in operation. The number of deaths in the camera areas fell from 21 in the three years leading up to their installation, to just one death in the two years with the cameras operating. Reported crashes fell by 20 percent and the number of motorists exceeding the speed limit declined by 72 percent. Additionally, public acceptance of speed cameras is high, with only five to seven percent of people surveyed saying the cameras provide no benefits. The results may prompt the New South Wales government to install more cameras.

STOP ON RED WEEK 2003: RE-CAP OF EVENTS

The week started off with a bang on August 27 in Phoenix, where the news event resulted in a front page story in the Arizona Republic. Joe Garagiola, Jr., the general manager of the Arizona Diamondbacks, was presented with an award in appreciation of the organization's red light running prevention efforts. Mr. Garagiola's parents were hit by a red light runner and his eloquent remarks at last year's event sparked the idea for the "Get Home Safe" campaign. His remarks this year were equally impressive. Later that evening the Campaign headed to *Stop on Red Night at Bank One Ballpark*, where Luis Gonzalez joined the Campaign in presenting the Arizona Governor's Office of Highway Safety with an award for their commitment to preventing deaths caused by red light runners.



Pre-game ceremony during Stop on Red Night at Bank One Ballpark.



A child admires his Luis Gonzalez poster at the Arizona Diamondbacks game.

From Phoenix, Leslie Blakey, executive director for the Campaign, flew to Garland, Texas on August 29 to kick off Garland's photo enforcement program. Garland is implementing a red light camera program that falls within the boundaries set forth by the Attorney General's opinion. Hopefully, this effort will result in similar programs in other Texas cities.



City of Baltimore Commissioner Clark reads Mayor O'Malley's Stop on Red Week Proclamation at the Baltimore news event.

On September 3 in Baltimore, law enforcement, trauma, fire, rescue and other traffic safety officials from across the state joined the Campaign at the East Coast Stop on Red Week news event. During his remarks, City of Baltimore Police Commissioner Kevin Clark read Mayor Martin O'Malley's proclamation designating August 30-September 5, 2003 as National Stop on Red Week in Baltimore. Later that evening, during *Stop on Red Night at Camden Yards*, the Campaign presented awards to William A. Bronrott of the Maryland House of Delegates and the Outdoor Advertising Association of America.



Pre-game ceremony during Stop on Red Night at Camden Yards.

The Campaign traveled to Los Angeles next for the West Coast Stop on Red Week news event. The Los Angeles Police Department and the California Highway Patrol joined us in uniform as we honored Los Angeles City Councilman Dennis Zine and the California Highway Patrol. *Stop on Red Night at Edison Field*, held on September 6 with the 2002 World Champion Anaheim Angels, was a great way to wrap up an exciting week. Ian Baker and other Stop on Red, Orange County members joined the Campaign on the field to honor the LAPD and the Anaheim Angels.

Ian's father was killed five years ago by a red light runner. Baseball was a sport that Ian and his dad often enjoyed together, so it was an unexpected and touching moment when Jeff DaVanon presented Ian with an autographed baseball bat in front of the entire crowd. Stop on Red, Orange County worked to distribute posters to fans throughout the game.



Jeff DaVanon presents Ian Baker and Ronda Rajotte with an autographed bat during the Anaheim Angels' pre-game ceremony.

Special thanks go out to the Red Means Stop Coalition and the Arizona Diamondbacks; the American Trauma Society, Maryland Division, the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS), TraumaNet and the Baltimore Orioles; Stop on Red, Orange County and the Anaheim Angels; the Outdoor Advertising Association of America (OAAA), Clear Channel Communications and Viacom Outdoor; and the many police fire and rescue units in each city for their contributions.



GOVERNOR GRAY DAVIS SIGNS CALIFORNIA RED LIGHT CAMERA REFORM BILL INTO LAW

On September 25, 2003, Governor Gray Davis signed A.B. 1022, the California Red Light Camera Reform Bill, into law. The bill was authored by Assemblywoman Jenny Oropeza, D-Carson, and co-sponsored by the Automobile Club of Southern California and the California State Automobile Association in Northern California.

“We applaud today’s action by Governor Davis to sign A.B. 1022 into law improving red light photo enforcement systems in California,” stated Leslie Blakey, executive director of the National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running. “This is an important modification of California law that will increase public support for and confidence in red light camera programs. Red light running is reckless and preventable and red light cameras are traffic safety devices that save lives and reduce crashes and injuries.”

The law, which takes effect January 1, 2004, addresses some of the recommendations in last year’s report from the California Bureau of State Audits on red light camera programs. It provides that a government entity must maintain control of such functions as establishing uniform guidelines for screening, issuing citations and storing confidential information and establishing procedures for compliance with these guidelines; assuring that only those citations that have been reviewed and approved by law enforcement are mailed to violators; overseeing the establishment of or change of signal light timing; and regularly inspecting and maintaining warning signs.

* * *

SURVIVOR ADVOCATES NEEDED

Survivor advocates have suffered the personal consequences of motor vehicle crashes and have decided to work to protect others from the pain they have had to endure — they can become as involved as they would like in efforts to curtail red light running. No previous advocacy experience is needed. If you or anyone you know has survived a red light running crash or lost someone due to a red light runner and might be interested in working to make America’s roads safer, please contact:

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750 First Street, NE, Suite 901, Washington, DC 20002
202-408-1711 or 800-659-2247
Fax: 202-408-1699

E-mail: advocates@saferoads.org
Website: www.saferoads.org

All discussions and information will be kept confidential.

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