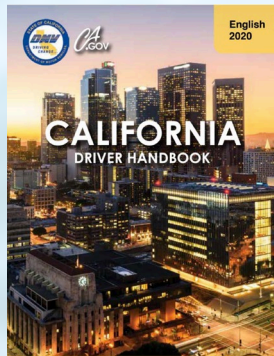


Do you still have some questions? Go to the Caltrans website at www.dot.ca.gov and type "MUTCD" in the search box to find the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Go to Chapter 2B then Section 2B.13. Another web site to visit is the DMV at www.dmv.ca.gov. Click on "Driver License" then "California Driver Handbook". In the section called "Laws and Rules of the Road" there is a subsection called "Speed Limits".



The City of Encinitas contracts for law enforcement services with the San Diego County Sheriff. If you have an enforcement question or request, please contact The North Coastal Station at (760) 966-3500.

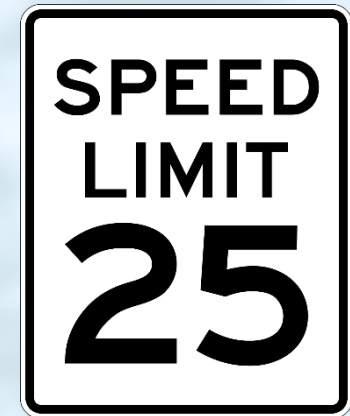


The City of Encinitas is committed to providing its residents with the safest and most efficient transportation system possible. This pamphlet is designed to provide you with useful and helpful information regarding traffic control.



SPEED LIMITS

An informational pamphlet on the proper use and setting of speed limits.



**City of Encinitas
Traffic Engineering**

**505 South Vulcan Ave.
Encinitas, CA 92024**

**760-943-2211
traffic@encinitasca.gov**



CALIFORNIA BASIC SPEED LAW, HOW ARE SPEED LIMITS DETERMINED?

The primary legal justification for vehicle code enforcement in California is the California Vehicle Code (CVC). All cities base their speed regulations on the Basic Speed Law: “No person shall drive a vehicle at a speed greater than is reasonable or prudent and in no event at a speed which endangers the safety of persons or property.”

Local authorities can establish speed limits within set guidelines based on Engineering and Traffic Surveys (E&TS). These surveys must include an analysis of roadway conditions, collision records and a sampling of the prevailing speed of traffic. Other factors may be considered, but an unreasonable speed limit, called a “speed trap”, may not be established. The legislature has declared a strong public policy against the use of speed traps, to the extent that citations issued where a speed trap is found to exist, are likely be dismissed.

The method of setting speed limits begins with a survey of the speeds at which motorists travel. The speed limit must be set based on the 85th percentile speed. The 85th percentile speed is defined as the speed at or below which 85 percent of the traffic is moving.



WHY ARE SOME SPEED SIGNS YELLOW?

Regulatory signs have black or red text on a white background and are signs that everyone must obey. Warning signs have black text on a yellow background that warn motorists about changes in the road such as sharp turns, tunnels, intersections, and exit ramps. Motorists should slow down to the suggested speeds on the yellow speed signs to safely navigate the road condition.



WHAT ARE SPEED ZONES?

The state allows cities to create speed zones where motorists must slow down. Speed zones are seen most often near school and construction zones. Going slower means you can see the children or workers more easily and have time to stop before a collision could happen.



WILL LOWERING SPEED LIMITS REDUCE SPEEDING?

Although it might be assumed that simply lowering the speed limit is an easy way to stop speeding, there are studies that show that even when speed limits are lowered, people still drive at speeds that they believe to be reasonable and safe. When that happens, the road could become unsafe because some motorists follow the posted speed limit, and others drive at the speed they believe is best. A sample study on Effective Speed Zoning can be found [here](#).



HOW CAN SPEEDS BE LOWERED IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD?

Many concerns about speeding come from residential neighborhoods. Residents concerned about the speeding in their neighborhood are encouraged to contact the Sheriff's Department for enforcement or the City about traffic calming measures.

Traffic calming means making changes to a road's design features such as changing the painted markings, extending curbs into the street (bulb-outs), building a traffic circle, or adding a median to help lower the speed of traffic. Please see the *Traffic Calming* pamphlet for more information.