

Providing safe and secure communities

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Speeding affects more than a driver's budget

Edmonton... Dry roads and warm weather can make speeding seem more tempting and less risky. Yet speed is a major factor that contributes to the seriousness of a collision. In 2005, about eight per cent of all collisions involved unsafe speed, and nearly one quarter of all fatal crashes involved a driver travelling at a speed too great for conditions at the time.

Drivers require time to deal with traffic hazards, assess potential dangers and safely react. Speeding reduces a driver's time and ability to safely respond to traffic control devices, extends the distance required to stop, and increases the chance of losing control of the vehicle.

Speeding also:

- decreases the effectiveness of seat belts and other safety devices, such as airbags and crumple zones;
- decreases the effectiveness of roadside safety devices such as barriers, crash cushions and bridge rails; and
- increases the probability of death or injury if there is a crash.

Know and practice the following rules of the road.

- Drive 50 km/h in urban areas and 80 km/h on rural roads, unless the speed limit is otherwise posted.
- Motorists passing emergency vehicles or tow trucks whose lights flashing must slow to 60 km/h or to the posted speed limit, if it is lower. The law applies to motorists who are traveling in the lane immediately beside the stopped vehicles. Fines for speeding in these cases are double the regular amount.
- In construction zones, motorists must observe the posted speed when workers are present. Fines for speeding in these areas are double.
- Slow down in school and playground zones. The speed limit in a playground zone is in effect every day of the year. The speed limit is 30 km/h unless otherwise posted and is in effect from 8:30 a.m. to one hour after sunset. During this time, a vehicle is not permitted to pass or attempt to pass another vehicle travelling in the same direction.

Speeding violations have serious consequences and can affect a driver's record. With some speeding offences, penalties become more severe and can result in court appearances. If you accumulate 15 or more demerit points within a two-year period, your licence is automatically suspended for one month.

Improving traffic safety is one of the actions under Premier Ed Stelmach's plan to provide Albertans with safe and secure communities. Other priorities for the government are to govern with integrity and transparency, improve Albertans' quality of life, manage growth pressures, and build a stronger Alberta. For more information about traffic safety, contact the Office of Traffic Safety at (780) 422-8839 or visit www.saferoads.com.

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