



CITY OF RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS

POLICE DEPARTMENT

(817) 616-3780 · Fax (817) 616-3790 · 6700 BAKER BLVD. · RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS · 76118

Red Light Photo Enforcement Program: Frequently Asked Questions

Why has the City of Richland Hills decided to utilize red light cameras?

Nationally, more than 50% of all reported crashes and 22% of all injury crashes occur in an intersection.

The majority of red light violations that result in crashes involve right-angle impacts, which tend to be the most severe of collisions.

The City of Richland Hills has deemed red light running, and the associated crashes, to be a threat to public safety.

It is believed the Automated Red Light Camera Enforcement program will reduce the incidents of red light violations, thereby reducing the number of red light crashes and injuries associated with such crashes.

Under what authority can the City of Richland Hills impose a civil penalty for running a red light?

In September 2003 the Texas legislature ratified Senate Bill 1184, which amended Section 542.202 of the Texas Transportation Code. This amendment authorized municipalities to impose civil penalties against the owner of a motor vehicle for a violation of a municipal ordinance. Chapter 82 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Richland Hills was enacted in November 2006, which establishes a penalty to be assessed against the owner of a vehicle that enters an intersection after the light changes to red.

Does a violation of this ordinance go on my driving record?

No. City Ordinance 82-201 establishes a civil penalty against the owner of the vehicle, not the operator. As such, it is not reported to the Texas Department of Public Safety.

What if I no longer own the vehicle when the violation occurred?

Under these circumstances proof of sale would need to be submitted for the violation to be dismissed. A copy of the bill of sale would be sufficient to meet this requirement.

What if I wasn't driving the car when the violation occurred?



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As stated above, City Ordinance 82-201 establishes liability against the registered owner, not the operator. If you are the registered owner, but were not driving the vehicle at the time of the violation, you must show proof that you were not the driver.

What if my car was stolen when this violation occurred?

You would simply need to provide the jurisdiction and report number where the offense was reported.

What if I run a red light and am cited by an officer, then receive a Notice of Violation in the mail for the same offense?

The Notice of Violation issued pursuant to a violation of City Ordinance 82-201 would be dismissed. The violator would still be responsible for the citation issued by the officer for violation of the Transportation Code, Section 544.007.

How do the red light cameras work?

Each intersection equipped with red light camera equipment will have a series of digital cameras installed near the roadway. These cameras will consist of two digital cameras and a digital video camera. Utilizing a passive sensor the system will detect when the signal light changes to red. Using digital video presence cameras, the system will trigger when a vehicle enters an intersection *after* the light changes to red. The first digital still camera will capture two images, scene A and scene B. Scene A will show the vehicle prior to entering the intersection while the light is red, while scene B will show the vehicle in the intersection while the light is still red. The photographs will display the time, date, and location of the offense as well as the amount of time the light was red when the image was captured. Also, the speed limit of the roadway and the speed of the vehicle at the time of the violation will appear on the photograph. The second digital camera will capture a close-up image of the rear license plate of the vehicle. And finally, the digital video will capture twelve seconds of video, depicting the six seconds prior to and the six seconds following the violation. The three digital still images will be included when a Notice of Violation is issued. Also, a link to a web page will be noted on the Notice of Violation to allow viewing of the twelve second video.

What is the penalty for violating the ordinance?

A civil penalty of \$75 is assessed for each violation. However, three or more violations within any 12-month period will result in an enhanced penalty of \$100.

How do I contest a Notice of Violation?



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Notices of Violation may be appealed to an Administrative Hearing Officer. Details on how to schedule a hearing will be included on the Notice of Violation.

If, after a hearing, I am held liable by the Administrative Hearing Officer, is there a means to appeal the decision?

Yes. A person found liable by the Administrative Hearing Officer may appeal this finding to the Richland Hills Municipal Court. Instructions on how to schedule an appeal will be available from the Administrative Hearing Officer as well as from the Municipal Court Clerk's office.

Who pays for the red light cameras?

This program is funded by those who refuse to stop at red lights and violate the city ordinance.

What happens to the revenue generated from the penalties assessed by the red light cameras?

All revenue from Notices of Violations are transferred to a Traffic Safety Fund after the monthly costs of the equipment is paid. Any excess revenue must be utilized for traffic education, traffic engineering improvements, and traffic enforcement.

Will the red light cameras take a picture of the driver of the vehicle?

No. A violation of the city ordinance is a civil violation assessed against the owner of the vehicle; it is not a criminal violation. As such, there is no need to identify the driver, and, therefore, no need to capture an image of the driver.

If I am in the intersection waiting to turn left and my light changes to red will I receive a Notice of Violation?

No. A violation only occurs when you enter an intersection after the light has changed to red.

Who is providing the red light cameras to the City of Richland Hills?

Redflex Traffic Systems was awarded the contract to provide a turn-key solution for the Automated Red Light Camera Enforcement program. Redflex installs, maintains, and services all equipment associated with this program. Furthermore, Redflex will process



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and review all violations captured by the equipment. Redflex will then provide the Richland Hills Police Department all evidence of the violation. A Richland Hills police

officer will review all evidence and ensure a violation has clearly been committed. Once verified by a sworn peace officer, Redflex will be authorized to create and mail all Notices of Violation.

Does Redflex receive a percentage of the revenue generated from the issuance of Notices of Violation?

No. Redflex will receive a fixed monthly fee for their services.

Can Redflex tamper with the timing of the red light to create violations?

No. In order to tamper with the signal light, Redflex would have to have access to the computer controlling the lights, which will not be given. In order to arm the system, Redflex will place a passive sensor on the electrical leads to the signal lights. This sensor will detect the change in electrical current necessary to change the light from green to yellow to red.

Where will the cameras be installed?

The program began by installing cameras at Glenview Drive and Booth-Calloway Road, for east-and-west-bound Glenview Drive. Future installation of one camera will occur at Baker Boulevard, westbound, at Rufe Snow Drive. Other locations may be considered in the future.

Why were these locations chosen?

Several factors were considered: red light crashes, red light violations, complaints, and the extent of red light running as determined by a survey completed by Redflex.

When will the City of Richland Hills begin operations?

A 30-day warning period commenced on March 29, 2007. During the warning period violators will receive a warning rather than a Notice of Violation. This warning will look exactly like a Notice of Violation, but will not incur a fine. On April 29, 2007, the warning period will end and enforcement of the city ordinance will begin.



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What are the City of Richland Hills's plans for educating motorists of this program?

A newspaper article appeared in the local paper on April 9, 2007, announcing the program. An article will also appear in the April 2007 edition of the city newsletter. Also, the city of Richland Hills and the Richland Hills Police Department each maintain a web

page with a link for additional information. Additionally, signs have been posted at the approach of red light camera intersections notifying motorists of the presence of red light cameras.

Recurring advertisement will continue throughout the life of this program in an attempt to change driver behavior, to educate motorists of the dangers of red light running, and to deter drivers from running red lights.