

Neighborhood Speed Watch Program

Guide to Raising Awareness of Neighborhood Speed Limits



City of Richland Hills Police Department
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Neighborhood Speed Watch Program

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Speeding drivers on residential streets can be a common complaint received by the City of Richland Hills. The City's Neighborhood Speed Watch Program encourages neighborhood residents to become involved in assessing this problem.

The Neighborhood Speed Watch Program is a public awareness program in which concerned citizens can take an active role in solving the problem of speeders in their own neighborhoods. City residents record speeds and report the speeds back to the City. This creates awareness of the speed limit in the neighborhood and aids in identifying and resolving traffic related problems on the residential streets of Richland Hills. The program is also designed to sensitize and educate motorists about neighborhood traffic safety.

Often, drivers who speed through neighborhoods are unaware of the effect their actions have on the peace and safety of neighborhood streets. Education of the posted speed limit encourages drivers to slow down. No formal citations or fines are issued.

How the Program Works

Phase 1 - Investigation

- 1) After the police department receives a speed complaint, department staff and citizen volunteers will work together to conduct a study to determine and recommend justifiable solutions. Methods used may include observations, canvassing of neighborhoods, traffic surveys, or collection of traffic data.
- 1) Neighborhood groups or individuals who wish to take part in the program need to notify the police department of their willingness to initiate a speed watch program in their neighborhood.
- 2) Citizens agreeing to participate in the program are briefed on the requirements and expectations for participation. They are instructed in the chosen method including the use of radar equipment, proper data collection, and appropriate behavior while conducting the study.
- 3) Training is provided prior to a radar unit being loaned out to participants. This type of study is typically a team effort with one person in the group taking responsibility for operating the radar unit, and another recording the required information on a City of Richland Hills Neighborhood Speed Watch Form. Participants choose the time and locations for operating the speed watch.
- 4) Once the study is completed, all equipment and forms used during the study are returned to the police department where the data will be analyzed by police staff. Recommendations will be made based on the results of the analysis.
- 5) If a radar unit was used to collect speed data, letters may be mailed to the registered owner of vehicles violating speed limits.
- 6) If the recommendations are not satisfactory or don't resolve the issue, Phase 2 of the program will be implemented.

How the Program Works

Phase 2 – Accelerated Enforcement

- 1) Following the recommendation for further action, the police department will implement increased patrol and traffic details in the affected area.
- 2) Radar trailer or radar speed board displays may also be displayed.
- 3) The use of the radar trailer and speed boards may be rescheduled at various times to reinforce the control effort.
- 4) At the end of the accelerated enforcement deadline, volunteers will follow up with data collection to evaluate the result of the accelerated enforcement efforts.
- 5) Police staff will analyze the data and make a recommendation for further action, if necessary.
- 6) If the actions taken were successful, no further action will be taken. A 10% reduction of violations is an indicator of success.
- 7) If success is not achieved, Phase 3 will be implemented.

Phase 3 – Advanced Studies

- 1) Phase 3 consists of advanced traffic studies.
- 2) Professionals such as traffic engineers may be used as consultants to address the issue.
- 3) The department will seek advice and recommendations for implementation of traffic control devices, street modifications, or additional signage, or changes in signage.
- 4) At the conclusion of the advanced traffic studies, recommendations will be presented to the Chief of Police for review and possible action.

Final action will involve implementation of a new traffic plan, if required.

Neighborhood Speed Watch Rules of Conduct

- 1) A minimum of **two volunteers** are required at all times during the speed watch.
- 2) Volunteers must be 16 years of age or older to participate. Volunteers under the age of 21 must be accompanied by an adult 21 years or older.
- 3) Speed watches may only be conducted from a **legally parked car**.
- 4) Do not block or park on sidewalks or driveways. Do not park in red zones or in front of fire hydrants. Obey all traffic and pedestrian laws.
- 5) **Be courteous and exercise reasonable care.** Neighbors, pedestrians, and motorists may stop to ask what you are doing. Hand them a Neighborhood Speed Watch Program brochure and ask them to call the police department if they have any questions or concerns. If a confrontation arises, stop the study and immediately contact the Richland Hills Police dispatch center at 817-281-1000. Remain calm and do not argue.
- 6) **The public may incorrectly assume that you are a representative of the City or a law enforcement officer**, or that your actions will result in their receiving a traffic citation. You must **make it clear that you are volunteering as a private citizen** and participating in the Neighborhood Speed Watch Program. You may explain that your actions will only result in a letter being mailed that encourages drivers to observe the posted speed limits and to drive safely.
- 7) **Use common sense.** Do not make gestures or verbal comments toward passing vehicles. Do not chase, attempt to stop, or apprehend drivers.
- 8) **Do not encourage non-participants to be present.** Only those persons who have been instructed in the use of the radar equipment may participate in the speed watch. Crowds of people will only draw attention to the speed watch and are counterproductive.
- 9) **Accurately collect and record data.** Never exaggerate or falsify any information about what you or your partner observes during speed watch. You should only report current data coming from you and your partner's observations during your speed watch.

I have read and understand the above Rules of Conduct of the Neighborhood Speed Watch Program and agree to abide by them. I further agree to take full responsibility for my actions during the time I am participating in a speed watch, and that a violation of any of the above rules will result in all materials and rights associated with the Speed Watch Program being revoked and/or suspended by the Richland Hills Police Department.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____ Witnessing Officer/Employee: _____

City of Richland Hills Police Radar Unit Loan and Usage Agreement

The radar unit and associated accessories, as listed below, have been loaned to me by the City of Richland Hills Police Department as provided in the Neighborhood Speed Program.

The radar unit is a delicate instrument and must be handled carefully and with caution. I will be responsible for protecting it and returning it in good working order. I will use this device only on the dates and in the manner agreed to with the City of Richland Hills Police Department.

As operator, I am not a City employee or a law enforcement officer, and will not communicate or seek to communicate by my actions or speech that I am. I am a volunteer and responsible for my own action during the time I am participating in a speed watch.

In addition to myself, only those persons completing this form (separate copy) will be allowed to use the named equipment or allowed to assist in the collection of speed watch data.

Radar Unit Serial Number: _____

Other Equipment: _____

Date loaned: _____ Return date: _____

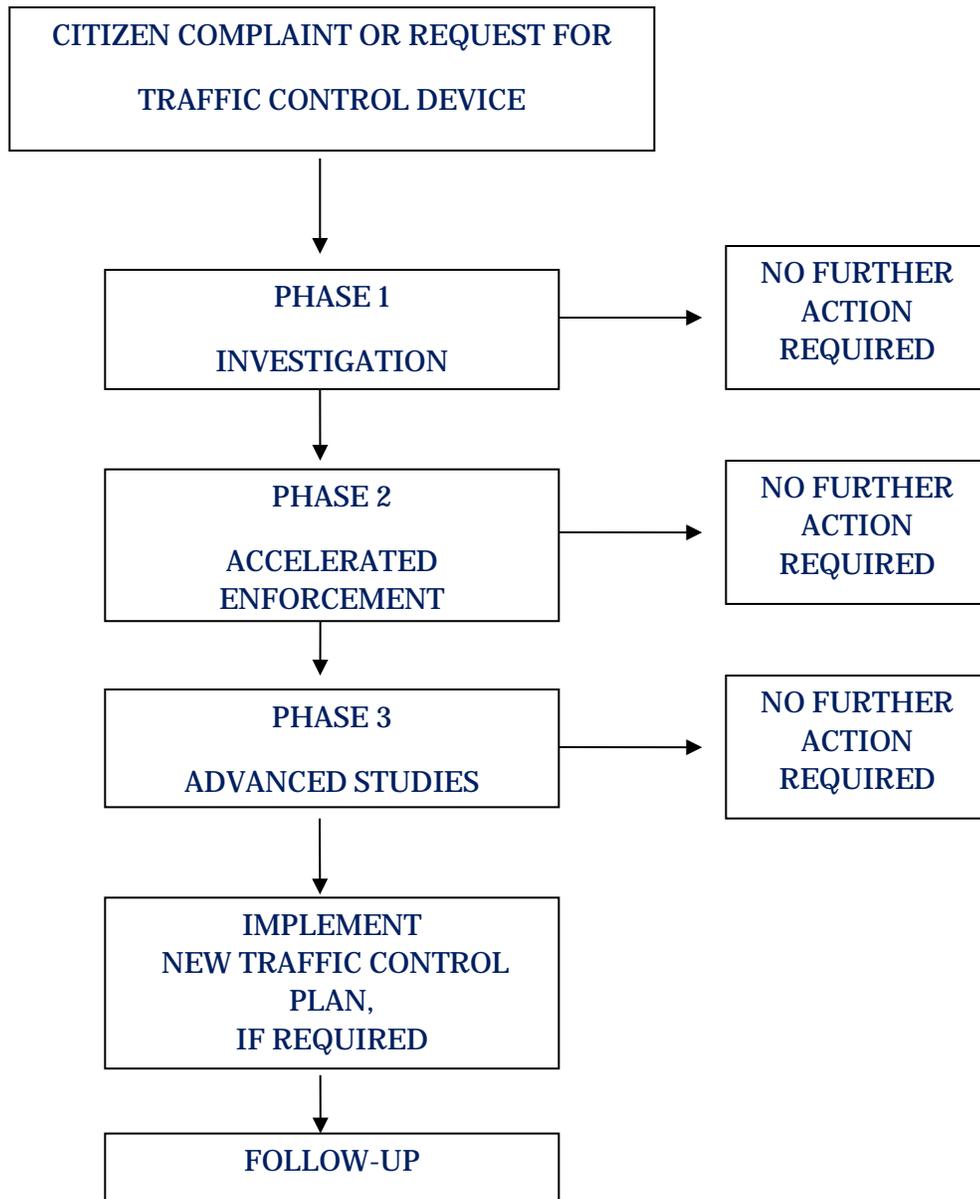
Signed: _____ Date: _____

Below for Staff Use Only

The above named person received training in the use of the radar unit and data collection, and was instructed on the program's Rules of Conduct.

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Neighborhood Speed Watch Traffic Safety Program Flow Chart



Neighborhood Speed Watch Vehicle Survey Form

Observer: _____ Date: _____

Start Time: _____ End Time: _____ Speed Limit: _____

Street Name: _____ Weather: _____

Cross Street: _____ between _____

	Speed	Direction (NB, EB, SB, WB)		Speed	Direction (NB, EB, SB, WB)
1			26		
2			27		
3			28		
4			29		
5			30		
6			31		
7			32		
8			33		
9			34		
10			35		
11			36		
12			37		
13			38		
14			39		
15			40		
16			41		
17			42		
18			43		
19			44		
20			45		
21			46		
22			47		
23			48		
24			49		
25			50		

Neighborhood Speed Watch Residential Survey Form

Date(s) survey conducted: _____

Name of person(s) conducting survey: _____

Location of Complaint: Block _____ Street _____

Nature of complaint: _____

Residents Contacted:

Name	Address	Agree with complaint?	Comments:
		Yes / No	

