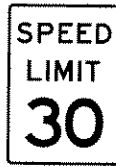


WILL A LOWER SPEED LIMIT HELP REDUCE SPEEDING?



A common myth: posting a lower speed limit will cause drivers to slow down and reduce accidents.

Facts indicate otherwise. Research conducted throughout the country over several decades has shown that drivers are influenced by the type of street and the current traffic conditions, and not the posted speed limit.

When a speed limit sign is not posted, Texas' Basic Speed Law still applies. It requires a person drive at a speed that is reasonable and prudent under existing conditions. In every event, speed must be so controlled as to avoid colliding with any object, person, or vehicle on the highway. It is the duty of ALL persons to exercise reasonable care for the protection of others.

Under Texas law, the maximum speed limit in Tyler is 60 miles per hour (mph). Other maximum speed limits established by law include the 30 mph on local streets in residential areas and business districts. Even though these speeds are not always posted, all motorists are required to know the basic speed laws.

Speed limits between 30 and 60 mph may be established on the basis of traffic engineering studies. These studies include roadway conditions, accident records and the prevailing speed of prudent drivers.

If an unreasonably low speed is posted, most drivers will ignore the signs, while a few may try to stay within the posted speed limit. This causes real safety concerns because of the difference between faster and slower drivers.

Setting unrealistically low speed limits has two adverse effects.

- They make violators out of reasonable and otherwise law-abiding citizens.
- Most importantly, police enforcement is diminished, which plays a vital role in controlling the speed limit. Unrealistic speed limits create a difficult situation for the police and the community and citations are not upheld in court. Often the police will not return to the site to reinforce the law.

Speed limits in a school zone are 20 mph. These zones may only be established based on traffic engineering studies and City Council approval and are used only for children going to and from school, when school is in session.

