

# Speed Limit Concepts



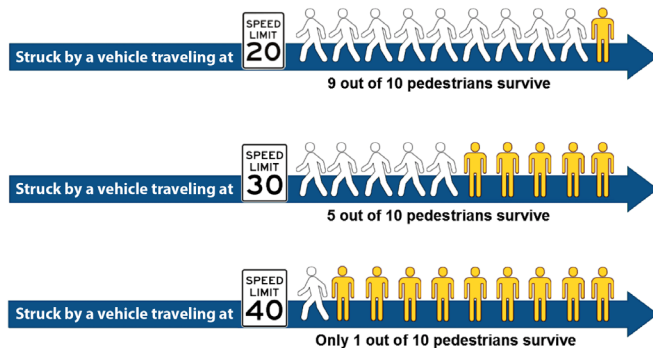
The City of Laguna Niguel is responsible for setting the local speed limits. Speeds are typically set at the first five-mile per hour increment below the 85th percentile speed, defined as that speed at or below which 85-percent of the traffic is moving. Further reduction must be documented and justified by the Engineering and Traffic Survey.

Simply lowering the speed limit does not guarantee motorists will drive slower; other speed management tools may have to be implemented along the roadway.

**According to published data, 1 in 5 car crashes in Laguna Niguel are associated with unsafe speed.**

Each person traveling within the City of Laguna Niguel can model good behavior by traveling the speed limit or less based on roadway conditions.

*Increasing speeds have a dramatic impact upon people walking and biking during a crash:*



## More Questions?

### Speed Limit Enforcement Questions:

Laguna Niguel Police Services (administered by the Orange County Sheriff's Department), is responsible for enforcing traffic laws within the City of Laguna Niguel. If you have questions about the enforcement of speed limits, please contact: **(949) 362-4346**

### Questions About Locally Posted Speed Limits:

The City of Laguna Niguel Public Works Department is responsible for setting and posting local speed limits on the basis of engineering and traffic surveys. Feel free to reach out to us with your concerns or additional questions.

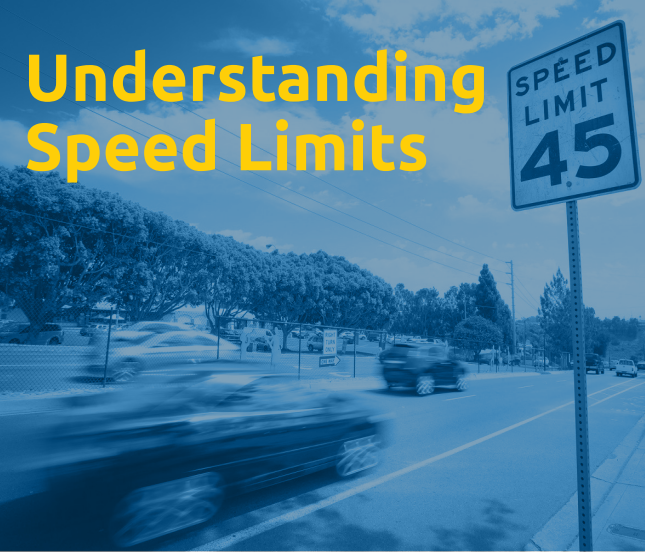
### Contact Us for More Information

City of Laguna Niguel  
Public Works Department  
30111 Crown Valley Parkway  
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677  
**949-362-4337**

City of Laguna Niguel  
Department of  
Public Works



## Understanding Speed Limits



- ▶ What are the California state speed limit laws?
- ▶ How are city-wide speed limits set?
- ▶ How do speed limits improve safety?

This brochure is designed to answer these questions and more.

## Did You Know...

...Traffic rules account for most of the contact by citizens with law enforcement and the courts?

Speed limits are necessary to ensure traffic safety on our streets, roads and highways.

## California Speed Laws



The primary legal justification for vehicle code enforcement in California is the California Vehicle Code (CVC).

All states 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” (CVC 22350).**

State law also establishes maximum speed limits. For example, the maximum speed on an undivided two-lane roadway is 55 MPH (CVC 22349b). All other speed limits are called prima facie limits, which are considered by law to be safe and prudent under normal conditions. Certain prima facie limits are established by State law and include the 25 MPH speed limit in business and residential districts and the 25 MPH in school zones when children are present. Residential area speed limits do not need to be posted to be enforceable.

Local officials have authority to establish reduced speed limits on the basis of Engineering and Traffic Surveys (CVC 22358). Such surveys must include an analysis of roadway conditions, crash records and a sampling of the prevailing speed of traffic (CVC 627).

Other factors may be considered, but an unreasonable speed limit, which is called a speed trap, may not be established, (CVC 40802). Where a speed trap is found to exist, a citation is likely to be dismissed (CVC 40803–40805).

## Speed Limits in Residential Areas



The most common concerns about speeding generally originate from residential areas.

Speed surveys are required to establish speed limits on most city streets, however, 25MPH speed limit signs may be posted on residential streets without conducting a speed survey, if the street or segment of street being considered (CVC 515) meets the following:

1. Street width cannot exceed 40 feet.
2. Uninterrupted length of street cannot be more than 1/2 mile; interruptions include official traffic control devices such as stop signs and traffic signals.
3. There can be only one traffic lane in each direction.