

## **DID YOU KNOW???**

### **SPEEDING NEEDS A CULTURAL CHANGE**

All through our driving lives we have heard that speed kills but we all still speed – some drivers sometimes, others most of the time. We know that speeding is a persistent factor in nearly one-third of crash-related deaths, according to the Governors Highway Safety Association. The group believes more should be done to try to save lives.

“We continue to have a big problem with speeding in this country,” said Russ Martin, director of government relations for the Governors Highway Safety Association. “Historically, it’s been about 1/3 of total fatalities.” This figure has not changed appreciatively in decades – it is still a major factor in about 1/3 of all fatalities.

Martin said aggressive campaigns such as “click it or ticket” and “friends don’t let friends drive drunk” successfully targeted seat belt use and drunken driving. He believes similar state and federal programs could help change people’s complacency about speeding. “Changing the culture surrounding speeding might be one of the most important things that we need to do,” Martin said.

Other strategies he said localities could adopt to get drivers to slow down include traffic-calming measures such as roundabouts, bump outs, refuge islands and improving signal timing at intersections. More aggressive enforcement could include automated ticketing using speed cameras.

According to a recent study, the use of cameras on residential roads in Maryland, on a high-speed roadway in Arizona and on D.C. streets found that the proportion of drivers speeding more than 10 mph over posted limits declined by 70 percent, 88 percent and 82 percent, respectively, six to eight months after cameras were introduced. The benefits of using speed cameras to reduce speeding have been addressed numerous times in these “Did You Know” articles.

According to the study, factors that make speeding so dangerous is that it increases the energy of crash impact, it gives drivers less time to react to perceived trouble and it takes longer for the car to stop once the driver begins to brake. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) reports that 137 communities across the U.S. had speed camera programs as of January 2019. Unfortunately, New York State does not allow for speed cameras except in school speed zones and in certain designated municipalities.

Personally I support the use of speed cameras. Where used, the registered owner of the vehicle receives a fine, but no driver points are assessed, as cameras do not identify the driver. And, the normal procedure is for a contractor to install the cameras and collect the fines, retaining a percentage of the fines for administering the program. It has been proven to be a very successful way to reduce speeding. Why not use this proven measure to enforce speed limits and in turn to reduce fatalities and serious injuries?