

THESE PEOPLE LOVE WEHO

Peter Del Giudice
Steffi Gaines
Syed Husain
Judy Tanka
David Bockoffplaceholder

Subscribe here
if you do too

Red Light Districts: What You Should Know About WeHo's Traffic Light Cameras

Monday - January 27, 2014 by [Staff](#) | [18 Comments](#)



No one likes a traffic ticket, but drivers especially see red when it comes to citations issued on the basis of red-light cameras.

Maybe it's the feeling that Big Brother is keeping tabs on drivers using technology instead of old-fashioned police patrols. The jaw-dropping amount of the tickets—nearly \$500—surely doesn't help matters. ([Why so much?](#) In addition to the base fine, the tickets are rife with added-on fees.)

Although the City of Los Angeles stopped using red light cameras in 2011, the cameras are still used in other area cities, including West Hollywood, Culver City and Beverly Hills.

Opponents of the cameras view the system as abusive and suggest that many ticketed drivers did not run a red light deliberately and merely made an error in judgment. Zenon Porche, the Sheriff's Department deputy who oversees the system in West Hollywood,

says that it is fair and that it has significantly reducing the number of fatal crashes in the city.

Some of WEHOville.com's readers have reached out with questions about the program. Here is what we learned that you need to know about red light cameras in West Hollywood:

Where are the cameras?

In West Hollywood, there are red light cameras at eight intersections:

- Fountain Avenue at Crescent Heights Boulevard, at Fairfax Avenue and at La Brea Avenue
- La Cienega Boulevard at Sunset Boulevard and at Melrose Avenue
- Santa Monica Boulevard at Fairfax Avenue and at La Brea Avenue
- Beverly Boulevard at Robertson Boulevard

Why so many cameras in such a city of only 1.89 square miles?

According to Porche, accident rates determine how many cameras are needed and where they are placed. "West Hollywood is small, but it's very congested," he said.

What can I be ticketed for?

If you're caught on a red light camera in West Hollywood, you can get a ticket only for going straight through a red light. Other cities cite drivers for making turns through red lights, but Porche said that, statistically speaking, tickets for turning violations aren't justified in WeHo.

How many tickets are being issued, and who is being cited?

In 2013, the total number of citations countywide was 11,399, according to information provided by the Sheriff's Department. Only 465 of those citations were issued to West Hollywood residents. Porche noted that West Hollywood residents are more likely to know where the cameras are and thus avoid being snapped running a red light.

Do I really have to acknowledge and pay this ticket?

Well, err, it's hard to be definite, and it depends on what you mean by "have to." But from a strictly legal standpoint, the answer is "yes."

“You have an obligation to respond – end of story,” said Porche, who noted that an arrest warrant can be issued if you don’t respond. “We can come after you ... Make no mistake about it, it’s a valid ticket, and people are legally obligated to respond.”

(Note: Responding can mean acknowledging and paying the ticket OR explaining and verifying that you are not the person who was driving the car when the violation occurred.)

From a purely practical standpoint, many reports (some going so far as to call payments “voluntary”) suggest that ducking tickets hasn’t resulted in much in the way of consequences. The LA Weekly, for example, [reported](#) that a Los Angeles City Council member conceded that there were no consequences to not paying before LA ended the red light ticket program. Ignoring a ticket can lead to a call from a collection agency, but that’s not likely to affect your credit score, your driver’s license or car insurance rate. However, it could come up if you end up in court on another matter.

For his part, Porche said he has talked to the courts about stepping up enforcement of red light tickets. Ignoring the ticket may be the equivalent of going through an intersection on a borderline yellow. Perhaps you’ll make it through unscathed, or perhaps you’ll be in for an unpleasant surprise later.

Red Light Resources

- The Sheriff’s Department provides information, including videos with Deputy Zenon Porche, [online](#).
- Jay Beeber, the libertarian activist who led the campaign to get Los Angeles to drop the red light camera program, makes his case against the lights on his website, [Safer Streets L.A.](#)
- [Highway Robbery](#) is another website that offers both arguments against the program and advice on what to do if you get ticketed.

[Click here to subscribe](#) and get news updates each morning.

18 Comments

1.  [James C. Walker, Life Member - National Motorists Association](#)

[Thu, Oct 08, 2015 at 4:22 pm](#)

Bob should stay in another city AND tell the hotel WHY they lost his business. Arnold gave good advice for court behavior, I would add dress WELL.

The Bone is correct, red light cameras are a cash cow – and a particularly vicious, predatory, money grab one. Red light cameras were NEVER about safety, only about \$\$\$\$. It is easy to get even lower crash rates and drastically lower violation rates with traffic light engineering than it is with camera tickets. But fixing the engineering is not profitable. Using cameras allows cities like West Hollywood to literally rob mostly safe drivers with improper and less safe traffic light engineering. It is a racket, one that might be deemed an ongoing criminal enterprise if the city, county and state governments were not for-profit business partners with the for-profit camera companies.

11,399 tickets, if paid by 70% of the ticket victims, brings in about \$4 million it camera loot.

EVERY area person should detour around West Hollywood, NEVER spend a dime in that greedy money grab city, and tell any merchants you did business with WHY that you will never patronize them again as long as the hanging bandit cameras are present.

James C. Walker, Life Member – National Motorists Association



2. [The Bone](#)

[Thu, Oct 08, 2015 at 11:54 am](#)

California is a " Spirit of The Law State " NOT a " Letter of The Law State " ...LASD evidently does not practice this, at least not with Deputy Zenon Porsche, who runs the Red Light Program. Zenon Porsche, when you listen to him speak, says : You don't have any excuse, confusion does not play into it, with the ONLY valid reason being that you were not the driver... I strongly suspect that this Red Light Program exists for 2 reasons :

- #1) It is a cash money cow for the County, and they are not about to get rid of it.
- #2) Deputy Porsche realizes that he has a sweet gig, confuse the rotating table of Judges from other court departments into believing that " his " red light baby is foolproof... Because he knows that if the Red Light Program were to go away, his ass might be sent out on patrol where he might have to get his hands dirty and do a actual real cop type job.



3. [Jim](#)

[Sun, Aug 16, 2015 at 6:34 pm](#)

Dennis: You may be able to ignore that ticket, if it is in LA County in California (I see you added "fl" after the Hollywood in your comment). If it is a California ticket, read all of the comments above, and the LA Weekly article.



4. [DENNIS CARBEE](#)

[Sun, Aug 16, 2015 at 12:56 pm](#)

i got a red light ticket in Hollywood fl. I stopped but I ended up half way over the last white line. The photo shows a car crossing in front of me. Problem is I lost my notice and now it is past due. I suppose I should call the courthouse to find out if my license has been suspended and just go pay up



5. [Maggie Bridges](#)

[Wed, Jul 15, 2015 at 10:00 pm](#)

Though the news is out that traffic ticket will not be pursued anymore, chaos remains in public. It affects the persons credibility and self esteem. Consulting a traffic attorney for California red light camera ticket would be the right option.



6. **Henry Heighweigh**

[Tue, Jul 07, 2015 at 12:28 pm](#)

Kalia asked if she could get a camera ticket on a left turn. The answer is yes, if you enter the intersection after the light has gone red, that is a violation. However, if you are at an intersection where there's no arrows controlling the left turn, and the light goes to red while you're out in the middle of the intersection waiting for your chance to swing the turn, you are OK. Just wait for the opposing traffic to come to a stop, and then swing your turn.

Here is part of the LA County court's official explanation as to how they decided to have a policy of not reporting ignored camera tickets to the DMV:

“Our judicial officers must balance their responsibility for enforcing the law with their responsibility to protect the public from abuse of those laws.”

My guess is that they set that policy after many of their mothers and grandmothers got camera tickets.



7. **Kalia**

[Mon, Jul 06, 2015 at 4:52 pm](#)

So if you are turning left and go though the light, you won't get ticketed? It's only to go straight through the intersection?



8. **Arnold**

[Thu, May 28, 2015 at 5:47 pm](#)

I just went through the traffic court procedure in the traffic court of Beverly Hills for a red-light camera ticket I got in West Hollywood. I don't know if it is good advice to ignore such a ticket, I'm not a lawyer. I certainly would not want to get charged with "Failure to Appear in Court", because now it's contempt of court instead of a traffic violation. I guess you could plead you never received the mailed court order. Unless they send it to you by registered mail. Check with a lawyer before you go that route, though.

However, this is what I learned when I went to traffic court:

- 1) Be courteous.
- 2) ONLY ANSWER ANY DIRECT QUESTIONS ASKED BY THE JUDGE. AND ONLY ANSWER THAT EXACT QUESTION, NOTHING ELSE, NO MATTER HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT IT.
- 3) DO NOT VOLUNTEER ANY INFORMATION, NOTHING, EVEN IF IT FEELS LIKE THE RIGHT THING TO DO. IN THIS CASE, SILENCE IS GOLDEN.

Yes, I went to traffic court. The judge (god bless this very amazing person!) asked me if I had a picture of the red-light camera. I said NO and wanted to babble on that I knew I had run the red light. WRONG!!! SILENCE IS GOLDEN! The judge then looked at the picture on the computer, said they couldn't recognize the driver. Asked the Sheriff in court to come look at the picture, asked him if he could recognize the driver. Sheriff said NO.

The Judge dismissed the case since there was no visible evidence on who had run the red light. In other words, no fine, no points, no increase in Insurance rates, no reports to DMV.

Looks like there are still some real Judges left in this here great Country that are treating the citizens as innocent unless proven guilty beyond any doubt!



9. **Bob**

[Tue, Apr 07, 2015 at 11:27 pm](#)

The timing of lights should be standardized by County or State. The notion that a community or city can use a 3-second light (from green to red) on a turn left signal at an intersection during times with little to no traffic is unethical. I spend money in West Hollywood staying at hotels there when I attend journalism classes at UCLA as a student. I am not in a position to pay \$500 — that will wipe out my savings to pay for classes. This is predatorial behavior by a city interested in paying it's employees salaries and pensions. I am seriously considering to take my business elsewhere.



10. **Michael Hayden**

[Mon, Apr 14, 2014 at 5:39 pm](#)

As of April 14th 2014, I want to know what to do. I have read all the articles and I agree that the Sheriff is going to make a statement telling people to pay up. There are so many of these tickets ignored, I feel that not making an arraignment or extention or contacting the court is the way to go. There is no nexus or contract because you never signed a promise to appear for anything.



11. **Roman**

[Tue, Mar 18, 2014 at 10:57 pm](#)

Does Culver city comes under LA Country ? one of my friend thought he might have violated ,but was in rental car so, don't know the status.



12. **Santamomica**

[Sun, Feb 02, 2014 at 3:09 pm](#)

I just got one of these and am trying to decide what to do. I absolutely did not willfully run a red light – I just got caught my surprise and made a judgement call not to slam on the brakes. Would showing up in court help me, like if the other person does not show up does it get thrown out? Or am I screwed either way because they have my picture?



13. **Professor Shivers**

[Fri, Jan 31, 2014 at 4:13 pm](#)

Like Wesley, I want to know what the LAW says the timing of the lights must be, i.e., how long yellow? It MUST be a standard set by the state.



14. **Dell**

[Thu, Jan 30, 2014 at 10:59 am](#)

I know Weho camera tickets are a real thing. I read an article that in 2008 LA ditched the red light cameras, and then I read again that they are back. What is the status of LA?



15. **[Jim](#)**

[Tue, Jan 28, 2014 at 12:24 pm](#)

The LA Weekly is not the only paper saying that you can ignore these tickets. Last Tuesday the Daily News had a big article saying the same thing.

The trick about ignoring the tickets is that you must not contact the court to take an extension or set up an arraignment. If you do, that acknowledges receipt of the ticket and ignoring it will cause you big trouble. (And keep in mind that the ability to ignore applies only to tickets in LA County. WeHo, Bev Hills, the

cameras along the MTA rails and busways, Culver City, Hawthorne, and about a dozen other cities.)



16. [Michael Koch](#)

[Mon, Jan 27, 2014 at 6:43 pm](#)

I read the recent article in the LA Weekly. according to them if you are ticketed within LA county, you are not required to pay. WeHo and Bev Hills are within LA county.

Of course the sherrif is going to say “pay the ticket”.



17. [Metropat](#)

[Mon, Jan 27, 2014 at 9:48 am](#)

Because so many drivers rush through the light causing most of the traffic accidents, I think they should have those cameras on every street. Unfortunately, the cost of maintaining the cameras is quite high. The question is not why there are cameras which people fear creates a big brother state, the question is why do drivers continue to run a red light which endangers the life of others. Take responsibility, pay the \$500 and I promise you will never go through a red light again. PS: I was not aware that West Hollywood continued with enforcing the camera.



18. [Wesley McDowell](#)

[Mon, Jan 27, 2014 at 9:07 am](#)

Interesting article. It would be quite interesting to know why the timing of lights varies. For example, some start the countdown the go to yellow then red. Others do the countdown then stay green. Is this an attempt to trap drivers? What’s wrong with consistency?

Comments are closed.

Subscribe to

WEHO
ville

to support it.



**The news you want
and need.**

© 2019 WHMC LLC - All rights reserved.

×