



NEWS RELEASE

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Less Highway Congestion During Stay-At-Home Orders Not a License to Speed

CHP Citations Jump by 87% for Violators Speeding More Than 100 mph

SAN DIEGO – Caltrans announced today a joint Statewide effort with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to urge drivers in the state to slow down given a recent 87% increase in citations for speeding in excess of 100 mph that coincides with decreased traffic volumes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Locally, Caltrans District 11 and SANDAG ask drivers throughout San Diego County to slow down.

Throughout California, from March 19 when the state's stay-at-home order began to April 19, the CHP reports issuing 2,493 citations statewide for speeding more than 100 mph, as compared to 1,335 during the same period last year. This increase in citations occurred as Caltrans has measured an average decline in traffic volume on state roads of approximately 35% as compared to this time last year.

“Excessive speed and unsafe driving threaten everyone using our highway system,” said Caltrans Director Toks Omishakin. “Viewing less congested roads as an invitation to drive dangerously jeopardizes the safety of construction and maintenance crews who are working to maintain reliable access to our highways when people need it most.”

In San Diego, during the weeks of March 30 and April 6, California Highway Patrol (CHP) issued more than 120 speeding tickets to motorists on the I-5 Build North Coast Corridor construction zone between Solana Beach to Carlsbad. Most of the drivers were cited at speeds ranging from 30 to 50 mph above the posted 55 mph reduced speed limit. Some drivers even reached speeds as high as 108 mph.

“If you need to drive to carry out essential tasks, we implore you to slow down so that our essential workers can travel and work safely,” said Gustavo Dallarda, Acting District 11 Director. “Together Caltrans, SANDAG and the CHP are working to keep the transportation system open and good condition to provide safe access to healthcare facilities, food, medicine, and ensures that San Diegans receive the supplies we all need.”

“It is alarming to see the number of citations officers are writing for excessive speeds on California roadways,” said CHP Commissioner Warren Stanley. “Higher speeds can lead to much more serious injuries and significantly increase the chance of death should a crash occur. Keep yourself and those on the road around you safe. Slow down and drive at a safe, legal speed.”



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California's "Move Over" law continues to be in effect and requires all drivers to move over a lane, or if unable to do so safely, slow down when they see amber flashing lights on Caltrans vehicles, law enforcement and emergency vehicles, and tow trucks.

"Fewer cars on the road doesn't give drivers the green light to travel over the speed limit," OTS Director Barbara Rooney said. "Driving at a safe speed when you must go out is one way to keep you and your family safe during this pandemic."

California's more than 700 electronic highway signs will also soon display the following types of safety-related messages:

IF YOU MUST

TRAVEL

DO NOT SPEED

KEEP ESSENTIAL

WORKERS SAFE

DO NOT SPEED

For any motorists in need of aid, the SANDAG operated Motorist Aid service for roadside assistance can be easily accessed by dialing 5-1-1 anywhere in San Diego County.

Caltrans, SANDAG and CHP thank San Diego residents for their continued patience during highway construction and cooperation of "Driving 55 on the 5." Please slow down and Be Work Zone Alert.

Construction During COVID-19 Pandemic

Caltrans plays an essential role by keeping goods moving to market, maintaining access to medical facilities and continuing safe highway operations. Department maintenance crews are still reporting to handle hazards, safety concerns and other critical functions on the highways, however the department is deferring some non-essential tasks to limit the exposure to COVID-19. Construction crews are still working on Caltrans projects while maintaining social distancing and following U.S. Center for Disease Control and California Department of Public Health guidelines.



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For more information about COVID-19 <https://covid19.ca.gov/>

About Build NCC

Build NCC is a collaborative effort between Caltrans, SANDAG, and the U.S. Department of Transportation. The first phase of construction began in the cities of Solana Beach, Encinitas, and Carlsbad as part of the North Coast Corridor Program. Build NCC includes extending the Carpool/HOV Lanes on I-5 in each direction from Lomas Santa Fe Drive to State Route 78, double-tracking the rail line at the San Elijo Lagoon, replacing the highway and rail bridges at the San Elijo Lagoon, restoring the San Elijo Lagoon, and constructing nearly seven miles of new bike and pedestrian trails. Construction on Build NCC began in early 2017 and is expected to be completed by 2022. To learn more about Build NCC, visit KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/BuildNCC.

About Caltrans

Caltrans District 11 serves one of the most geographically and culturally diverse areas in the country and includes San Diego and Imperial counties. It spans the entire California-Mexico Border from the Pacific coast to Arizona and reaches north from the international border to Orange and Riverside counties.

Follow @SDCaltrans on Twitter at www.twitter.com/SDCaltrans and visit Caltrans San Diego on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CaltransDistrict11 for news related to state transportation in San Diego and Imperial counties.

About SANDAG

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is the San Diego region's primary public planning, transportation, and research agency, providing the public forum for regional policy decisions about growth, transportation planning and construction, environmental management, housing, open space, energy, public safety, and binational topics. SANDAG is governed by a Board of Directors composed of mayors, council members, and supervisors from each of the region's 18 cities and the county government.

To protect the health and safety of staff, partners, and the general public, SANDAG offices are closed to the public and employees are teleworking. SANDAG is not shutting down operations, and employees will continue to provide essential services and maintain progress on critical regional projects. SANDAG will monitor the development of COVID-19 in the region and follow guidance from the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency.

Follow us on social media for current information regarding SANDAG's projects and services:

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