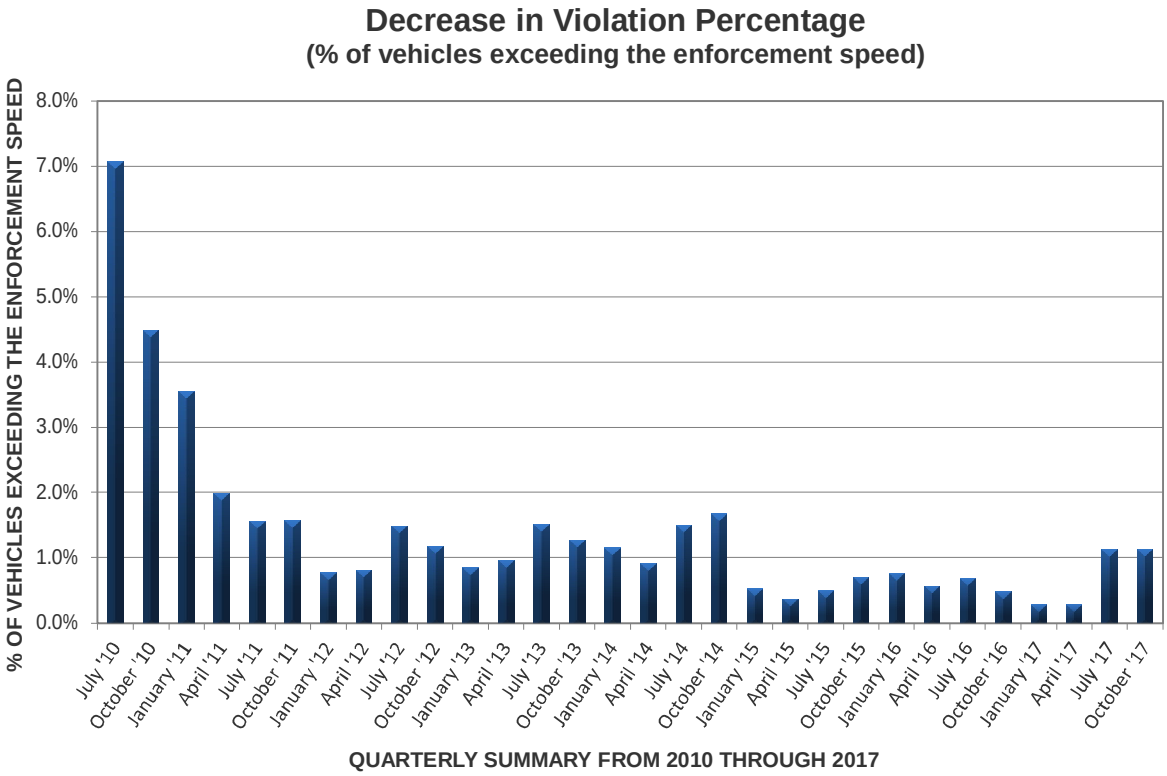
The Facts about Maryland's *SafeZones* Program
Fall 2017

Fact: Maryland *SafeZones* works.

- In the work zones where *SafeZones* Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) systems are deployed, drivers are slowing down, as evidenced by the drop in the percentage of citations issued at these work zones**.** Since 2010, *SafeZones* has been deployed at 74 enforcement locations in work zones on Interstates, National Highways and Maryland State Routes.
- When the program began, approximately seven (7) out of every 100 drivers in *SafeZones* enforced work zones were exceeding the speed limit by 12 miles per hour (mph) or more. Today, only about (1) driver out of every 100 is receiving a citation, showing an 85 percent reduction in the number of vehicles traveling 12 mph or more above the work zone speed limit.



Please visit the Maryland SafeZones website at www.safezones.maryland.gov.

Fact: *SafeZones* is for driver and passenger safety as well as worker safety.

- The purpose of the *SafeZones* program is to not only safeguard workers, but also protect the drivers and passengers traveling through construction zones. Nationally, more drivers and passengers are killed or injured in work zone crashes than workers. Four out of five work zone fatalities are vehicle drivers or their passengers.
- In 2016, six people lost their lives in work zone crashes on Maryland roadways, including one highway worker.
- Works zones, by nature, present challenging driving conditions. Work zones conditions, such as lane shifts, split travel lanes, reduced lane widths, concrete barriers, and uneven pavement, present potential hazards that leave little margin for driver error, regardless of whether workers are actively working in the work zone or not. Driving too fast for conditions is particularly hazardous in work zones.
- MDOT SHA is committed to an integrated approach to changing driver behavior in work zones; automated speed enforcement is one tool to make work zones safer. During peak construction season, there can be hundreds of work zones on Maryland highways. All of them require attentive driving, not just those monitored through the *SafeZones* program.
- MDOT SHA has devoted funding to a public education awareness effort, which includes radio public service announcements, billboards and use of social media, reminding drivers that work zones demand one's full attention.

Fact: *SafeZones* is accurate and law enforcement reviews every citation.

- The Maryland *SafeZones* program citations are accurate. The *SafeZones* program uses scanning LIDAR (laser technology), which captures multiple speed measurements of each unique passing vehicle.
- Law enforcement officers from the Maryland State Police and Maryland Transportation Authority Police review every citation to ensure fairness and accuracy.

Fact: *SafeZones* equipment is, and always has been, calibrated properly.

- ***Initial System Calibration:*** *SafeZones* equipment has never been deployed prior to receipt of a certificate of calibration from the manufacturer, who is a separate entity from the vendor that operates the *SafeZones* equipment. The manufacturer is not involved in the program's daily operation. Additionally, MDOT SHA obtains certificates of calibration from a laboratory that is independent from both the vendor and the manufacturer prior to the initial deployment of each new ASE system.
- ***Annual Calibration:*** Each ASE system is sent to an independent laboratory on an annual basis to certify system calibration. All tests for calibration have verified that all of the *SafeZones* equipment is functioning accurately.

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- ***Daily Calibration Check:*** Calibration of the *SafeZones* laser-based equipment is checked by a trained individual every day, as required by law, to ensure that it is measuring speeds accurately and not recording false violations. Specifically, the operator reviews the system and should an error message display, he/she will power down the equipment and re-power. If the error message continues, the operator does not deploy the system.
- Calibration certificates and daily logs are available for view on the *SafeZones* web site. Please visit www.safezones.maryland.gov.

Fact: The vendor is paid a fixed fee per deployment.

- MDOT SHA carefully administers its contract with Conduent, which is paid a fixed fee per deployment.
- Traffic safety – not revenue-generation – is the goal and intent of the program. Large, colorful warning signs and a digital speed trailer provide on-site, real time information that gives drivers ample opportunity to adjust their speed prior to entering the speed camera's tracking area.

Fact: Maryland *SafeZones* program is used only in highway construction zones.

- Senate Bill 277, Acts of the 2009 Maryland General Assembly, authorized both automated speed enforcement in highway work zones (§ 21-810, Transportation Art., Md. Code Ann.) and school zones (§ 21-809, Transportation Art., Md. Code Ann.). However, the *SafeZones* program operates only in highway work zones and is the only ASE program administered by MDOT SHA, the Maryland Transportation Authority, and Maryland State Police.
- The *SafeZones* program operates in work zones along expressways and controlled access highways with a posted speed limit of 45mph or higher. Civil citations, with a $40 fine, are issued to drivers exceeding the posted speed limit by 12mph or more in *SafeZones* enforced work zones.
- Counties and municipalities operate their own school zone speed enforcement programs. MDOT SHA involvement in the local school zone programs is limited to the establishment of designated "school zones" along State highways and review of utility permit applications for placing ASE equipment on them to ensure the safety of pedestrians and drivers.