A uniform speed of vehicles helps traffic move more safely and efficiently.

The Colorado Department of Transportation’s (CDOT) goal is to establish speed limits that maximize safety and that are respected by motorists. By using sound engineering principles, CDOT can provide a balanced transportation system that gets motorists to their destination as safely and efficiently as possible.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO**
If you believe that there is a safety or speed limit concern posted on a roadway, (City Street, County Road or Highway), you may report this to an official in charge of that road. If the segment is a portion of the State Highway System, including U.S. and Interstate routes, contact should be made with the corresponding CDOT Region Traffic and Safety Engineer.

**Region 1**  
Phone: 303-512-4040

**Region 2**  
Phone: 719-546-5734

**Region 3**  
Phone: 970-683-6271

**Region 4**  
Phone: 970-350-2368

**Region 5**  
Phone: 970-385-1423

**Headquarters**  
Phone: 303-512-5530
SPEED LIMIT PRINCIPLES

Setting speed limits to realistic levels helps to protect the public by reducing the potential for vehicle conflicts while moving traffic efficiently. Speed limits also provide a basis for enforcement and sanctions for those who travel at speeds excessive for conditions which could endanger others.

- 30 mph in any residential district
- 40 mph on open mountain highways
- 55 mph on non-interstate open highways
- 65 mph on interstate highways, freeways, or expressways

The absolute speed limits, listed below, are the maximum lawful speed limits and may not be legally exceeded under any circumstances.

- 75 mph
- Posted work and school zones

Colorado traffic laws apply to all state highways, county roads, and city streets and requires that speed limits shall not be higher or lower than the *prima facie* speed limits unless a thorough traffic investigation or survey, also known as a speed study, has justified the change. For state highways, the speed study is typically conducted and approved by the Safety and Traffic Engineering Branch of CDOT.

Each speed study follows requirements within the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and traffic engineering standards. Factors which may be considered include:

- 85th percentile speed data (speed of 85% of drivers)
- Existing development

SAFETY

CDOT uses a variety of traffic control devices to help reduce crashes on Colorado’s roadways. These devices include signs, traffic signals, flashing beacons, and pavement markings. When it is raining, snowing, foggy or icy, Colorado law requires us to adjust our speed so we are able to travel safely even if the speed we travel is below the posted speed limit. We are also required to drive with tires which meet or exceed Colorado’s Traction Law. We all play a role in keeping our roads safe and should always drive carefully, especially in work and school zones.

TYPES OF SPEED LIMIT SIGNS

Once a speed limit is determined, signs are posted along the roadway segment. The following speed limit and speed limit advisory signs reflect a few types you may see along a road when traveling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regulatory Speed Limit and Variable Speed Limit</th>
<th>Advisory Speed</th>
<th>Regulatory Work Zone Speed Limit</th>
<th>Regulatory School Zone Speed Limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black and white sign shows the maximum speed limit under ideal conditions.</td>
<td>Black and yellow sign to advise motorists of a safe speed. Typically, they are used with a warning sign.</td>
<td>Work zone used to identify maximum speeds within a work zone. These speed limits may not be exceeded under any circumstances.</td>
<td>School zone speed limit in effect during a specific time and may not be exceeded under any circumstances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable speed limits that change based on road, traffic, and weather conditions.</td>
<td>25 MPH</td>
<td>SCHOOL</td>
<td>SPEED LIMIT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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