



Road Runner: Disabled speed cams send county drivers flying

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Somewhere in the cold, mechanical guts of the 11 former speed cameras set up along county roads a spark of life managed to survive when the machines were turned off last week.

The sensors, but not the cameras, were left on for a full week after the Pima County Board of Supervisors told American Traffic Solutions to permanently shut down the controversial cameras.

What those sensors “saw” must have been a blur, as drivers celebrated the demise of the cameras by stomping on the gas as they flew by the decommissioned mechanical speed cops.

The sensors are only tripped when a car/truck/souped-up minivan is going 11 mph over the posted speed limit.

County officials said the sensors reported a total of 1,970 speed racers in the week after the cameras were turned off.

The week before? In their last week of operation, the cameras/sensors caught 634 people speeding past the same 11 cameras.

The good news for those drivers is that, without the actual cameras being on and clicking away, the data are just that — a bunch of numbers. No citations for any cameras along county-controlled roads will be issued. A word to the wise, however: Don’t plan on your own lead-footed celebration in front of your favorite installation.

County officials have asked the Sheriff’s Department to increase speed enforcement in the area as a result of the new data.

As a reminder, the city’s red-light cameras positioned at intersections inside the city limits are very much still active and are issuing tickets.

ROAD Q

Q: Robert Nelson writes: “Now that Stone Avenue between Drachman and First Street is almost completely undrivable, are there any plans to tear out what asphalt is left and just make it a gravel road? Even a washboard road would be better than what we have now.”

A: Michael Graham, the city’s public information officer, has good news:

The Tucson Department of Transportation plans to reconstruct Stone Avenue between First and Drachman streets starting this summer. “The work will include capacity and streetscape improvement, including new asphalt,” he said.

Send your Road Q questions by email to roadrunner@azstarnet.com or to 4850 S. Park Ave., Tucson, AZ 85714. Please include first and last names.