



COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

SUBJECT: **SPEED MEASURING DEVICES**

NEW REVISED RESCINDS

APPROVED: *GM*
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ACTING CHIEF OF POLICE

Effective Date 8/22/2018

I. POLICY

The policy of the Cottage City Police Department is to use speed measuring devices in high or potentially high accident locations when speed is a possible factor contributing to the accidents. It will also be used in areas where speed limit violations are prevalent, and in response to citizen concerns about speeding motorists.

II. PURPOSE

- A. The effective use of speed measuring devices and their acceptance is dependent upon the operator's understanding of the specific limitations of the speed measuring device itself. Adequate training and certification combined with periodic re-certification to show operator efficiency is mandated. The purpose of this General Order is to provide guidance in the proper use of speed measuring devices in traffic enforcement.
- B. Procedures for the Cottage City Police Department have been established to ensure that:
 - 1. Officers are certified to use speed measuring devices;
 - 2. Adequate maintenance, calibration, and operational record systems (suitable for introduction as evidence in court) are developed and maintained; and,
 - 3. Speed measuring devices utilizing radar are certified every 12 months.

III. EQUIPMENT

- A. Equipment specifications for radar speed measuring devices shall meet or exceed National Highway Traffic Safety Administration standards.
- B. All radar speed measuring devices will be inspected and calibrated by an authorized testing facility annually with the documented results maintained in files. Suggested and required maintenance will be performed by the manufacturer or a qualified service facility.
- C. The Sergeant will coordinate dates for speed measuring device repair and/or calibration.
 - 1. Upon coordination of repair dates, the device in need of repair will be packaged and delivered to an appropriate commercial carrier for shipment. Upon return of the repaired speed measuring device, the Sergeant will place the device back into service.
 - 2. Calibration will usually occur at Cottage City by a certified technician; however, if that does not occur, the procedures above will be followed.
- D. All documentation including repair work orders, equipment calibration certificates and a list of device specifications and serial numbers will be retained in the files.
- E. The speed measuring devices shall be kept dry at all times and when not in use, they shall be securely stored in their cushioned carrying case. The radar unit shall never be placed in a position so that its face is down and its antenna is against metal.

IV. TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

- A. The certification course for speed measuring device operators shall consist of classroom instruction and practical field application of speed measuring equipment.
- B. Each officer successfully completing the course will be authorized and certified by the Cottage City Police Department to operate speed measuring devices.

V. SPEED MEASURING DEVICE USAGE

The precise method for using a speed measuring device and the enforcement of laws applying to speed will vary according to the type of speed measuring device used. Generally, the following procedures are applicable:

- A. The speed measuring device must be properly installed and connected to the appropriate power supply.
- B. The effective range of the particular speed measuring device must be thoroughly understood by the operator to ensure that visual observations can support the speed readings.
- C. The operator must choose an appropriate location that is conducive to the effective and safe operation of the speed measuring device.
- D. The speed measuring device will be properly tested to ensure accuracy in calibrating speed. Most manufacturers recommend specific methods of checking calibration. These should be followed without exception.
- E. At a minimum, speed measuring devices should be tested for accuracy:
 - 1. At the beginning of the operator's tour of duty;
 - 2. Each time a site location is changed if radar is used; and,
 - 3. At the end of the operator's tour of duty.

VI. SERGEANT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Ensure assigned radar speed measuring equipment is calibrated annually and repaired as needed by the authorized testing facility.
- B. Retain all documentation including repair work orders and equipment calibration certificates.
- C. Ensure that a maintenance log is kept for the speed measuring units.

VII. OPERATOR PROCEDURES

- A. Certified operators will use only speed measuring equipment on which they have received training and certification.

NOTE: An officer utilized only to stop vehicles and issue citations is not required to be certified in speed measuring device operation.

- B. Radar operators who wish to use the Portable radar unit will sign out the unit on a log established by the Sergeant who will maintain the records for a period of 3 years. Operators will be held responsible for the loss or damage of the unit.
- C. The speed measuring device operator will be responsible for the care and upkeep of the speed measuring devices used. This includes taking the device out of service if it does not meet calibration checks or otherwise is inoperable. The operator shall place the device out of service and write a memorandum to the Sergeant outlining the problems associated with the device.
- D. Officers utilized on foot to issue citations will only be deployed during daylight hours. A distance not greater than 300 feet will separate the speed measuring device operator and the stopping officers, allowing the operator to maintain constant visual contact.
- E. Police vehicles may be used at any time to stop violators with safety for the public, working personnel and equipment being primary considerations.
- F. Whenever the hand-held speed measuring device is connected to a power source; it should be held in the hands of the operator or secured in a safe location where the device cannot be damaged from abrupt movement. When the device is not connected to a power source, it will be properly stored.
- G. A radar operator shall, when requested by a violator, provide available information on the radar equipment, unless the request interferes with on-going enforcement activities or officer/violator safety, at which time the person inquiring will be referred to the Sergeant.
- H. The following elements must be established by the officer for court presentation when speed measuring device speed charges are placed:
 - 1. The time, place, and location of the vehicle that was checked, the identity of the operator, the speed of the vehicle, and the visual and speed measuring speed checks;

2. An overview of officer qualifications and training in the use of speed measuring devices;
3. That the speed measuring device was operated properly;
4. That the device was tested for accuracy before use and after use by an approved method;
5. The identity of the vehicle, coordinated with visual and audible tracking history to establish approximate speed;
6. The speed limit in the zone in which the officer was operating and where the speed limit signs were posted.

VIII. SAFETY/HEALTH PRECAUTIONS

Speed measuring devices are of such limited range and power that the risks due to exposure to microwave radiation are almost negligible. The issue of long-term use of speed measuring devices being linked to cancer has been debated for years with no conclusive data ever presented substantiating the theory that speed measuring device usage poses a threat to users. Nevertheless, the following common sense precautions should be followed to reduce the possibility of exposure to microwave radiation:

- A. Officers should not place activated speed measuring devices on their laps or between their legs.
- B. With the models of speed measuring devices that are equipped with a holding mechanism, the hold mechanism should be used so that the signal will not continuously operate.
- C. An operator should never hold onto the antenna or hold the antenna closer than six inches to his/her body.