

Officer Awareness:

Trapster.com

The following is some interesting information developed by Deputy Todd Thurston.

R/D responded to the above location for a family trouble report. Upon arrival I was met in the driveway by the complainant. She stated she knew I was on the way to her house and knew when I pulled into the driveway of her house. When asked how she knew this information she stated she was tracking my police vehicle using her cell phone. Complainant stated she was using her Apple iPhone and an application called Trapster.com. As I looked at her phone there was a satellite view of her house and the surrounding neighborhood with a yellow ping marking my police vehicle in her driveway.

According to the complainant, trapster.com has many applications including sending an alarm to the phone whenever police vehicles are within a one mile radius of the phone. It shows current live locations of police vehicles, vehicles running radar, checkpoints and most frequented areas by police vehicles.

I went back to complainant's house with Deputy Unterborn. I left my GPS running and Deputy Unterborn shut his off. Complainant had only one police vehicle located on her iPhone.

According to Trapster.com, Trapster can use Wi-Fi or GPS to pinpoint the user's current location and send them audio alerts or text messages when they are approaching a ticket threat. Users report the existence of a trap by pressing the touch screen or using a key combination on the mobile device. Users can customize the alerts via the Trapster website or the mobile app so that they only receive notifications of conditions they are interested in, such as red light cameras or live police vehicles driving around.

A suspect using this application that maybe involved in car larcenies, barricaded in a house or a drug house for example would know how many police vehicles and from which direction they are approaching once they enter the one mile radius.

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Additional information on Trapster:

The below information was found on the provider's web site:

Understanding Types of Traps, and Confidence Ratings

Part of getting the most out of Trapster is understanding the different trap types and confidence levels that we use on the web and in the mobile applications. We've created a system that uses various icons and colors to denote different trap types, ie. red light cameras, and their associated user confidence level, so that you can visually add and identify the right traps. Given that Trapster's application is only

as good as the data that our community members (that's you) provide us, we think its important to dissect all the different trap types. At the end of the day we want you to feel confident that you're adding the right trap to the right location, or getting the most accurate speed trap notifications.

Confidence Levels



Green Trap Icons: Traps with a green icon indicate that the particular trap has been reported, but it has not been verified. The green color indicates a low confidence level because it has yet to be voted on, or confirmed, by users. Once a user votes using the "Thumbs Up" icon (in mobile applications this is sometimes a Yes or No option) on the Trapster Trapmap, or via a mobile application, the color will change.



Yellow Trap Icons: Traps with a yellow icon indicate that the trap in question has been verified by another user. Once another user takes an action to vote their approval on a green trap, the trap icon will change from green to yellow. When you see yellow traps in Trapster, you can have a little more confidence that these are accurate trap locations. Should you agree or disagree, make sure to add your vote by rating the trap yourself.



Red Trap Icons: This is the highest level of confidence because more users have voted to approve this particular trap. Traps with a red icon indicate the majority of Trapster users agree that this is a legitimate trap. Of course, your vote matters too, so whether you agree or disagree, make sure to add your vote.



Gray Trap Icons: Traps with a gray icon indicate the majority of Trapster users do not believe that this is an accurately reported trap. Since most of the votes are negative, gray traps have a very low confidence level, and though they remain in the system, you won't have to worry about receiving mobile notifications for them.

Live Police Trap



Live Police Traps indicate an active sighting of a police speed trap, or a police vehicle currently observing traffic. Examples of an accurately reported live police trap include police with a radar or laser trap set up, a motorcycle cop with a radar gun, an officer parked on a freeway or on-ramp, or a cruiser hiding near a stop sign to catch vehicles not coming to a complete stop. Live Police Traps automatically expire after one hour, unless other users confirm the live police trap with a positive vote. When reporting a Live Police Trap just remember that the trap should be a live speed trap, so it needs to be actually in progress, and potentially a threat to other drivers.

Police Often Hide Here



Do you know where the cops often camp out in your hometown, neighborhood, or metro area? You can use this knowledge and add Police Often Hide Here traps to the Trapmap on the web or from your phone to alert other drivers just passing through. We tend to see Trapster users reporting hiding spots in abundance, so before you add a new trap, check your surrounding area on the Trapmap for existing hiding spots. You can then add your vote of approval to the traps you believe are frequent hiding spots. Confirmed hiding spots (ie. Police Often Hide Here traps) will remain permanently reported on the Trapmap, unless they are voted down by a majority of users who disagree with the reported trap.

Red Light Camera



This is a red light camera



This is not a red light camera

We've all come to loathe red light cameras, you know those cameras that sit alongside tricky stop lights and capture photos of us as we accidentally (hopefully) run a red light. These are the worst, because they typically come with a hefty fine and there's very little we, as citizens, can do to dispute them. But please be careful not to confuse regular traffic surveillance cameras, found at almost every intersection in metro areas, with actual photo enforcement red light cameras that issue violations. The ones that issue violations have a large box that is the flasher unit. Those are valid Trapster entries. The small ones that are about the size of a big zucchini are not valid Trapster entries.

Red Light Camera traps will remain on the [Trapmap](#) unless a majority of users vote their disapproval on any given trap. Of course we'd love it if you reported and voted on all red light cameras in your area (you can use Street View in the Trapmap to confirm). By doing so, you'll help other Trapster users avoid these expensive traffic tickets.

Speed Camera



If you think red light cameras are obnoxious, then you'll probably want to be aware of the older and nastier cousin, the speed camera. These fixed photo enforcement speed cameras are typically mounted on

poles and monitor your speed as you cruise on the freeway, speedway, or highway. That's right, these little buggers are capturing your speed and will cost you a pricey ticket should you exceed the speeding limit by 10 mph or more. Unfortunately, more and more speed cameras are being installed across the globe (right now they're popular in Europe but they're starting to show up stateside), so make sure to use Trapster to receive audio alerts, and return the favor by identifying and reporting these cameras when you see them on the road. Just like the rest of fixed traps, Speed Camera traps will remain on the Trapmap unless a majority of users vote their disapproval. Speed cameras are certainly not a friend to drivers, so we hope you'll take the time to add and vote on these devilish traps.

Mobile Speed Camera



Now this is getting sneaky! Mobile speed cameras are just like speed cameras, but they travel inside moving vans. These vans typically park on the side of the road to capture moving violations in photo form as motorists drive by. Though not as prevalent as other speed traps, mobile speed vans are becoming more common, with usage already in the United States, Australia, and United Kingdom. So if you spot one of these sneaky vehicles trying to monitor speeding traffic on your commute, use the Trapmap and select Mobile Speed Camera as your trap type. Of course, you can also vote your approval or disapproval on existing traps in the system. Since these vans are mobile, and we work hard to keep information accurate and current, Mobile Speed Camera traps are live in the system for 2 hours after the last confirmed report.

Combo Camera



Combo cameras are exactly what they claim to be: combined red light and speed photo enforcement cameras. As if either camera wasn't potent enough alone, right? It follows then that these combo cameras will nab you for both running a red light and speeding while doing so. This makes it pretty futile to speed up when driving through intersections, especially if you see that unfortunate flash go off. Trapster treats Combo Camera traps like most of the others, so reported traps will remain on the Trapmap unless voted down by other users. As always, you can add Combo Camera traps from the web or your mobile application, and vote your approval or disapproval as well. We know keeping track of all the different trap types is tricky, but we hope we can help you distinguish between a red light camera, speed camera, and combo camera, so you can add them faster and receive more accurate alerts.

Checkpoint



Live police checkpoints include sobriety (D.U.I. or D.W.I) checkpoints, roadblocks, and police checkpoints. During holiday weekends, checkpoints are pretty common and can cause huge traffic jams and frustration, not to mention driver anxiety. Trapster can help you avoid these time consuming checkpoints, and get you to your destination with more time to enjoy your holiday. Checkpoint point traps remain live - and update you via audio alerts - until they expire 6 hours after the last confirmed vote of approval.

Note: Though all functions are available from this Web site, Trapster® is primarily a mobile phone application. Before you can start entering traps, from the site or your mobile phone, you must join the Trapster® community.