



## Frequently Asked Questions: Amarillo Traffic Signal Safety Program (ATSSP)

### What is a red-light running violation?

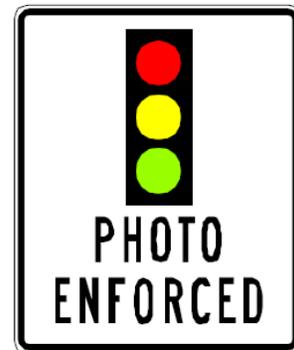
A red-light running violation occurs when a motorist enters an intersection after the traffic signal has turned red. Motorists already in the intersection when the signal changes to red, when waiting to turn for example, are not considered red-light violators.

### Where are the red-light cameras located?

Cameras are installed at six approaches located at five intersections based on accident and traffic volume statistics compiled by the Police and Traffic Engineering Departments. Each intersection is clearly marked with signs.

Intersections equipped with red-light camera systems are:

- Ross and I-40 South Frontage Road
- Pierce and SE 11th Avenue
- Coulter Street and I-40 North Frontage Road
- Coulter Street and Elmhurst Drive
- Amarillo Blvd. & Tascosa Road
- Amarillo Blvd. & Fillmore Street
- Amarillo Blvd. & Pierce Street
- Taylor Street & SE 10th Avenue



### Why did I receive this Notice of Violation?

Based upon images captured by the automated system, your vehicle was determined to have committed a red-light violation. As the owner of the vehicle, the Notice of Violation is mailed to you.

### What if the light was yellow?

The ATSSP only becomes active once the red light is showing. It will not capture a vehicle if the vehicle enters the intersection prior to the light changing to red. If you entered the intersection on yellow, it is legal to clear the intersection if the light turned red while you were still in the intersection.

### What if I am not the driver/owner of the vehicle at the time of the violation?

You may submit a Declaration of Non-liability if you are in the business of renting or leasing vehicles or if the vehicle was sold or reported stolen at the time of the violation. You may submit a sworn statement to that effect to the administrative hearing officer to rebut the presumption that you were driving the vehicle at the time of the violation. Using the envelope provided with the Violation, complete and mail a notarized Declaration to the City of Amarillo, Violation Processing Center, 209 W. Main St., Mesa AZ 85201.

## **What happens if I ignore the Notice of Violation?**

Failure to pay the civil penalty or to contest liability by the due date is an admission of liability and constitutes a waiver of the right to appeal under the City's ordinance. Failure to pay the civil penalty or to contest liability within the 30-days allowed will result in a \$25 late fee.

## **Will I receive any points on my driving record for this violation?**

The civil penalty may not be recorded on the owner's driving record and an arrest warrant may not be issued.

## **Will my insurance rates be affected?**

No, this is a civil infraction and is not reported to any insurance agencies.

## **Is this only a revenue generating program?**

This is a safety program. Automated signal safety systems have been shown to reduce red-light violations and intersection crashes. Numerous studies throughout the U.S., as well as the experience of many other cities, indicate significant decreases in red-light running violations and collisions after cameras were installed. Often times, a spillover effect results from automated enforcement. Other intersections not monitored by automated enforcement also see a decrease in violations and accidents because of the presence of enforcement in other areas of the community.

## **What if I was issued a citation from an officer for the same offense?**

The citation issued by a police officer takes precedence over the ATSSP Notice of Violation. You must submit copies of both the citation and the notice of violation to the Administrative Hearing Officer who will take the appropriate actions to cancel the ATSSP Notice of Violation.



## Red-light cameras increase safety by changing driver behavior in the long run

- In **Garland, Texas**, crashes caused by red-light runners decreased by 56 percent (from 43 crashes to 19) at the four intersections where red-light cameras were installed. Overall, crashes were reduced by 25 percent and all injury crashes were reduced by 27 percent.
- Following the first six months of operation of the Intersection Safety Program in **Houston, Texas**, Mayor Bill White reported a 30 percent decrease in overall crashes.
- From 1994-2005, red-light running violations decreased 73% in **New York City**.
- Accidents are down 11 percent in the intersections with red-light cameras in **Arnold, Missouri** according to Police Chief Robert Shockey. At the Rockport intersection located in front of a school, accidents are down 50 percent.
- According to a 2007 study completed by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, researchers tallied signal violations at intersections in **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** before and after red-light camera enforcement had been in effect for about one year and found the cameras reduced violations by 96 percent.
- During its first year of operation, the City of **Florissant, Missouri** saw a 51 percent reduction in citations at intersections with safety cameras.
- Since May 2007 the City of **St. Louis, Missouri** has experienced a 49 percent reduction in citations in their first two operational photo-enforced intersections.
- In **Calgary, Canada**, the City reports that there was a 29.4% decrease in the total number of right-angle collisions and a 39.4 percent decrease in the number of injury right-angle collisions, and a 100 percent decrease in the number of fatal right-angle collisions.
- The City of **Seattle, Washington** reports in their first 8 months of the program at their initial six camera sites, a 40 percent decrease in violations and injury accidents down the first year of operation.
- Statistics from the **Red Bank, Tennessee** Police Department show a 13.8 percent reduction in collisions citywide on a year-over-year basis. Collision reductions at camera-equipped intersections resulted in even greater reductions.



# Red-light running facts

## Red-light running is a dangerous and costly problem.

- Red-light running is the leading cause of urban crashes according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.
- The Federal Highway Administration site identifies Texas as one of the worst states for red-light running and red-light running crashes.
- In 2005, 165,000 injuries and over 800 fatalities in the U.S. were attributed to red-light running. There were over 1.8 million accidents at intersections.
- According to the Texas Department of Public Safety the estimated cost of red-light running is estimated to be at least \$1.4 billion annually.
- Texas lost 663 people to traffic signal crashes between 1992 and 1998, representing 11 percent of the nationwide total, as reported by Texas Department of Public Safety.



## A crash caused by a driver who runs a red light is more likely to result in serious injury or death.

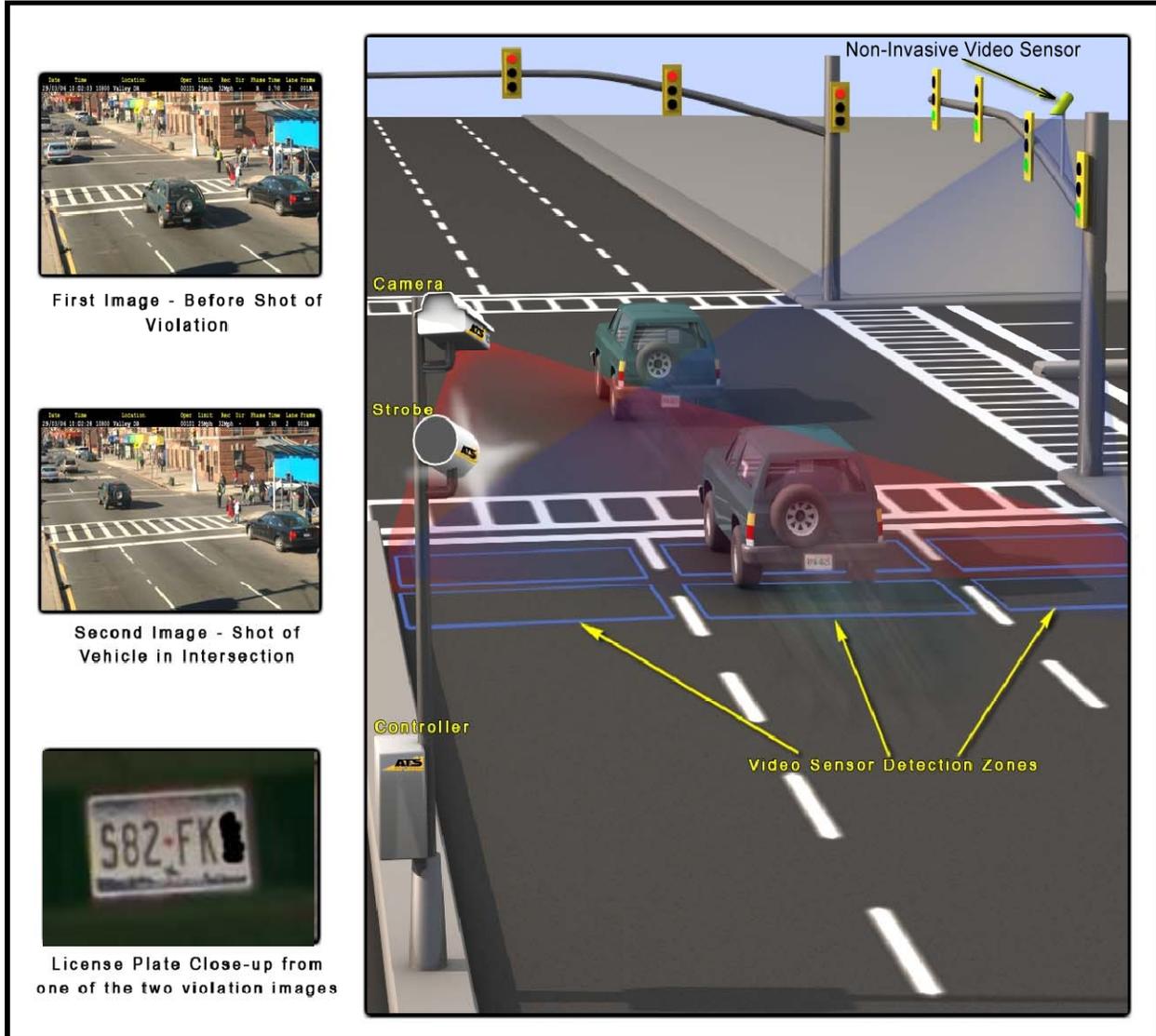
Deaths caused by red-light running are increasing at more than three times the rate of increase for all other fatal crashes.

More people are injured in crashes involving red-light running than in any other crash type.

## Most people run red lights because they are in a hurry, when in fact they only save seconds.

- Almost all drivers (96%) fear being struck by a red-light runner.
- A majority of Americans (56%) admit to running red lights.
- Red-light runners can be any one of us who drives.
- One in three Americans knows someone who has been injured or killed in a red-light running crash.
- Red-light running is often a result of aggressive driving, and is completely preventable.

## How a red-light camera works



The system is activated when motion is detected just prior to the white stop bar AFTER the traffic signal has turned red. The camera system takes a series of two images.

The first image shows the vehicle before crossing the white stop line after the red light was illuminated.

The second image shows the violator in the middle of the intersection with the red light illuminated.

The license plate image is a close-up from one of the images captured.

Data including the time, date, and duration of the yellow and red lights is also recorded.

# What to do if you receive a Notice of Violation

## How much is the civil penalty?

The civil penalty is \$75.00 for each offense. After the due date, a late fee of \$25.00 will be added to the civil penalty.

## How much time do I have to pay my Notice of Violation?

If your payment is not received or a hearing is not requested by the 30<sup>th</sup> day after the violation date indicated on your notice, a \$25.00 late fee may be added to the \$75.00 fine amount.

## What are my options?

There are three options.

### 1. Pay the fine.

- **Pay Online.** Logon to [www.ViolationInfo.com](http://www.ViolationInfo.com) by entering your Notice number and Pin number shown in the red box on the front right of your notice. Click the Pay button. There is a convenience fee of \$4.00 that will be assessed at the time of payment.
- **Pay by Mail.** Mail your check or money order (payable to the City of Amarillo) in the enclosed envelope along with the coupon printed at the bottom of the reverse side of the notice. The processing center mailing address is:  
City of Amarillo  
Automated Intersection Safety Program  
P.O. Box 742503  
Cincinnati, OH 45274-2503.
- **Pay by Credit Card.** Call toll free 1-866-790-4111 between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. CST. There is a convenience fee of \$4.00 that will be assessed at the time of payment.
- **Pay in Person.** You may pay in person by appearing at the Amarillo Municipal Court building located at 201 SE 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. or at City Hall located at 509 E 7<sup>th</sup> Ave.

### 2. Contest the Notice of Violation.

You must request an administrative hearing in writing before the due date listed on the top and bottom right of your Notice of Violation. Remove the coupon located at the bottom of the Notice of Violation, sign the back and mail it in the enclosed envelope.

### 3. Submit an Affidavit stating you were not driving the car.

You may only submit a Declaration of Non-liability if at the time of the violation one of the following was true:

1. Vehicle was stolen (must provide police report)
2. Vehicle was sold (must provide valid proof of sale)
3. Your company is in the business of leasing or renting vehicles and the vehicle was leased or rented at the time of the violation (must provide lease or rental agreement)

You may obtain a Declaration of Non-liability by visiting [www.ViolationInfo.com](http://www.ViolationInfo.com) or the City's web site at [www.amarillo.gov](http://www.amarillo.gov). This affidavit must be filled out accurately and in its entirety, and it must be notarized. Mail the Declaration and pertinent information to: City of Amarillo, Violation Processing Center, 209 W. Main St., Mesa AZ 85201.



**ViolationInfo.com**

Enter your Notice # and Pin #, then press Login:

Notice #:

PIN #:

Login Help

Privacy Policy **Axis VPS**  
VIOLATION PROCESSING SYSTEM

Visit [www.ViolationInfo.com](http://www.ViolationInfo.com) to view information about your Notice of Violation. You will be asked to enter your Notice number and PIN number which are found on the **front** of your Warning or Notice of Violation, in the **upper right or left corner**, inside the red box. *By clicking on the above graphic you will leave the City of Amarillo Web site.*



City of Amarillo, Texas  
 Traffic Signal Safety Program  
 Mail to:  
 209 W. Main Street  
 Mesa, AZ 85201

# NOTICE OF VIOLATION

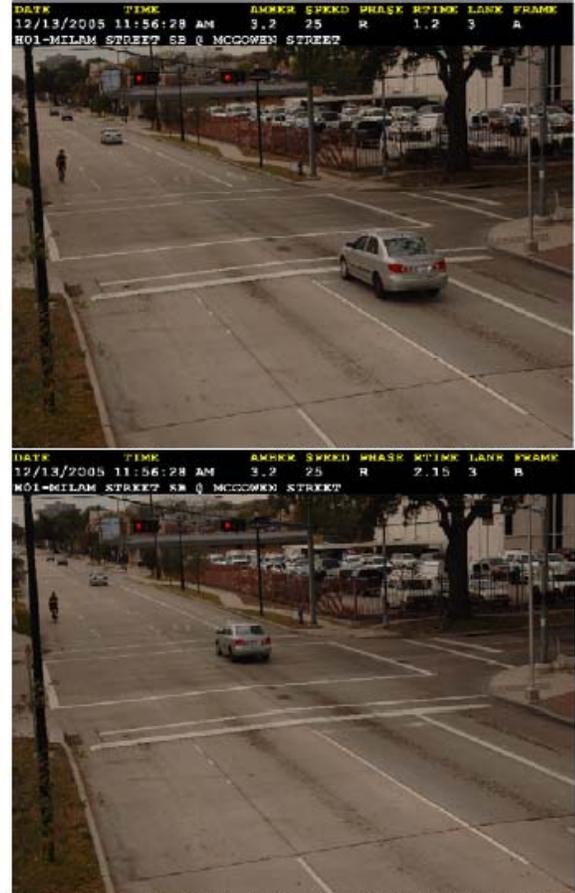
NOTICE #: 0730500012345  
 PIN #: 1234

Amount Due: \$75.00  
 Due Date: Issue + 30



**JOHN A SMITH**  
**123 MAIN STREET**  
**AMARILLO, TX 79101**

ON/ABOUT (Date) 08/08/2007	AT TIME 11:56 AM	AT LOCATION MILAM STREET SB @ MCGOWAN STREET			
NAME John A Smith					
STREET ADDRESS 123 Main Street					
CITY Amarillo	STATE TX	ZIP CODE 79101			
DID UNLAWFULLY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OPERATE / DRIVE <input type="checkbox"/> PARK					
V E H I C L E	YEAR 2005	MAKE Toyota	MODEL Camry	STYLE 4-door	COLOR Silver
	L I C	NUMBER R86BZS	STATE TX	YEAR 2005	
DID THEN AND THERE COMMIT THE FOLLOWING OFFENSE. THE FACTS SUPPORTING THIS BELIEF ARE AS FOLLOWS: Failure to Stop at a Red Light					
IN VIOLATION OF: Automated Red Light Enforcement Ordinance # 7091			<input type="checkbox"/> RSM <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORD.		
City of Amarillo Employee			DATE 08/12/2007		
First Initial Last Name		EMP ID	(same as Issue Date)		
ON INFORMATION, THE CITY OF AMARILLO CHARGES THE VIOLATOR AND INFORMS THE COURT THAT THE ABOVE FACTS ARE TRUE AND PUNISHABLE BY A: CIVIL PENALTY OF \$75.00			ISSUE DATE 08/18/07		



Pay with your Visa or MasterCard at [www.ViolationInfo.com](http://www.ViolationInfo.com) or mail your check or money order with this coupon to the address below



NAME: JOHN A SMITH	DUE: Issue + 30
NOTICE #: 0730500012345	VERSION: 1
PLATE: R86BZS	STATE: TX
	TYPE:

City of Amarillo, Texas  
 Traffic Signal Safety Program  
 PO Box 742503  
 Cincinnati, OH 45274-2503

- ✓ Si necesitas ayuda en Español, favor de llamar al 1-866-790-4111.
- ✓ Make your check or money order payable to the City of Amarillo, Texas
- ✓ DO NOT MAIL CASH
- ✓ Write the Notice # on the front of your payment
- ✓ Insert this tear-off coupon in the enclosed envelope with the address (at the right) showing through the window
- ✓ Payment is admission of liability.
- ✓ To avoid late fees, you must respond to this Notice (payment received or a hearing request) before the due date indicated above.

**AMOUNT DUE: \$75.00**

1 0730500012345 000000014841 075006

## **I have received multiple Notices of Violation; do I have to send in a payment for each?**

No, you may send one check in one envelope – but you must include coupons for each violation you received. If you received three violation notices, you may send in one check and three coupons but write each notice number on your check.

## **What if my check bounces?**

You will be responsible for a returned check fee of \$25.00 for handling the bounced check – in addition to any late fees and the original fine amount. You will receive a letter from the City of Amarillo detailing the new amount due.

## **Can I make payments in installments or set up a payment plan?**

Payment plans are not available. You must pay your ticket by the due date or be subject to a \$25.00 late fee. Once you have received a second notice with the late fee attached you will have approximately 30 days before the delinquent fine is sent to collections.

## **My payment has already been sent; will I still be charged late fees?**

Late fees will NOT be assessed if your payment is received in a timely fashion.

## **I paid the violation; why did I receive another notice?**

The notice you just received could be for additional violations or it could be a second notice that is now a past due notice. If it is a past due notice, chances are that your payment and the notice crossed in the mail. It can take as many as 10 business days to show in the system once it has reached our office. Call 1-866-790-4111 to confirm that your payment was received.

## **What is the Refund Policy?**

A refund check may be issued under the following circumstances:

- Duplicate and/or overpayment of a Notice of Violation
- Overpayment of the Notice of Violation as a result of a Hearing or Appeal.

If you feel you are entitled to a refund, please submit your request on the Red Light Refund Form. Send the completed form to the address specified at the top of the form.

## **Do I have to pay my civil penalty the day of the hearing?**

You must pay the full civil penalty amount within 30 days of a liable judgment.

## **What happens if I do not pay the Notice of Violation?**

Failure to pay the civil penalty within the time allowed will result in a \$25 late fee.

## **I do not believe I ran a red light. Where can I go to view my images and video?**

Log on to [www.ViolationInfo.com](http://www.ViolationInfo.com). To log on to the site you must enter the Notice Number and the PIN Number located at the top right of your Notice of Violation.

You may also access the website at all Amarillo Public Library locations:

- Central Library 413 SE 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- North Branch Library 1500 NE 24<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- East Branch Library 2232 E 27<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- Northwest Branch Library 6100 W 9<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- Southwest Branch Library 6801 W 45<sup>th</sup> Ave.

You may also obtain information by scheduling an appointment with the Traffic Engineering Department by calling (806) 378-6296.

### **I don't believe I ran a red light and want to discuss my case with someone.**

You **must** request an administrative hearing before the due date listed on the top and bottom right of your Notice of Violation. Remove the coupon located at the bottom of the Notice of Violation. Sign the back and mail it in the envelope provided to request a review of your Notice of Violation before an Administrative Hearing Officer as detailed in the Ordinance.

### **What is an administrative hearing?**

An administrative hearing is an opportunity in which you may appear in front of a city-appointed officer and discuss the circumstances surrounding your Notice of Violation. As detailed in the ordinance section below, you may schedule a hearing to contest the imposition of the civil penalty.

#### **Sec. 16-3-382 (a) Administrative hearing**

### **How much do I have to pay for an administrative hearing?**

There is no charge or cost to request an administrative hearing. A person who is found liable for a civil penalty after an administrative hearing shall pay the civil penalty and costs within thirty (30) days of the hearing.

### **Can I schedule a hearing?**

You must schedule a hearing in writing. Sign the coupon located on the bottom back of your Notice of Violation and mail it to the address shown. The signed coupon must be mailed on or before the due date of your Notice of Violation. You will be notified by mail of the scheduled date and time for your hearing.

(a) A person who receives a notice of violation may contest the imposition of the civil penalty by requesting, in writing, an administrative hearing of the civil penalty within 30 days after receipt of the notice of violation.

### **I am Disabled and unable to appear in court for my hearing.**

You must respond to your Notice of Violation on or before your due date. If you wish to contest the Notice of Violation, you do not need to appear before the Administrative Hearing Officer. However you must submit in writing, on or before your due date, a copy of your disabled placard and a written explanation of your actions or concerns. This written explanation will be reviewed and a decision will be issued by mail. Please call

Violations Processing Center / Amarillo Customer Service Center at 1-866-790-4111 for additional information.

### **Can I make a hearing request over the phone?**

No, all requests must be in writing.

### **What day and time are the hearings scheduled, and how long does it take?**

Hearings are held on **Wednesdays between 9 am and Noon**. Hearings last from 10 to 15 minutes and will be scheduled accordingly.

### **Can someone other than me attend the hearing?**

Only you or your legal counsel may appear at an adjudicative hearing.

### **Is there more than one place that I can attend my hearing?**

No.

### **Can I bring a lawyer to the hearing with me?**

Yes.

### **Under what circumstances can this notice be dismissed?**

The City of Amarillo Code of Ordinance No. 2091 Sec. 16-3-382 (d), Affirmative Defenses, defines 8 reasons that a Notice of Violation issued under the ordinance may be dismissed. The reasons are if:

- (1) The traffic-control signal was faulty;
- (2) The operator of the motor vehicle was acting in compliance with the lawful order or direction of a police officer or other person directing traffic at the request of a police officer, or was a participant in an authorized funeral procession or parade that had the right-of-way through the intersection in disregard of the red signal;
- (3) The operator of the motor vehicle disregarded the traffic control signal to safely yield the right-of-way to and make a path for an immediately approaching authorized emergency vehicle;
- (4) The suspect motor vehicle was operating as an authorized emergency vehicle;
- (5) The motor vehicle was a stolen vehicle being operated by a person without the effective consent of the Owner;
- (6) The license plate depicted in the Recorded Image of the violation was a stolen plate being displayed on a motor vehicle other than the motor vehicle for which the plate was issued;
- (7) The presence of ice, snow, unusual amounts of rain or other unusual hazardous road condition existed that would make compliance with this Article more dangerous under the circumstances than disregarding the traffic control signal and, the disregard of such signal did not cause an accident or require evasive maneuver by another driver or pedestrian; or
- (8) The person who received the notice of violation was not the Owner of the motor vehicle at the time of the violation, as evidenced by a proper and prior transfer or assignment of the State-issued certificate of title for that motor vehicle.

**Section 16-3-382 (e)** To demonstrate that at the time of the violation the motor vehicle was a stolen vehicle or the license plate displayed on the motor vehicle was a stolen plate, the owner must submit proof acceptable to the hearing officer that the theft of the

vehicle or license plate had been timely reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

### **If I disagree with the Administrative Hearing Officer's findings and want to appeal the decision, what do I do?**

You may appeal a liable decision by filing a notice of appeal and paying a non-refundable filing fee of \$27.00, in person, with the Chief Clerk of the Municipal Court within 31 days of the Hearing Officer's findings.

### **What is an appeal?**

#### **Sec. 16-3-383. Appeal**

A person who is found liable after an administrative hearing may appeal that finding of civil liability to the Municipal Court of the City of Amarillo by filing a Notice of Appeal with the Clerk of the Municipal Court. The Notice of Appeal must be filed not later than the 31st day after the date on which the Administrative Hearing Officer entered the finding of civil liability. If the Notice of Appeal is not timely filed, the right of appeal is waived.

Unless the person, on or before the filing of the Notice of Appeal, posts a bond in the total amount of the penalty, fees and costs, an appeal does not stay the enforcement of the civil penalty. The Municipal Court shall determine an appeal by trial de novo. Affidavits submitted at the Administrative Hearing to establish the reliability of the photographic traffic signal enforcement system shall be admitted in the trial de novo. The facts must be proven by a preponderance of the evidence.

A person found liable by the Municipal Court shall pay an appellate filing fee of 27.00 in addition to the civil penalty and any other costs and fees due the City of Amarillo. The court is authorized to immediately collect the civil penalty by cash, credit card, or by immediately proceeding against any bond posted by the person.

### **How do I know that these violations are valid?**

Images of your vehicle were captured and recorded by an automated intersection safety system. You can review your images and video of the actual occurrence online. The images and video were reviewed by several qualified technicians and finally by the Amarillo Police Department before the alleged civil infraction was affirmed and mailed to you as the registered owner. You have the option of contesting the Notice of Violation by requesting in writing an administrative hearing, at which time you may discuss the validity of the images and video captured on the date and time detailed on the Notice of Violation.

### **What if the camera was not working or was defective?**

If you look at the front of the Notice of Violation – at the paragraph under the close-up of your license plate – the Amarillo Police Department states in the first sentence that the Automated Intersection Safety System was operating correctly at the time of this violation.

### **What company provides the red-light camera program in Amarillo?**

The City of Amarillo has contracted with American Traffic Solutions Inc. to provide the red-light camera enforcement program. ATS will install and maintain all equipment related to this program and process all violations before forwarding the data to the Amarillo Police Department for their review and issuance. More information about ATS is available at [www.atsol.com](http://www.atsol.com).