

Pohatcong Township red-light cameras to start watching intersections at midnight

Published: Tuesday, August 23, 2011, 9:47 PM Updated: Tuesday, August 23, 2011, 9:54 PM

By **Sarah M. Wojcik | The Express-Times**

Red-light runners beware.

Cameras in two busy Pohatcong Township intersections are switching on at midnight to begin watching for drivers disobeying traffic lights.

For the next 30 days, violators will receive a warning notice in the mail, but by the end of September, each violation will cost \$85.

The cameras are going live at two township intersections: Route 22 and New Brunswick Avenue and Route 22 and County Route 519. Township council voted to approve the program and install the cameras in late June.

“This warning period will give residents an opportunity to become familiar with the red-light system,” Police Chief Paul Hager said in a statement. **“This is a public safety program and our goal is to deter red-light runners and prevent the ongoing collisions we have been investigating at the intersections resulting from these violations.”**

The township has been accepted into a five-year pilot program, Red Light Running Automated Enforcement, by the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

Mayor James Kern III said he was excited to see the cameras up and running.

“The amount of near-accidents that I see when I go through (the intersections) is just incredible. Hopefully this will deter people from doing this,” Kern said. **“Just the idea of there being a camera there might deter people from potentially causing an accident.”**



Express-Times File Photo | TIM WYNKOOP

A worker from American Traffic Solutions, of Scottsdale, Ariz., installs a red-light photo camera system Aug. 8 on a pole on Route 22 east at Route 519 in Pohatcong Township.

The cameras operate 24/7 and will snap a photo of a vehicle that crosses into the intersection after the light turns red. Warning signs approaching the intersection alert drivers that the area is under surveillance, Hager said.

Kern said he feels he can assuage most people's concerns about the red-light cameras since police officers will review the photos.

"I think it's important to note that there is an officer that reviews every summons. We're going to look for blatant violations," Kern said. **"There's still going to be that officer discretion involved."**