

## **DOTD** District Map

**District 2:** Jefferson, Lafourche, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, Terrebonne  
**504-437-3100**

**District 3:** Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, Vermilion  
**337-262-6100**

**District 4:** Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, DeSoto, Red River, Webster  
**318-549-8300**

**District 5:** East Carroll, Jackson, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Union, West Carroll  
**318-342-0100**

**District 7:** Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis  
**337-437-9100**

**District 8:** Avoyelles, Grant, Natchitoches, Rapides, Sabine, Vernon, Winn  
**318-561-5100**

**District 58:** Caldwell, Catahoula, Concordia, Franklin, La Salle, Tensas  
**318-412-3100**

**District 61:** Ascension, Assumption, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Pointe Coupee, St. James, West Baton Rouge, West Feliciana  
**225-231-4100**

**District 62:** Livingston, St. Helena, St. John, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Washington  
**985-375-0100**

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

*A speed study can be initiated in response to a public official or a local resident request for a speed limit review.*



**STATE LAW RS 32:61** *establishes the following speed limits unless otherwise posted*



Speed limit on any highway in Louisiana should not exceed 55 mph unless:

- ▶ It is a multi-lane divided highway.  
**Speed Required by Statute: 65 mph**
- ▶ It is an interstate or controlled access highway.  
**Speed Required by Statute: 70 mph**



1201 Capitol Access Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802  
www.dotd.la.gov  
(877) 452-3683



## **Speed Limit** What you Need to Know



### **Want more information?**

You can find information at DOTD's website:  
[www.dotd.la.gov](http://www.dotd.la.gov)



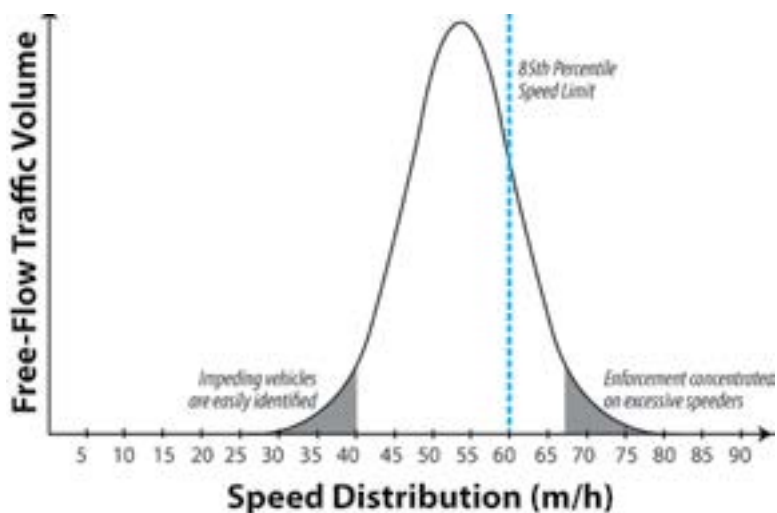
Setting speed limits is primarily a road safety measure. Speed limits are posted to inform motorists what reasonable speed must be followed. Many factors are considered when determining the proper speed limit. This brochure is dedicated to explaining the process and the information that is considered.

### How are Speed Limits Set?

DOTD is authorized to set speed limits only on state-owned roadways. For speed limits to be set on the state highway system, a traffic and engineering study is required since data collection is an integral part of this process. Several types of data, including speed, crash, and roadway environment information, are vital to this procedure.

Moreover, the speed limit is set using the administrative rule at the **85th percentile** speed, which is the speed at which 85 percent of the vehicles are traveling at or below. Basically, 15 percent of vehicles go faster than this speed, and 85 percent go at or below this speed.

To ensure a true reflection of a normal traffic situation, speed checks are made on average weekdays during off-peak hours, under favorable weather conditions.



#### DID YOU KNOW?

DOTD is authorized to set speed limits only on state-owned roadways. For all other instances, it is the responsibility of the local governments.



### Types of Speed Limits

Speed limits may be classified as **statutory regulations** or **speed zoning regulations**.

All Louisiana roads have **statutory speed limits** which are established by the state law under [RS 32:61](#). (See back panel for more information)

Traffic studies are performed as needed or when a request is received to determine if these statutory speeds are appropriate.

**Speed zoning regulations** are used where statutory limits do not fit. In these cases, speed zones are established to reflect the safe maximum reasonable speed.

This type of speed limit is determined through valid traffic engineering speed surveys of a balanced sample for each road classification (e.g. rural expressways, residential streets, primary arterials, etc.).

### Can Speed Limit Be Set Too Low?

Safety is DOTD's No. 1 concern. The goal has always been to set speed limits that motorists follow and help to maximize safety. By using sound engineering principles, DOTD is able to provide an efficient, balanced, and safe transportation system.

Unfortunately, most traffic problems are not simple and require complex solutions. Many believe that lowering the speed limit is always the best solution, but in reality it is just a simple solution which can be unsafe.

Rarely does a single traffic control solution solve the issue. At times, other speed control devices may be installed like flashing beacons, pavement markings and raised pavement markings.

In addition, research has shown that speed limits set below the 85th percentile speed do not significantly reduce the number of roadway crashes. In fact, crashes may increase due to unreasonable low speed limits.

Also, there is a disadvantage to setting speed limits far below the 85th percentile speed. If reasonable drivers see an unreasonable low speed limit, they will ignore the signs and will become unobservant to all speed limit signs.

Lastly, setting the posted speed limit below the 85th percentile speed will cause an increase in the relative speed differential between the slower and faster moving vehicles. In general, highways operate safest when vehicles travel in the same direction at or near the same speed.



### What is a Speed Study?

A speed study is a common traffic investigation which can be requested by the public or local government. Its result shows a true reflection of a normal traffic situation by conducting speed checks on average weekdays during off-peak hours, under favorable weather conditions.

On an average, a speed study can take up to 90 days from when a request is received to when a report is generated.



### When should a traffic study be conducted?

- ▶ A new development is proposed and it will generate substantial new traffic.
- ▶ A major roadway improvement or reconstruction project is proposed.
- ▶ An existing transportation problem such as a high crash location is evident.
- ▶ At the judgment or discretion of jurisdiction staff based on unusual circumstances.
- ▶ A new construction or reconstruction of a roadway has been completed.