

**ORDINANCE NO. 9559 (New Series)**

**AN ORDINANCE ADDING DIVISION 10 TO TITLE 7 OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY CODE OF REGULATORY ORDINANCES RELATING TO TRAFFIC REGULATIONS IN THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO TO PROHIBIT SPECTATORS AT ILLEGAL SPEED CONTESTS**

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The Board of Supervisors of the County of San Diego ordains as follows:

Division 10 (commencing with section 710.101) is added to Title 7 of the San Diego County Code to read as follows:

**DIVISION 10. SPECTATORS PROHIBITED AT ILLEGAL SPEED CONTESTS OR EXHIBITIONS OF SPEED**

**SEC. 710.101 Purpose**

The Board of Supervisors finds and declares that pursuant to California Vehicle Code Section 23109, motor vehicle speed contests and exhibitions of speed conducted on public streets and highways are illegal. Motor vehicle speed contests and exhibitions of speed are more commonly known as street races or drag races.

Streets within the County of San Diego have been the site of continuing and escalating illegal street racing over the past several years. Such street racing threatens the health and safety of the public, interferes with pedestrian and vehicular traffic, creates a public nuisance, and interferes with the right of private business owners to enjoy the use of their property within the County of San Diego. The illegal street races occur on a regular basis on various streets within the County. Hundreds of racers and spectators gather on these streets late at night and in the early morning hours, blocking the streets and sidewalks to traffic, forming a racetrack area, placing bets, and otherwise encouraging, aiding and abetting the racing process.

Illegal street racers accelerate to high speeds without regard to oncoming traffic, pedestrians, or vehicles parked or moving nearby. The racers drive quickly from street to street, race for several hours, and then move to other locations upon the arrival of the police. Those who participate in this illegal activity are very sophisticated, using cell phones, police scanners, and other electronic devices to communicate with each other to avoid arrest. They also use the Internet to provide information on where to race, and give advice on how to avoid detection and prosecution. Traffic accidents, property crimes, and calls for police service have increased dramatically.

In most cases, illegal street races attract hundreds of spectators. Knowingly present spectators who purposefully watch illegal street racing encourage these illegal activities. Without the presence of spectators who watch these illegal races much of the

sport in illegal street racing would be eliminated.

This division makes evidence of specified prior acts admissible to show the propensity of the defendant to be present at or attend illegal street races, if the prior act or acts occurred within three years of the presently charged offense.

This division is adopted to prohibit spectators at illegal street races with the aim of significantly curbing this criminal activity. The division targets a very clear, limited population and gives proper notice to citizens as to what activities are lawful and what activities are unlawful. In discouraging spectators, the act of organizing and participating in illegal street races will be discouraged.

### **SEC. 710.102 Definitions**

(a) “Illegal motor vehicle speed contest” or “illegal exhibition of speed” means any speed contest or exhibition of speed referred to in California Vehicle Code Sections 23109(a) and 23109(c).

(b) For purposes of section 710.103, “event” means any speed contest or exhibition of speed referred to in California Vehicle Code Sections 23109(a) and 23109(c).

(c) Preparations for the illegal motor vehicle speed contest or illegal exhibition of speed include, but are not limited to, situations in which: (1) a group of motor vehicles or individuals has arrived at a location for the purpose of participating in or being spectators at the event; (2) a group of individuals has lined one or both sides of a public street or highway for the purpose of participating in or being a spectator at the event; (3) one or more individuals has impeded the free public use of a public street or highway by actions, words, or physical barriers for the purpose of conducting the event; (4) two or more vehicles have lined up with motors running for an illegal motor vehicle speed contest or exhibition of speed; (5) one or more drivers is revving his engine or spinning his tires in preparation for the event; or (6) an individual is stationed at or near one or more motor vehicles serving as a race starter.

(d) “Spectator” means any individual who is within 200 feet of an illegal motor vehicle speed contest or exhibition of speed, or at a location where preparations are being made for such activities, for the purpose of viewing, observing, watching, or witnessing the event as it progresses. Spectator includes any individual within 200 feet of the event without regard to whether the individual arrived at the event by driving a vehicle, riding as a passenger in a vehicle, walking, or arriving by some other means.

### **SEC. 710. 103 Spectator at Illegal Speed Contest or Exhibitions of Speed-- Violation**

(a) Any individual who is knowingly present as a spectator, either on a public street or highway at an illegal motor vehicle speed contest or exhibition of speed, with the intent to be present at such illegal speed contest or exhibition of speed, is

guilty of a misdemeanor subject to a maximum of six months in jail and a fine of \$1,000.00.

- (b) Any individual who is knowingly present as a spectator, either on a public street or highway, where preparations are being made for an illegal motor vehicle speed contest or exhibition of speed, with the intent to be present at such illegal speed contest or exhibition of speed, is guilty of a misdemeanor subject to a maximum of six months in jail and a fine of \$1,000.00.
- (c) Exemption: Nothing in this section prohibits law enforcement officers or their agents from being spectators at illegal motor vehicle speed contests or exhibitions of speed in the course of their duties.

#### **SEC. 710.104 Relevant Circumstances to Prove a Violation**

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, to prove a violation of Section 710.103, admissible evidence may include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- (a) the time of day;
- (b) the nature and description of the scene;
- (c) the number of people at the scene;
- (d) the location of the individual charged in relation to any individual or group present at the scene;
- (e) the number and description of the motor vehicles at the scene;
- (f) that the individual charged drove or was transported to the scene;
- (g) that the individual charged has previously participated in an illegal motor vehicle speed contest or exhibition of speed;
- (h) that the individual charged has previously aided and abetted an illegal motor vehicle speed contest or exhibition of speed;
- (i) that the individual charged has previously attended an illegal motor vehicle speed contest or exhibition of speed;
- (j) that the individual charged previously was present at a location where preparations were being made for an illegal speed contest or exhibition of speed or where an exhibition of speed or illegal motor vehicle speed contest was in progress.

#### **SEC. 710.105 Admissibility of Prior Acts**

The list of circumstances set forth in Section 710.104 is not exclusive. Evidence of prior acts may be admissible to show the propensity of the defendant to be present at or attend an illegal motor vehicle speed contest or exhibition of speed, if the prior act or acts occurred within three years of the presently charged offense. These prior acts may always be admissible to show knowledge on the part of the defendant that a speed contest or exhibition of speed was taking place at the time of the presently charged offense. Prior acts are not limited to those that occurred within the County of San Diego.

Passed and adopted this 17<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2003.