

'I'm sorry officer; I got here as fast as I could.'

'I'm sorry officer, but I was trying to blow the snow off my windows.'

'Officer, I wasn't really speeding, but my air conditioner is broken and I was trying to fight off heat exhaustion by making a faster breeze. You wouldn't want me to pass out behind the wheel and cause an accident would you?'

'I was almost out of gas and I was speeding so I could get to a gas station before I ran out.'

'I was going too fast to see the sign.'

'I'm in a hurry cause I messed my pants and that's why I don't have any pants on. And uh, no I don't have a drivers licence.'

'Well, I do have a pilot's licence, too. Would that help?'

'Officer, I have a trial pair of those coloured contact lenses, I can't see my speedometer clearly.'



York Regional Police Sgt. David Mitchell has heard every excuse.

STAFF PHOTO/BILL ROBERTS

EXCUSES, EXCUSES

BY MARTIN DERBYSHIRE
Staff Writer

Excuses, excuses. Get caught speeding and everybody's got one.

"People's excuses for speeding are always interesting," York Regional Police traffic unit Sgt. Dave Mitchell said. "We keep a list of the good one liners."

Some of them even work.

"We caught one guy speeding who said he just washed his car and was air drying it; He got a ticket," Sgt. Mitchell said.

"I had to go to the bathroom," is a very common excuse or 'I'm not feeling well,' 'I'm going to the hospital,' and 'it's an emergency.' Then we hear things like, 'Officer, I just bought new shoes and the thicker soles are forcing me to push down harder.' We had one guy who said he was just fitted

for a new prosthetic leg and it's a little longer than his last one."

The Ontario Provincial Police summer cottage patrol, a traffic safety blitz program focussing on Hwy. 404 and Hwy. 400 headed north through York Region to cottage country, has become quite famous for the funny things officers hear.

Sgt. Cam Wooley writes down all the odd things he and others find out on the road.

"After 27 years, I've heard so many bad excuses for speeding, I don't remember half of them," he said.

Over the Canada Day weekend, Sgt. Wooley said the OPP encountered such beauties as:

• A woman caught speeding on Hwy. 400 in Aurora who parked in the passing lane when she was pulled over. She said she

thought it was against the law to drive on the shoulder;

• A man caught speeding at 148 km/h who said he'd seen so many other cruisers out on the road, he figured there couldn't be any more left; and

• A man caught going 155 km/h. He asked officers to give him a break considering he just got out a jail for driving under suspension.

A lot of what officers find is hilarious, but speed is no joke.

In 2004, 41 people were killed on York Region roads, many as a direct result of speeding.

"The excuses don't seem so funny when you have to perform the unfortunate task of telling a family their loved one is never coming home again. There's never ever an easy way of doing that," Sgt. Mitchell said.

'Officer, it's a Lamborghini. Come on, I was only in second gear.'

'Impossible officer. My car has some problem, it would shake apart at that speed.'

'Yeah, I know I was speeding, but you are a York cop, and I'm on Hwy. 404. You can't give me a ticket, ha.'

'No officer, I had my cruise control on, therefore you are wrong. And by the way, I pay your wages.'

'I was just trying out my nitrous oxide system.'

'Yes sir, I realized I was speeding, but I have the worst diarrhea and you can follow me home to get the evidence if you want.' The officer replied, "But your home is a couple blocks in the other direction!"

'I'm an idiot. I was looking right at you. Cops don't have motorcycles in my hometown.'

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