

## **Speed Control, Speed Bumps and Radar Signs**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Speed Control**

Public Works does not have the ability to control speeds along a roadway. We oversee the maintenance of our 850-mile County road network including 200 bridges. 850 miles of roadway is an equivalent of a roadway stretching from Klamath Falls to San Diego. This does not include City, State, or Federal Roads....the total mileage of all roads in Klamath County is closer to 4,000.

The decision to exceed a speed limit is an individual driver decision. Sadly, more and more drivers are exceeding the speed limits as population grows and cars become safer (and proper defensive driving skills are taught but increasingly ignored). Speed limits are created by the State and passed down to Cities and Counties. Speed limits are enforced by City Police, State Patrol, or County Law Enforcement. Public Works can be involved in the process but the rules and regulations and enforcement are out of our control.

#### **Speed Bumps**

Speed bumps are a safety liability (think of an out of town motorcyclist finding a speed bump in the middle of the night) and speed bumps do not work very well in conjunction with snow/ice removal in the winter months. We do not have any speed bumps on our County road network in Klamath County. Speed bumps slow down emergency vehicles and obstruct large vehicles, they distract drivers who focus more on slowing down than on pedestrians around them, and they are hazardous to cyclists. Speed bumps penalize all road users, which is unfair to the motorists that obey traffic laws. Speed bumps also increase noise and fuel consumption due to deceleration and acceleration associated with the bump.

#### **Radar Signs**

Public Works has one set of permanent radar feedback signs in our entire 850-mile County road network. Our radar feedback sign is on Harlan Drive east of Homedale. After it was initially installed, we measured speeds and the speeds were reduced by a few miles per hour. A few years later we measured the speeds and there is no reduction compared to before the signs were installed (and we continue to get complaints from the neighboring property owners about excessive speeds). Public Works spent about \$10,000 for the equipment purchase and labor for installation. Eventually we will be faced with replacing it (or removing it) when the LED's burn out, radar system breaks, solar panel stops working, or batteries become obsolete.

We receive (almost weekly) requests for radar feedback signs and/or speed bumps, The only insight that Public Works can offer is that all of us need to better educate our young drivers how to obey traffic laws, drive defensively, put down the cell phone, and leave 5 minutes earlier to make an appointment. Additional law enforcement only works when law enforcement is present...as soon as the patrol leaves old "speeding" habits start to reappear. As a society, we do not have enough resources or funds to have law enforcement on all roadways. Possible temporary solution would be to put up and take down radar feedback signs. Temporary radar feedback seems to work in the short term (similar to having a patrol presence) but the impact is short lived after the signs are removed. Unfortunately, the installation and removal of temporary signs takes time and resources and there are 850 miles of roads that could use the same treatment.

**I am still confused. Who can answer my questions?**

For information about county roads, local access roads, and dedicated ways, please call us at (541) 883-4696. For information about federal forest roads, you should contact the appropriate federal agency and for information about any road within city limits, please call the appropriate city (City of Klamath Falls, Bonanza, Chiloquin, Merrill, Malin). For state highways, please contact the Oregon Department of Transportation at (541) 883-5662.