# Oregon Department of Transportation

Transportation Safety Division

Mobile Photo Radar Speed Enforcement

on Interstate Highway Work Zones

2017 Fact Sheet

In an effort to make highway construction work zones safer for highway workers and the public, the Oregon Department of Transportation, in partnership with Portland Police Bureau, periodically enforces speed laws through the use of photo radar.

ODOT has contracted with Portland Police Bureau, through a grant from the Transportation Safety Division, to provide photo radar speed enforcement on interstate highways. The purpose of these efforts is to increase safety in the work zone.

## Legislature authorized use of the tool

The 2007 Oregon Legislature authorized a pilot project giving ODOT the authority to use photo radar as a speed enforcement tool in highway work zones in limited situations. In 2013, the Legislature made the legislation permanent on all state highways and expanded the circumstances under which it could be used.

* The first project ODOT researched was the U.S. 30/Yeon Street pavement preservation project in Northwest Portland in 2009. The project showed a 23 percent decrease in speeding vehicles when photo radar was present
* The second research project using this tool was ODOT’s Outer Powell Safety Improvement Project on U.S. 26 in Southeast Portland. The 2013 project was unable to determine if photo radar had an impact on the percentage of speeding motorists.
* In the third effort, in 2015, ODOT and the Portland Police Bureau operated photo radar on an Interstate 5 work zone, Oregon’s first such effort on an interstate highway. Data collected showed average vehicle speeds were lower when photo radar was active compared to when there was no such enforcement. On the first night, speeds were 7 percent less and on the second night 9 percent less.

Information about both the 2009 and 2013 efforts can be found in the following research report. <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Programs/ResearchDocuments/PhotoRadar_Speed.pdf>

## Safety is ODOT’s top priority

Worker and motorist safety in highway construction work zones is a top priority for ODOT and its law enforcement and construction industry partners. Some of the leading causes of work zones crashes are driver inattention and speed.

* Oregon averaged 488 work zone crashes a year 2011-2015.
* Oregon averaged 13 serious injury crashes and five crashes with fatalities 2011-2015.
* On average, a work zone crash occurs in Oregon every 18 hours.
* More than one person is injured on average every day in a work zone crash in Oregon.
* Four of five work zone fatalities are drivers and their passengers, not highway workers.

Additional work zone statistics and safety information is available on the ODOT Web site, <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/pages/workzonesafety.aspx>

## Photo radar is already in use in Oregon

Photo radar is used with success for speed enforcement by cities around the state, including Portland. Studies show that photo radar reduces the percentage of vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit. <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Programs/ResearchDocuments/PhotoRadar_Speed.pdf>

## Photo radar on ODOT highway work zones

Mobile photo radar may be used in ODOT Interstate work zones as is identified in ORS 810.441. Options include either while workers are present or within a configuration change as is defined in this statute.

## Signs clearly identify work zones.

A road construction work zone begins at the initial advance warning, continues through the transition area into the work area and extends to the last temporary traffic control device such as cones, barrels or “End Work” signs. (ORS 810.230.)

## Motorists will know when it’s in use.

Photo radar can operate as defined by ORS 810.441. Signs will notify motorists that photo radar is in use.

## Device takes two photos

The photo radar device takes two photos when it detects a speeding vehicle: the first as the car approaches and the second as it drives away to record the license plate. The registered owner of the vehicle then gets a ticket in the mail.

## Fines serve as a deterrent.

Fines for speeding in these enforcement actions are designed as a deterrent. The goal is to improve safety and reduce speed through work zones. Speeding citations range from $110 to $435, depending on speed and other factors. Fines double in work zones at all times, whether workers are present or not, which means the fine for a speeding citation could reach $870.

## Citation fines go through routine channels.

All money collected will go through routine traffic citation channels. The goal is to encourage drivers to voluntarily slow down in work zones.

## For more information.

For more information about Portland Police Bureau’s use of photo radar, visit the PPB Web site, <http://www.portlandonline.com/Police/index.cfm?c=30591>.

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