

Speed safety cameras start issuing tickets on Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

By Don Snedecor
The Southwest Portland Post

The first speed safety cameras in Oregon started issuing speeding tickets on Sept. 24 after 30 days of issuing warnings that have already reduced top-end speeding by 93 percent. The goal of the cameras is to reduce speeding and save lives.

The Southwest Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway corridor is part of Portland's high crash network of roads.

The Portland Bureau of Transportation's recent Vision Zero crash data analysis found that Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway is one of the top roads where people driving are killed or seriously injured.

People walking along or crossing on foot are twice as likely to be struck by a car as on the average city street.

Cameras started issuing warnings on Aug. 25, the start of a 30-day period that ends on Saturday. The warnings have already reduced top-end speeding along the corridor, where about 25,000 vehicles travel each day and the speed limit is 40 mph.

Before the cameras were installed, an average 1,417 vehicles a day traveled 51 mph or faster, according to readings by a pneumatic tube laid across the roadway.

During the warning period from Aug. 24 to Sept. 18, an average 93 vehicles a day were found traveling 51 mph or faster – a 93.4 percent reduction from the tube count.

In the first week of the warning period, cameras recorded an average 115 violations a day. Violations dropped to an average 72 a day by the week of Sept. 12 to 18.

"It's amazing to see how quickly these safety cameras have reduced dangerous speeding on Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway," said City Commissioner

Steve Novick, who oversees the transportation bureau. "I'm so glad these cameras have already improved safety on a busy street where pedestrians face a terribly high crash rate."

"Speed safety cameras have a proven track record in other cities, and are already showing their effectiveness in Portland," said transportation director Leah Treat.

"For us to reach our Vision Zero goal of ending traffic fatalities and serious injuries, we need tools like these cameras. Thanks to the city council and state legislature, we can use this proven tool and save lives."

The installation on Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway is the first safety camera installation since the City of Portland and community safety advocates convinced the state Legislature in 2015 to pass HB 2621, which allows them to be used on High Crash Corridors in the Portland city limits.

Safety cameras are a proven safety tool that can reduce dangerous speeding and save lives. The cameras are mounted along high crash corridors and when people driving past them exceed the posted speed limit, they capture photos and video for review by Portland Police.

The camera issued warnings for the first 30 days of operation. An officer from the Portland Police Bureau will review violations before a citation is issued. The typical fine is \$160.

HB 2621 requires that money received from the speeding tickets can only be spent to cover the cost of the program or pay for safety improvements and programs on High Crash Corridors.

The Speed Safety Cameras program provides ample warning to people driving in the area. State law requires speed signage and speed reader boards to be installed on Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway warning drivers more than 100 yards in advance of the cameras in both directions.

Transportation bureau staff also conducted extensive outreach with local neighborhood associations as well as more than 75 businesses and community organizations to raise awareness of the changes along the corridor, before the cameras were installed.



Speed safety cameras posted on Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway. (Photo by Hannah Schafer, Portland Bureau of Transportation)

EARTH TALK

(Continued from Page 8)

symbolic action to reduce neonics, but without a federal ban on the books such piecemeal efforts can't do much to help.

In Spring 2016, U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR) introduced a bill in the U.S. Senate calling for new policy initiatives and interagency coordination to restore and enhance pollinator habitat across the U.S. Key provisions of Merkley's Pollinator Recovery Act include setting aside three million acres of public land as expanded acreage for "forage and habitat" for pollinators.

Additional provisions include grant funding for research and development to develop crops to resist pests without neonics; financial incentives and technical assistance for farmers that adopt pollinator-friendly practices; and expanded

health monitoring and population tracking for bees and other key pollinators.

Concerned Americans should urge their Senators to co-sponsor or support the Pollinator Recovery Act. After all, protecting bees isn't just important to environmentalists but to anyone who enjoys avocados, almonds or any of the countless fruits, vegetables or nuts pollinated by our little black and yellow friends.

Contacts: Greenpeace "Save the Bees" Campaign, www.greenpeace.org/usa/sustainable-agriculture/save-the-bees; Merkley Unveils New Proposal to Help Restore Pollinator Populations Across the U.S., <https://www.merkley.senate.gov>.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Congressman responds to Post inquiry about marijuana advertising

Thank you for contacting me about advertising for legal marijuana in the U.S. mail. I appreciate hearing from you and apologize for my delayed response.

Currently, it is illegal to knowingly place a written advertisement in a newspaper, magazine, handout, or other publication for the purpose of receiving, buying, or distributing a Schedule 1 controlled substance like marijuana.

In February, I introduced H.R. 4467, the Marijuana Advertising in Legal States Act, which would declare that the prohibition does not apply with respect to an advertisement for a marijuana-related activity which complies with state law.

I share in your advocacy and will continue to press this issue, while keeping your thoughts in mind.

It is time to update our federal marijuana laws and regulations. Maintaining the status quo creates an inconsistent legal environment that wastes law enforcement resources and misses out on potential tax revenues.

This is a bipartisan issue and I look forward to the progress we can achieve this Congress.

Thank you again for contacting me. Please continue to be in touch.

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

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