



The Institute of Transportation Engineers  
Traffic Engineering Council  
presents TIPS on



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## Speed Humps

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### *Can speed humps be installed on my street?*

A speed “hump” is a raised area in the roadway pavement surface extending transversely across the travel way. Not to be confused with a speed hump, a speed “bump” is a raised area in a private driveway or parking lot.



Speed hump dimensions and characteristics vary from agency to agency. They are typically 12 foot long by 3 to 4 inches high and are usually placed across the roadway between intersections. They are typically requested by residents as a means to slow traffic in residential

neighborhoods or decrease the amount of “cut-through” traffic. In general, speed humps may:

1. Reduce traffic speeds in the immediate vicinity of the speed humps,
2. Decrease traffic volume, and
3. Reduce accidents in some areas.

At the same time, however, speed humps may also have the following detrimental effects:

1. Divert traffic to other neighborhood streets thereby moving the problem rather than solving it,
2. Increase noise level due to vehicle brakes, tires and engine,
3. Increase vehicle emissions due to deceleration and acceleration,
4. Increase response time of emergency vehicles,
5. Conflict with school and transit bus operation,
6. Present a potential hazard to bicyclists and motorcyclists.

Most agencies have a Speed Control Plan which either advocates the use of speed humps as a system wide tool to reduce speeds and/or vehicular volumes or eliminates their use unconditionally. When determining whether to install speed humps, the following restrictions may apply:

1. Streets serving transit buses.
2. Streets with daily traffic volumes above some predetermined threshold.
3. Streets designated as collector streets.
4. Rural roads.

The Institute of Transportation Engineers has developed a report covering the design and application of speed humps. The report (*Guidelines for the Design and Application of Speed Humps*) was prepared by the ITE Technical Council Speed Humps Task Force in 1995. It can be obtained by contacting ITE headquarters at 202/554-8050.