

For Immediate Release
Date: November 9, 2009
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— ACTION ALERT —

NYSDOT Proposing Widespread Use of Rumble Strips on Secondary Highways, Posing New Hazards to Bicyclists

**Contact NYSDOT and Your Legislators —
Urge NYSDOT Not to Jeopardize the Safety of Its Roadway Users!**



When encountering parked vehicles a cyclist must shift to the vehicle lane. Because a rumble strip (to the right of the edge line) destabilizes bicycles, this is dangerous. Further, as a result, cyclists hesitate to return to the shoulder.

CURRENT NYSDOT POLICY: Do not install rumble strips on secondary roads except in rare instances.

PROPOSED NYSDOT POLICY: Installation of rumble strips will be the preferred practice in the design of all secondary roads with a few exceptions.

RUMBLE STRIPS are a well-documented hazard to bicyclists. Accepted practice nationwide dictates rumble strips be used only sparingly on roads permitting cycling.

NYSDOT is proposing an Engineering Instruction (EI), titled "Secondary Highway Audible Roadway Delineators – Guidance and Policy," which is at variance with the practices recommended by the Federal Highway Administration, The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, and other standards setting agencies. Such national agencies generally recommend rumble strips are to be used on two-lane roads if there is a documented run-off-the road accident problem — and then used only as a last resort due to the hazards they create for other roadway users, including bicyclists.

Contact NYSDOT and your legislators to urge NYSDOT to not issue the proposed policy. Ask them to work with groups, such as the New York Bicycling Coalition, organizers of bicycling tours and events, and local cycling clubs to construct a less hostile policy that better balances the needs of motorist and bicyclist safety.

BACKGROUND: Rumble strips, as illustrated, are audible roadway delineators or indentations in the shoulder pavement that make sound when a car runs over them at high speeds. While an important safety tool used to prevent run-offs on high-speed Interstates and other limited access highways, they are a well-documented hazard to individuals on bicycles and should be used only sparingly on roads permitting cycling. NYSDOT is proposing to replace current stated policy -- not have rumble strips on secondary roads except in rare instances -- with a new one declaring "installation of shoulder rumble strips to be the preferred practice in the design of all secondary highways" with a few exceptions.

In short, the proposal would have NYSDOT install rumble strips (with certain exceptions) on secondary roadways throughout New York State, compromising bicyclists' safety and the quality of riding surfaces on thousands of miles otherwise scenic roadways. National practice is to have rumble strips nowhere with some exceptions on secondary roadways. By taking the opposite tack, NYSDOT's policy promiscuously promotes rumble strips, going far beyond what is seen as efficient deployment. Aside from the policy's cost implications, it is unwise. It means rumble strips in urban areas, creating or adding to the din. It means rumble strips on roads with speeds too low to generate sound. Rumble strips also mean higher maintenance costs for the taxpayer. And, of course, they pose a danger to cyclists by causing spills, erratic avoidance maneuvers, or causing them to avoid the shoulder and ride mingled in automobile traffic.

A check of other states with such secondary highway policies shows they require an accident analysis be done before such rumble strip use; the proposed NYSDOT policy does not. Other states specify where rumble strips are used, have at least 5 feet of paved shoulder between them and any guardrail; the proposed NYSDOT policy does not. Other states say not to even consider rumble strips unless there are high speeds and high traffic volumes: while the proposed NYSDOT policy does have speed and volume thresholds, they are considerably lower than those of any other state. There are dozens of other such examples in this EI where the proposed policy varies from generally accepted practice.

Action Alert from NYBC (Continued)

Contact NYSDOT and your legislators to urge NYSDOT to not issue the proposed policy TODAY. Call, write, or email (or utilize all 3 methods of communication) your Assembly Member, State Senator and the Commissioner of Transportation.

WHO REPRESENTS ME?

Who's my NYS Assemblyperson?

[Click here to search by Zip Code](http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/) <http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/>

Who's my NYS Senator?

[Click here to search by Zip Code](http://www.nysenate.gov/senators) <http://www.nysenate.gov/senators>

At the above sites, clicking on the highlighted names will bring you directly to the legislator's official website where you may make comments.

How to contact NYSDOT:

Website: [Click here to email NYSDOT](https://www.nysdot.gov/about-nysdot/contact) <https://www.nysdot.gov/about-nysdot/contact>

Or write: Commissioner Stanley Gee
NYS Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232

Prefer to mail?

Simply send a postcard (28¢ each at your nearest US Post Office) to your legislators and the Commissioner. For an investment of 84¢, you have the ability to improve bicycling throughout New York State, including in your village, town or city. Or, if easier, just stuff a copy of this notice in an envelope (adding personal comments if you wish) and mail (44¢ postage) it off to the Commissioner and elected representatives.

About the New York Bicycling Coalition

The New York Bicycling Coalition is dedicated to preserving New York State's wide and smoothly paved shoulder network as an important asset for use by the State's residents (bicyclists and pedestrians) as well as visiting cyclists. Since 1992, the New York Bicycling Coalition (NYBC) has served as the only statewide, not-for-profit organization of its kind advocating various "Share the Road" education and safety initiatives on behalf of both cyclists and motorists, while working to assure highway, street, and transit facilities are amenable to bicyclists and pedestrians. Support Our Efforts to Increase Bicycling and Pedestrian Safety and Access Today by joining online: <http://www.nybc.net/donate>