

# Welland Tribune (On)

## Watch your speed

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Illustrations: Transportation and parking operations manager Dave Ferguson demonstrates a device now available to be signed out to Welland residents under the new Speed Watch program, approved by council Tuesday night. Numbers flashed to drivers in red indicate they're going over the posted limit.

Making use of the city's new radar message board, and in response to residential complaints about lead-footed drivers - Welland now has a Speed Watch program.

awareness as a \$100 ticket brings awareness," Dzugan said.

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Endorsed by city council Tuesday night, it allows individuals or groups to sign out the municipality's SpeedMinder, which the Welland Safe Communities committee and its city partner purchased from a U.S.-based manufacturer earlier this year.

The roadside radar unit, which can be wheeled into the trunk of a car, reminds drivers to stick within the speed limit.

Excessive speeds are displayed with red numbers; safe speeds are shown in green.

It also records vehicle counts, speed violations, top speeds and average speeds wherever it may be set up to serve warning.

For example, in March, the machine recorded a top 94 kilometres an hour speed in a 40 km/h zone on First Avenue just north of Niagara College. On that given day the average speed was 61 km/h.

A staff report to politicians said most motorists travel at speeds they feel comfortable with, unaware they have exceeded speed limits.

Most requests the city receives for stop signs aimed at slowing down traffic can not be met because vehicle patterns fail to meet Ministry of Transportation requirements for installation, the report also said.

Those wanting to make use of the SpeedMinder will have to submit a written request to the city, outlining location and time of day for use. They will also be responsible for loss or damage to the \$3,500 machine and must sign a liability waiver.

City staff will provide operational and safety training.

Ward 1 Coun. Pat Chiochio, chair of Welland Safe Communities, said the Speed Watch program is beneficial to areas where police resources can't be deployed.

"As we know, the regional police cannot be in all areas at all times," he said.

Still, Ward 5 Coun. Mark Dzugan said police need to play a bigger role in curbing speeders, saying the city's roadside radar unit can only do so much. "Does it bring awareness? Yes. But it doesn't bring as much