

PRODUCT REVIEW

SPEED-O-MATIC "SPEEDO-1" X-BAND RADAR GUN

Every state in the Union is using police radar for precise speed measurement. Despite a handful of cases that are thrown out of court, radar speed tickets usually stick.

Passive radar detectors -- those that sell for around one hundred dollars -- are a good companion on a long trip. They will give you a few seconds warning before you are within radar tracking distance. There are many passive radar detectors on the market, and all offer good protection on both X as well as K-band police radar.

A more sensitive radar detector is the "super het" receiver. Selling from two hundred to three hundred dollars, the super het receiver offers exceptional radar detection range. Passive detectors sound off in seconds before radar is incurred -- the super hetrodine receiver will sound off almost a full minute before you are in the clutches of the law.

Speed-o-matic Corporation, Harbor City, California, is the only manufacturer presently importing a Japanese super het radar detector. Extensive field tests indicate that this unit is as good as domestically built radar detectors. The Speed-o-matic super het radar detector receiver "Phantom X-K" sells for two hundred and twenty-nine dollars, and offers the same performance as more expensive two hundred and ninety-nine dollar super het radar detectors.

ACTIVE JAMMING

For those of you that may wish to possess the ultimate counter-measure in thwarting police radar, the jammer may be just for you. First of all, let us get one thing up front -- active jamming is illegal. It is also quite effective.

To jam or deceive police radar, a transmitter on or near the police radar's frequency is required. Further, it should be modulated to simulate a "doppler beat" for the speed one would like displayed on the police radar indicator.

While the police radar is very sensitive for the mode in which it operates (called OIF) it has another mode present (which is less sensitive) which can be attacked by a jamming system. This is the straight "diode detection" mode. While the jammer has a power advantage, the radar has a selectivity advantage.

The bottom line is that power is required to jam. About one hundred milliwatts is required at the vehicle to effectively jam a police radar. This, incidentally, is marginal power with a radar target such as an eighteen-wheeler, so a combination of radar cross-section reduction and jamming increases your edge in beating that ticket.

SPEED-O-MATIC "SPEED-O 1"(Cont'd):

There are a couple of jammer units available which are either dedicated to, or convertible to, actual police radar jammers.

- These are:
1. Microwave Specialties (Texas) builds a "radar communicator" which operates on the amateur radio band adjacent to the X band police radar frequency. To be legal, it requires a ham radio license to operate. The speed you wish the police radar to receive is settable from the control panel. It is expensive. It is priced around eight hundred dollars.
 2. Speed-o-matic Corporation (Harbor City, California) builds a legitimate radar speedometer for vehicles on either the X band or the K band. The X band unit sells for under three hundred dollars, and the K band unit for under four hundred dollars.

While the odds on interfering with police radar's normal operations are almost nil, Speed-o-matic units do have a transmitter portion that is easily modified by removing one simple jumper wire. We advise against modifying these units in this way unless you are a technician doing repair work on police radar units and wish to use it for calibration and test equipment.

There are also extender horns to raise the effective power of the Speed-o-matic unit.

Keep in mind the following if you intend to start jamming:

1. Your radar detector will no longer work as it will pick up your own jammer machine.
2. On large targets, such as tractor trailers, it is best to get a further "edge" by reducing the radar cross section of the vehicle or increasing your radiated power with an extender horn.
3. Both radar bands, X and K bands, are an issue. For the ultimate, you are going to need two jammers -- one on each band.

