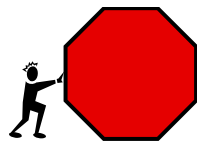




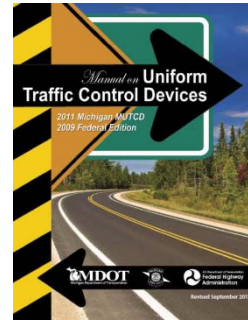
Why Don't They Install More Stop Signs?

A STOP sign is one of our most valuable and effective control devices when used at the right place and under the right conditions. It is intended to help drivers and pedestrians at an intersection decide who has the right-of-way.



One common misuse of STOP signs is to arbitrarily interrupt thru' traffic, either by causing it to stop, or by causing such an inconvenience as to force the traffic to use other routes. Where STOP signs are installed as "nuisances" or "speed breakers", there is a high incidence of intentional violation. In those locations where vehicles do stop, the speed reduction is effective only in the immediate vicinity of the STOP sign, and frequently speeds are actually higher between intersections. There are numerous studies from around the country that report this. For these reasons, it should not be used as a speed control device.

Guidance according to the **Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices** (national standard for all traffic control devices) states "STOP signs shall not be used for speed control. STOP signs should be installed in a manner that minimizes the numbers of vehicles having to stop. At intersections where a full stop is not necessary at all times, consideration should be given to using less restrictive measures such as YIELD signs."



A school crossing may look dangerous for children to use, causing parents to demand a STOP sign to halt traffic. Now a vehicle which had been a problem for 3 seconds while approaching and passing the intersection becomes a problem for a much longer period. A situation of indecision is created as to when to cross as a pedestrian or when to start as a motorist. Normal gaps in traffic through which crossings could be made safely no longer exist. An intersection which previously was not busy now looks like a major intersection. It really isn't -- it just looks like it. It doesn't even look safer and it usually isn't.



Most drivers are reasonable and prudent with no intention of deliberately violating traffic regulations; however, when an unreasonable restriction is imposed, it may







result in flagrant violations. In such cases, the STOP sign can create a false sense of security in a pedestrian and an attitude of contempt in a motorist. These two mindsets can and often do conflict, sometimes with tragic results.

The County follows established well developed, nationally recognized guidelines, the Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices in conjunction with the AASHTO design guide: A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets to determine when STOP signs become necessary. These guidelines identify specific traffic and pedestrian volume thresholds, accident history, sight distance, and any unusual conditions at the intersection. A traffic study is completed before installing a STOP sign.


Criteria for Two-Way STOP Signs – Two-way STOP signs may be used:





-  Where a street enters a through street; or
-  Where a clear view of cross street traffic is obstructed due to buildings, trees or shrubs; or
-  Where crash history indicates three or more reported crashes in a 12 month period, and the crashes could have been avoided by the use of a STOP sign; or
-  Where circumstances and crash history indicate that observing the normal right-of-way rule could still be hazardous, resulting in crashes.

4-WAY Criteria for Four-Way or All-Way STOP Signs:

In most cases, a two-way STOP sign is sufficient to define who has the right-of-way. A four-way or all-way stop is considered only when an intersection with a two-way stop is the site of numerous crashes or traffic congestion problems. Four-way STOP signs may be used:


 As an interim measure where traffic signals are needed; or


 On local streets, where there has been an average five or more reported crashes per year. These crashes would likely have been prevented by an all-way stop; or

 Where the number of vehicles entering an intersection averages at least 300 vehicles per hour for any eight hours of a typical day, and the combined vehicular and pedestrian volumes from the minor street averages at least 200 per hour for the same eight hours


ADVANTAGES OF APPROVED STOP SIGNS


 STOP signs establish right-of-way.


 The number of broadside accidents is likely to be reduced.


 May alleviate congestion at higher-volume intersections.

DISADVANTAGES OF STOP SIGNS

 Acceleration and deceleration increase noise and air pollution near the signs.

 The frequency of rear-end accidents is likely to increase.

 STOP signs cause unnecessary delay in light volume conditions.

 Creates false sense of security for pedestrians, while pedestrians expect vehicles to stop at STOP signs, national studies show that compliance to unwarranted STOP signs are less than 40%.



Stop Signs



The Macomb County Department of Roads takes its role in responding to traffic concerns very seriously, yet the ultimate burden of safety rests on you, the motorist in the County. We will respond to every traffic concern you have. Since we receive over 1000 citizen concerns per year, we may not be able to investigate your request as quickly as we would like to. We appreciate your patience and understanding in this matter.



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