

WILL MORE STOP SIGNS SLOW TRAFFIC ON OUR STREET?



STOP signs installed to wrong places usually create more problems than they solve.

Many requests are received for STOP signs to interrupt traffic or to slow speeding vehicles. However, studies in Texas and across the country show that there are a high number of intentional violations when STOP signs are installed as nuisances or “speedbreakers.”

Stop compliance is poor at multiway stop signs where there is little or no traffic on the minor street.

Unwarranted multiway stop signs have been shown to increase speeds on streets, as drivers try to “make up” for lost time stopped at unnecessary signs.

Nuisance STOP signs also increase air pollution, waste fuel and create more traffic noise.

Under the right conditions STOP signs can play an important role in traffic safety. National standards have been established to determine when STOP signs should be installed. These standards consider traffic speed, the number of vehicles, sight distance, and the frequency of “gaps in traffic” to allow safe vehicle entry or pedestrian crossing.

For safety purposes, when STOP signs are used, they should stop vehicles on the street with less traffic. Four-way STOPs are helpful only when traffic is high and approximately equal on all four approaches. At least 500 cars per hour, for a substantial portion of the day, are needed to make four-way STOPs beneficial.

Most drivers are reasonable and prudent. When confronted with unreasonable and unnecessary restrictions, motorists are more likely to violate them, and they usually develop contempt for all traffic signs...often with tragic results.

