

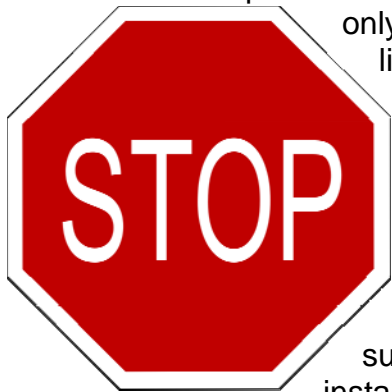
About Stop Signs

Will more stop signs help reduce speeding on our streets?

Under the right conditions, STOP signs can be very effective in improving traffic safety. The right conditions for installing STOP signs are determined through existing National Standards. Some factors considered in such standards are:

1. Traffic speed
2. Number of vehicles
3. Sight distance
4. Frequency of traffic gaps that allow safe vehicle entry and pedestrian crossing.

Most drivers are prudent and reasonable. Unnecessary and unreasonable STOP signs only generate their contempt for traffic signs and will make them likely to violate those devices. Such violations may often have tragic results. In other words, STOP signs may sometimes cause more problems than they solve.



STOP signs should normally stop traffic on the street with lower traffic volume. When both streets have similarly high volumes of traffic, four-way STOP signs should be installed. A traffic volume of 500 cars per hour during a substantial portion of the day is a determining factor for installing four-way STOP signs.

Installing, four-way STOP signs is usually not recommended when traffic at intersections is unbalanced. When the volume of traffic flowing on street A is considerably larger than the one flowing on street B, motorists driving on street A will tend to consider stopping at that intersection as illogical and useless and will only do "stop-and-go" or "roll-on" types of stop. This could increase the possibilities of accidents.

Installing a STOP sign in only one of two intersecting streets; however, tends to encourage drivers on the other street to increase speed since they have the "right of way" and they know others have to yield to them.

People often request STOP signs for street intersections in their neighborhoods hoping to force speeding motorists to slow down; however, as some nationwide studies show, STOP signs can generate a high number of intentional violations when installed as merely speed-breakers or nuisances.

According to some studies, vehicle speed is actually reduced in the immediate area where nuisance STOP signs are installed, but vehicle speed is also increased between stop intersections. This results from motorists making up for the "lost" time they spent at the stop sign. Nuisance STOP signs also increase fuel consumption, air pollution, and traffic noise.

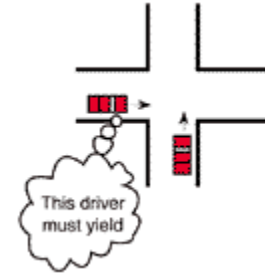
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In general, low-traffic-volume neighborhood street intersections regulated under the State of Arizona Right of Way rule tend to operate better without STOP signs. This law requires all motorists approaching intersections from all converging streets to slow down to reasonable speeds.

The State of Arizona "Right of Way" rule as stated in ARS 28-771 A requires that:

“When two vehicles enter or approach an intersection from different streets or highways at approximately the same time, the driver of the vehicle on the left shall yield the right-of-way to the vehicle on the right. This subsection does not apply to vehicles approaching or entering an uncontrolled "T" intersection if the vehicle on the left is on a continuing street or highway and the vehicle on the right is on the terminating street or highway. The vehicle on the terminating street or highway shall yield to the vehicle on the continuing street or highway.”



It may be very difficult to remove STOP signs once they are installed. Therefore, we must be sure from the outset that their installation will be beneficial to all modes of transportation.

If you would like to ask questions or discuss further, please call the Public Works Department at 623-349-6800.