

## Collisions

**Studies have shown**.....Unwarranted STOP signs do not reduce collisions and in fact may increase the potential for collisions.

## Environment

**Studies have shown**.....Unwarranted STOP signs increase stop/start actions and therefore increase exhaust fumes and associated hydrocarbons.

## Noise

**Studies have shown**.....Unwarranted STOP signs increase noise pollution due to stops and acceleration and the associated engine noises and brakes. Noise tests at the STOP signs and at mid-block locations show that the stop/start and acceleration resulting from the multi-way STOP installations increased the noise levels over the "before" conditions.

For more information on various programs, visit the City of Fairfield's web page.

[www.fairfield.ca.gov](http://www.fairfield.ca.gov)



## Public Works Department



## Traffic/Transportation Engineering

### Stop Signs

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# CITY OF FAIRFIELD CALIFORNIA

As more and more vehicles travel on our streets, traffic volumes continue to grow with a perception of increased speeds. These concerns are reflected in the large number of calls being received by the City of Fairfield Traffic/Transportation Engineering. Many of these calls ask for installation of stop signs to divert or slow traffic. Here are some of the questions that arise.

## **CAN THE CITY INSTALL STOP SIGNS TO SLOW TRAFFIC SPEEDS?**

## **ARE STOP SIGNS EFFECTIVE IN SLOWING AND DIVERTING TRAFFIC?**

## **CAN THE CITY INSTALL STOP SIGNS BECAUSE WE ARE SEEING MORE COLLISIONS?**

A stop sign is one of our most valuable and effective control devices when used at the right place and under the right conditions. The primary purpose is to help drivers and pedestrians decide who has the right-of-way at an intersection. In order for an all-way stop to be installed, it must meet the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) warrant criteria identified in the California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) which is the standards by which traffic control devices are installed. The most difficult warrant to achieve is the volume warrant where the intersection must exceed a sustained threshold for a minimum of hours a day.

One common misuse of stop signs is to arbitrarily interrupt major through traffic, either by causing it to stop, or by causing such an inconvenience as to force the traffic to use alternative routes. This often time results in impacts to other parallel streets. 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. In addition, the slowing and acceleration of traffic can often cause additional noise for a nearby residence. For these reasons, stop signs are not used for speed control.

Well-developed, national and state recognized practices help to indicate when such controls become necessary. These practices take into consideration, volumes, arrival of traffic, delays, and sight visibility.

## **Speed**

**Studies have shown** .....that an unwarranted STOP sign installation reduces speed only immediately adjacent to the sign. In most cases, drivers accelerate as soon as possible, to a speed faster than they drove before STOP signs were installed. They do this apparently to make up for time lost at the STOP sign.

For additional information:

(707) 434--3800

[www.fairfield.ca.gov](http://www.fairfield.ca.gov)



## **STOP signs are not effective for speed control.**

**Studies have shown**.....In almost all cases, through-traffic volumes stay the same, but travel speeds actually increase after the installation of unwarranted STOP signs.

## **Local Neighborhood Traffic Volumes**

**Studies have shown**....Local neighborhood traffic generally finds the path of least resistance. If there are alternative routes to get from Point A to Point B and if these alternate routes have fewer traffic controls, local drivers will take them which further impacts adjacent neighborhoods.

## **Compliance**

**Studies have shown**.....Unwarranted STOP signs are unenforceable. Drivers tend to ignore unwarranted traffic controls or obstacles that, in their view, are unnecessary. If they are frequently required to stop for STOP signs and rarely see any traffic on the opposing street, they may become impatient and tend to disregard STOP signs that have no obvious need.