

TRAFFIC AND SAFETY INFORMATIONAL SERIES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION #15

What Is the Harm in Installing an Unwarranted Traffic Control Device?

Installing traffic control devices such as stop signs or traffic signals along a roadway does not necessarily slow drivers down or increase safety. In fact, the overuse of stop signs and traffic signals can sometimes lead drivers to ignore or disobey them, especially when traffic control devices are installed at locations where they are not really needed.

Too many stop signs can lead to ineffectiveness

Studies have shown that when stop signs are placed at intersections where they do not appear to be needed, motorists may become careless about obeying them.

Too many traffic signals can negatively impact traffic flow

Installing traffic signals where they are not needed can create traffic congestion, increase travel time and vehicle emissions, and frustrate drivers, who may drive impatiently as a result.

Other options can provide safety

To make travel efficient and safe and to help ensure the proper observance of stop signs and traffic signals, traffic control devices are usually installed only where they are absolutely necessary. In many cases, other, less restrictive solutions such as yield signs may provide sufficient safety without any detriment to traffic flow.

For more information

For more information, please contact _____.