

**A traffic safety message  
from the Metro Nashville  
Public Works department's  
Neighborhood Traffic  
Management Program.**

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**Will STOP  
Signs Slow  
Traffic on  
Our Streets?**



Neighborhood Traffic Management Program

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Gratuitous **STOP** signs may increase speeding on other intersections.

Studies show that speed is reduced in the immediate vicinity of gratuitous STOP signs. However, speeds are higher between intersections than before the signs were installed. This is

caused by motorists “making up for lost time.”



Gratuitous STOP signs also increase air pollution, waste fuel, and

create more traffic noise.

Unnecessary **STOP** signs may contribute to motorist contempt.

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

**ALL-WAY-STOP** signs don't work as “speedbreakers.”

All-way STOP signs installed where they are not justified create more problems than they solve.

Most new requests received for STOP signs are intended to interrupt traffic or to slow speeding vehicles. However, studies in Nashville and across the country show that there is a high number of intentional violations when STOP signs are installed as nuisances or “speed breakers”.



Justification for **STOP** signs and **ALL-WAY-STOP** signs.

When justified, STOP signs and ALL-WAY 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.

When STOP signs are necessary, they should stop vehicles on streets with less traffic. Four-way STOP signs are helpful only when traffic is high and approximately equal on all four approaches. At least 500 vehicles per hour for any 8-hours of an average day, are needed to make four-way STOP signs beneficial.

Results of unjustified **ALL-WAY STOP** signs.

If unjustified ALL-WAY STOP signs are installed, you can expect:

Speeds to increase on the street. As stated previously, people increase their speed to “make up time” for unjustified stops.

Accidents tend to increase. The number of rear-end accidents increase at the intersections where unjustified ALL-WAY STOP signs are installed. An unjustified ALL-WAY STOP forces a driver to stop unnaturally, thus the driver behind them may not stop.

Increases pollution. It's a simple fact that stopping and starting increases pollution, decreases fuel efficiency, and increases wear and tear on your car.

**REMEMBER, STOP signs are not effective tools to decrease speeding. They can increase air pollution and waste fuel, and when used improperly, may even increase speeds and traffic volumes on adjacent streets.**

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