

Warrick County Highway Information Manual

Each year the County receives numerous requests to install regulatory signs. It is important that signs be warranted by facts and field studies in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Many researches show that unwarranted signs will lead to a loss of respect for all traffic control devices. Proper installation of regulatory signs will maximize the safety and efficiency of county roads and help ensure that citizens maintain a healthy respect for the community's traffic control system.

STOP SIGNS USED TO REDUCE SPEED LIMITS

The purpose of a stop sign is to assign right-of-way at an intersection, not control speed. Research shows that the improper installation of stop signs often creates more problems than they solve. While unwarranted stop signs may decrease speed in the immediate vicinity of the sign, they increase speeds between signs. They carry a high non-compliance rate and increase air pollution, waste fuel and create more traffic noise.

SPEED LIMIT SIGNS

Requests are made to post a lower speed in order to slow traffic on a road. Studies demonstrate drivers tend to operate their vehicles at speeds they feel that is safe and reasonable, regardless of the posted speed limit. Since it is the driving environment that mainly influences speed, posting signs at higher or lower speeds does not significantly change the 85th percentile speed. In addition, if an artificially low speed limit is posted, some driver will obey the lower speed limit while many others will simply ignore it. This difference in speed disrupts traffic flow and can lead to an increase in crashes. Finally, when traffic is traveling at different speeds, the number of gaps in traffic to allow safe crossing is reduced. Pedestrians and other drivers have a more difficult time in judging the speed of approaching vehicles.

MULTI-WAY-STOPS

The purpose of multi-way-stops is to assign right-of-way and not speed control. Studies show that unwarranted placement of multi-way-stops do not control speed and instead cause an unsafe environment for drivers and pedestrians. Motorists see little reason to yield the right-of-way and roll through stop signs because of an insignificant amount of traffic on the minor streets, when pedestrians and other vehicles expect them to stop.

CHILDREN AT PLAY

Facts indicate that the installation of these signs do not protect neighborhood children. Studies show that signs that warn people from normal conditions fail to improve safety. While drivers often disregard these signs, they give a false sense of security to parents and children. CHILDREN SHOULD NOT BE ENCOURAGED TO PLAY IN THE STREET and the Federal standards reject CHILDREN AT PLAY signs for this reason.

DEER CROSSING SIGNS

Deer crossing signs should be warranted only after a deer car accident study is completed and meets the criteria for a sign placement. Installation requirements are five deer car related accidents in a twelve-month period. These should be reviewed every three years.

RIGHT-OF-WAY POLICY

The Warrick County Engineering Department's policy is to be as conservative when claiming the existence of public right-of-way. Unless reliable documentation can be found to the contrary, the right-of-way for any given publicly (County) maintained road is assumed to be limited to the physical limits of the road surface.

Any documentation of right-of-way dedicated is its recorded deed