

TRAFFIC AND SAFETY INFORMATIONAL SERIES FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION #15

What is the harm in installing traffic signs and signals that aren't really needed?

It may surprise you to learn that adding more stop signs or traffic signals along a roadway does not necessarily slow drivers down or increase safety. In fact, in some cases, especially when they are not really needed, the overuse of signs and signals can lead drivers to ignore or not properly obey them.

Too many signs can lead to ineffectiveness

Studies have shown that when stop signs are placed at intersections where they don't appear to be needed, motorists become careless about stopping.

Too many traffic signals can negatively impact traffic flow

Installing traffic signals where they are not needed can create traffic congestion, add travel time, and frustrate drivers, who may start driving impatiently.

Other options can provide safety

To make travel efficient and safe and to help ensure the proper observance of stop signs and traffic signals, they are usually installed only where they are absolutely necessary. Other solutions—for example, a yield sign—may also provide enough safety, without any detriment to traffic flow.

For more information

For more information, please contact _____.