

We use the warrants that are established in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, a nationally accepted document used to control the placement of traffic controls in the public right-of-way, to determine the appropriateness of stop sign installations. If you are interested in reviewing these warrants, they may be viewed online (Chapter 2B, page 50-52) at:

[http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009/pdf\\_index.htm](http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009/pdf_index.htm)

*Customer Service and Engineering  
Excellence with Pride*



Montgomery County Department of Traffic  
Engineering and Operations  
100 Edison Park Drive, 4th Floor  
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878  
[traffycop@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:traffycop@montgomerycountymd.gov)

**WON'T A 'STOP  
SIGN' SLOW  
TRAFFIC ON  
OUR STREET?**



### What is the purpose of a stop sign?

At the right place and under the right conditions, a stop sign tells drivers and pedestrians who has the right of way. Nationally recognized standards have been established to determine when stop signs should be used. These standards, or "warrants," take into consideration, among other things, traffic speed and volume, sight distance, and the frequency of traffic "gaps" which will allow safe vehicle entry or pedestrian crossing.

### Why not place a stop sign on my street to reduce speeding?

One common misuse of stop signs is to arbitrarily interrupt traffic, either by causing it to stop or by causing such an inconvenience that motorists are forced to use other routes. Studies made in many parts of the country show that there is a high incidence of intentional violations where stop signs are installed as "nuisances" or "speed breakers." These studies showed that speed was reduced in the immediate vicinity of the "nuisance" stop signs. But, speeds were actually higher between intersections than they would have been if these signs hadn't been installed.

Stop signs installed in the wrong places for the wrong purposes usually create more problems than they solve.

Most drivers are reasonable and prudent. But, when confronted with unreasonable restrictions, they frequently violate them and develop a general contempt for all traffic controls - often with tragic results.