



SIGN INSTALLATION BULLETIN

All-Way STOP

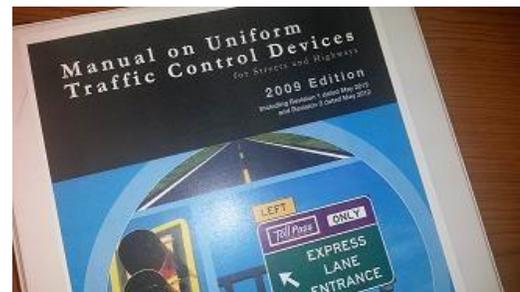


The Municipality of Anchorage receives requests – often in response to a citizen’s ‘near miss’ type event at an intersection - to install “All Way” Stop at intersections. This may be at an intersection that currently has no STOP signs assigning right-of-way (“uncontrolled”) or STOP signs on a lower volume road where it intersects a higher volume street – regardless of whether the intersection is a three-legged or four-legged intersection.

These requests may also come in response to concerns that vehicles on a road are travelling at an inappropriate speed for conditions for pedestrians, cyclists, or the operators of other motor vehicles.

The adopted Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices indicates this about the installation of All-Way STOP control at intersections.

“Multi-way STOP control can be a useful safety measure at intersections if certain traffic conditions exist. Safety concerns associated with multi-way stops include pedestrians, cyclists and all road users expecting other road users to stop. Multi-way stop control is used where the volume of traffic is approximately equal.”



[Section 2B.07 “Multi-Way STOP Applications” Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, FHWA, 2009](#)

A reference is made to Uniform Vehicle Codes, as well.

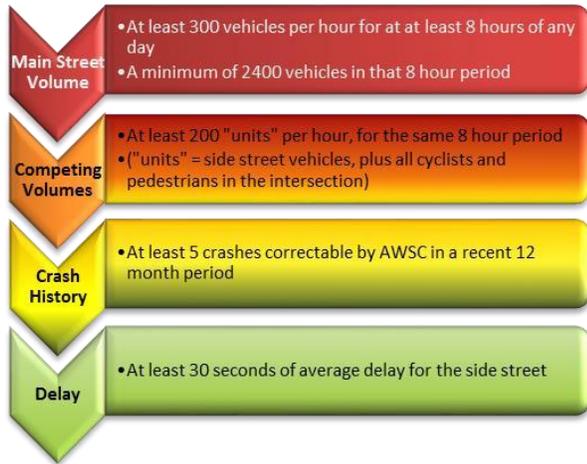
“State or local laws written in accordance with the Uniform Vehicle Code establish the right of way rule at intersections having no regulatory signs such that the driver of a vehicle approaching an intersection must yield the right-of-way to any vehicle or pedestrian already in the intersection.”

[Section 2B.04 “Right of Way at Intersections” Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, FHWA, 2009](#)

Several basic principles are used by the Traffic Engineer with respect to the installation of this – and other– types of regulatory signs.

First, traffic control devices – particularly in residential areas – should be used to the least extent possible. Over-signage – particularly along residential streets where there is already considerable demand for driver attention – results in an additional distraction to motorists. That incremental distraction can be a problem for the safety of pedestrians in, near, or crossing the roadway and the safe movement of cars into and out of driveways.

Second, any over-signage will result in a reduction in the effectiveness of the messages communicated to road users. This can and will affect the effectiveness of the information being communicated by those signs that are critically-needed to warn motorists of conditions that they might not be aware of – and which are potential hazards to pedestrians, cyclists, and other motorists.



Third, signage should be used sparingly to supplement – but not substitute – for an obligation to be aware of the rules of the road. Knowledge of Alaska State law and Municipal Code is obligation of each person who uses a road in the Municipality of Anchorage.

Fourth, the installation of every traffic control device has both an intended – and a series of recognizable unintended – consequences. A traffic signal system will assist in providing an orderly assignment of right-of-way at intersections and help reduce the number of right-angle and approaching turn crashes, but will do little to reduce – and, in fact, will usually increase - the number of

rear-end collisions. A marked crosswalk at a location where pedestrians cross a roadway may provide some guidance to motorists of pedestrian activity, but can lead to an increase in rear-end crashes when pedestrians step into traffic – or, worse, can result in crashes involving the pedestrian when they assume that they can do so without regard to the ability of the vehicle to come to a stop.

For these reasons, an engineering study of conditions: traffic volumes, pedestrian and cyclist volumes, sight lines, delay for cars entering the intersection from the side street, crash history, is required before All-Way STOP control is considered at an intersection.

Typically, we will expect that at least 40% of the total entering volume needs to entering the intersection from the minor/side street. The MUTCD indicates that the volumes should be ‘approximately’ equal.

Municipal Policy on All-Way STOP Control:

For these – and other reasons – the Municipality of Anchorage establishes as a policy that, and particularly in residential areas, All-Way STOP limit signs will be installed only when the warrants in the [Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#) have been evaluated – and determined to be met.

All-Way STOP control will not be used, as well, as a traffic calming or speed control measure.

Finally, an evaluation for a requested conversion to All-Way STOP Control may result in a determination that either the conditions have changed from the time of the existing right-of-way assignment was installed, or, that the existing assignment was used as a means of speed control. In this instance, the Municipality may change the existing right-of-way assignment to conform to current conditions and standards. This may include changing the directions that are stopped at an intersection, or, may even result in substitution of a lessrestrictive right-of-way assignment: yield control or no assignment of right-of-way.

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