

Each year the City of Hillsboro receives many requests for stop signs. The following information explains the correct use of stop signs and states the City's criteria for installation of stop signs.

### ***What is a stop sign used for?***

Stop signs are intended to help drivers and pedestrians determine who has the right-of-way at an intersection. Intersections not controlled by stop signs are subject to the right-of-way rule that states that a driver, when approaching an uncontrolled intersection, shall look out for and give right-of-way to any driver on the right simultaneously approaching a given point, regardless of which driver first reaches and enters the intersection.

Stop signs are installed to assign right-of-way at intersections where accidents or other data show that the driver observance of the right-of-way rule is not working. Stop signs are also occasionally considered an interim measure to a traffic signal where extreme congestion or multiple accidents have been recorded.

### ***Why not stop signs at every intersection?***

Too many stop signs reduce the effectiveness in observance of right-of-

way and control of intersections. Furthermore, installation of stop signs at all intersections would be very expensive. More stop signs in a neighborhood usually result in higher pollution and noise levels from vehicles' braking and acceleration.

### ***Can a stop sign reduce speeding?***

Stop signs are only used at intersecting streets and not at mid-block locations. They are not always effective at reducing vehicle speeds. Studies show that drivers accelerate rapidly after a stop. Within 100 feet of the stop sign they reach their top operating speeds. For speeders, the stop signs do little to slow them down.

Where stop signs are installed as "speed breakers", there is a high incidence of intentional violation or running the stop sign. Most drivers are reasonable and prudent with no intention of violating traffic regulations. However, when an unreasonable restriction is imposed, it can result in flagrant violations. In these cases, the stop sign creates a false sense of security for pedestrians and motorists. This may result in an increase in accidents.

### ***What is the effect of a stop sign on neighborhood traffic patterns?***

One of the more difficult aspects of traffic engineering is assessing what effect a new stop sign will have on adjacent streets. Experience shows that a stop sign may affect nearby traffic. Drivers may seek new routes to avoid the stop sign, thereby causing traffic problems in new areas. Another problem that can occur is an increase in speeds on the approaches to an intersection that are not required to stop. This is due to a false sense of increased safety at the intersection.

### ***Who decides?***

Signing decisions are made by the Street Committee and City Council based on recommendations by the City Engineer. Before decisions are made, City adopted guidelines must be considered. Traffic volume, intersection configuration, speeding, and accident reports are considered in the engineering analysis for installation. Stop signs are installed at an intersection only after a careful engineering evaluation of the existing conditions indicates that their installation is appropriate. Often simply improving the intersection visibility by trimming

trees and bushes in the right-of-way and/or restricting parking is more effective in improving intersection safety.

### **Criteria**

The City of Hillsboro observes federal guidelines outlined in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for stop sign applications.

*STOP signs should not be used unless engineering judgement indicates that one or more of the following conditions exist:*

- A. *Intersection of a less important road with a main road where application of the normal right-of-way rule would not be expected to provide reasonable safe operation.*
- B. *Street entering a through highway or street.*
- C. *Unsignalized intersection in a signalized area.*
- D. *High speeds, restricted view, or crash records indicate a need for control by the STOP sign.*

### **Where to begin**

If you believe your street might benefit from a stop sign, please review the

criteria and contact the City Engineer with your traffic concerns. Outline your concerns and requests in writing and send them to the Public Works Department, Engineering Division, 150 E Main Street, Hillsboro, OR 97123. Please include the following in your letter to assist us:

- ❖ Your name
- ❖ Your address
- ❖ A daytime phone number
- ❖ A fax number if available
- ❖ An email address if available

The City carefully evaluates most requests. However, because we receive many requests each year, we cannot always investigate your request as quickly as we would like to. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

### **Other Information Series Topics**

Additional information series brochures are also available through the City of Hillsboro Engineering Division on the following topics:

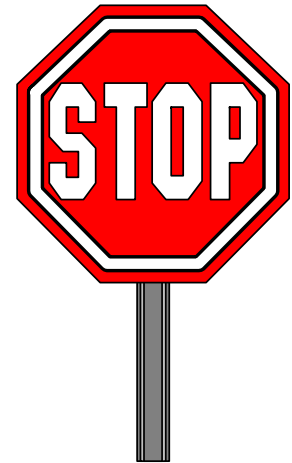
- NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC
- VISUAL CLEAR ZONES
- SPEED ZONING

## **CITY OF HILLSBORO**

### **INFORMATION SERIES**

Rev 04/2005

## **STOP SIGNS**



**CITY OF HILLSBORO**

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