



## Stop Signs

Stop signs may be used at three-way or four-way intersections to control right-of-way. The right-of-way is typically given to the street carrying the larger traffic volume. If traffic volumes are high on both streets, an all-way stop may be warranted.

Stop signs must be warranted in order to justify installation. The City prohibits the installation of stop signs at low-volume intersections strictly for traffic calming purposes.



**City of Murrieta**  
Public Works and Engineering Department  
26442 Beckman Court  
Murrieta, CA 92562



If you have any questions, requests or suggestions concerning traffic issues, please contact the Public Works and Engineering Department at: (951) 304-CITY (2489) or through the "At Your Service" link at: [www.murrieta.org](http://www.murrieta.org).



# Determining Traffic Control

Each year, the City of Murrieta receives many inquiries about installing stop signs. However, research shows that other measures are often more effective than adding more stop signs. A stop sign is a valuable and effective control device when used at the right place and under the right conditions.

The City of Murrieta is required by ordinance to comply with the Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). These well-developed, nationally recognized guidelines help to indicate when such controls become necessary. The MUTCD identifies specific traffic and pedestrian volumes, accident history, and any unusual conditions, which must be present at the intersection before traffic control devices may be installed.

Public understanding of the function of stop signs is one of the most critical elements in reducing speeding and traffic accidents. The following information explains the City's policies on traffic control and the consequences of misuse of stop control at City maintained intersections.

# Purpose of Stop Signs

Stop signs are installed at intersections to provide safe and efficient traffic flow by assigning who has the right-of-way. Stop signs function best when motorists perceive a convincing reason to come to a complete stop to avoid possible conflicts such as heavy cross traffic, pedestrians, or a visibility limitation.

## Misuse of Stop Signs

### *Speed Control Device*

A common misuse of stop signs is to disrupt through traffic either by causing it to stop or by causing such an inconvenience as to force the traffic to use other routes. At intersections where stop signs are inappropriately installed as "speed breakers," there is a high incidence of intentional violation. At those intersections where vehicles do stop, the speed reduction is effective only in the immediate vicinity of the stop sign and frequently speeds are higher between intersections to make up for lost time. The MUTCD reiterates that stop signs should not be used for speed control.

### *Improper Installation*

Stop signs that are perceived as "nuisance stops" may have a low rate of compliance and may not improve intersection safety. Also "nuisance stops" may divert traffic to nearby streets that are not designed for through traffic.

# Stop Sign Violations

Most drivers have no intention of violating traffic regulations. Most stop sign violations occur when an unreasonable restriction is imposed. In such cases, the stop sign can create a false sense of security in a pedestrian and an attitude of contempt in a motorist.

The best solution to reduce stop sign violations is to only install stop signs where they are warranted.

