

FROM A LEGAL STANDPOINT

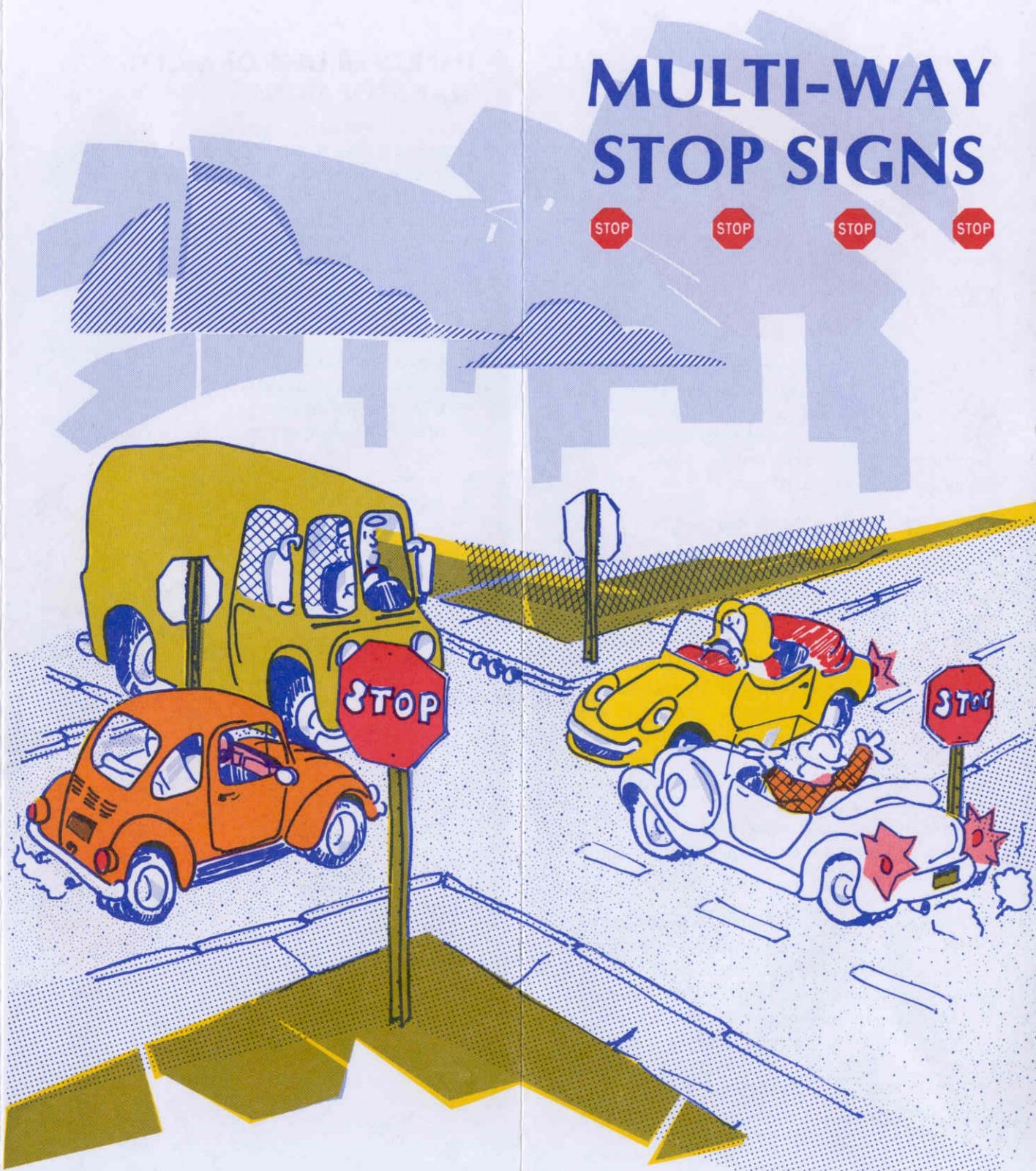
Most drivers are reasonable and prudent. However, when unreasonable traffic restrictions are imposed increased violations often occur. For example some drivers will make a partial or rolling stop rather than a complete stop. Others may tend not to obey the right-of-way rule, especially if they perceive that a stop sign is not appropriate at a particular intersection. This often results in an increase in right-angle accidents - the very type of accident the stop signs are installed to prevent. In such cases, the stop signs can create a false sense of security in a pedestrian and an attitude of contempt in a motorist. These two attitudes will conflict with tragic results. In addition, if the multi-way stop is not authorized, the governmental entity responsible for its installation can be exposed to the risk of a liability suit.

REMEMBER

Because multi-way stop signs cause substantial delays, confuse the motorist and can increase the risk of accidents they should be installed only where the law and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices allow.



MULTI-WAY STOP SIGNS





A stop sign can be one of our most valuable and effective traffic control devices when used at the right place and under the right conditions. It is intended to help drivers and pedestrians at an intersection determine who should yield the right-of-way.

MULTI-WAY STOP SIGNS

Well developed, nationally recognized guidelines help to indicate when multi-way stop signs become necessary. The use of "Multi-Way" stops (also known as "All-Way" or "4-Way" stop sign installations) generally is discouraged. However if the guidelines listed below are met installation may be appropriate.

- Where traffic signals are warranted and urgently needed, the multi-way stop is an interim measure that can be installed quickly to control traffic while arrangements are being made for the signal installations.
- An accident problem exists, as indicated by five or more reported accidents of a type susceptible to correction by a multi-way stop installation in a 12-month period. Such accidents include right and left turn collisions as well as right angle collisions.
- There must be certain minimum traffic volumes met.

IMPROPER USES OF MULTI-WAY STOP SIGNS

Often multi-way stop signs are installed at locations where they are not warranted. Misconceptions regarding the effects of stop signs often lead individuals to request their installation. Unfortunately pressure from misinformed but well intentioned individuals or groups can result in the unauthorized installation of a multi-way stop. Improper use can create problems such as:

- Causing accidents
- Increasing speeds between intersections
- Unnecessary delays
- Breeding disrespect for all traffic control devices
- Increasing vehicle operating costs
- Increasing noise and air pollution



SAFETY PROBLEMS

Unfortunately stop signs are perceived by many as cure-alls for traffic safety problems. Some people believe multi-way stops will slow the speed of traffic or create such an inconvenience that traffic will use other routes. Where stop signs are installed as "nuisances" or "speed control devices," there is an increase of intentional violations. In addition, the speed reduction that is desired is effective only in the immediate vicinity of the stop sign and often speeds actually are higher between intersections.