

Unwarranted Signs and Crosswalks

The City of Caldwell does not generally install cautionary signs such as “Autistic Child,” “Blind Child,” “Deaf Child,” “Children at Play,” or unwarranted STOP signs and crosswalks. The reasons include:

Lack of Effectiveness

Studies have shown that these types of signs and certain crosswalks do not provide the protection as intended and may provide a false sense of security and reliance that can create a more unsafe condition.

Marked crosswalks at unsignalized locations have been found to be more dangerous than unmarked crossings, which is why we generally confine crosswalk installations to school areas and signalized intersections where both motorists and pedestrians have come to expect and depend upon them.

Unwarranted Conditions

STOP signs and marked crosswalks should meet certain warranted conditions to be placed and may require an engineering study. For STOP signs, they may be warranted when certain traffic conditions, such as high traffic volume, poor visibility or a history of crashes create a safety hazard that cannot be addressed by other traffic control methods. Unwarranted STOP signs can lead to drivers going faster between intersections to save time or seeking alternate routes that increase gas usage and air pollution.

For crosswalks, certain thresholds should be met, (e.g., more than 20 pedestrians crossing for a minimum of two consecutive hours), and other factors, such as road classification, width and posted speed limit may require a pedestrian signal for a mid-block crosswalk. We closely follow the City of Nampa’s Pedestrian Crosswalk Policy found at <https://www.cityofnampa.us/1304/Pedestrian-Crosswalk-Policy>.

Enforceability

Cautionary signs provide no legal guidance on safe driving speeds and are unenforceable. They may create confusion and act as obstacles rather than aids to safety.

Sign Over Usage

For consideration of both signs and crosswalks, the City follows the guidance provided in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The MUTCD discourages the overuse of signs, as they can lead to driver confusion, disrespect of signs, visual clutter and reduced safety by hindering drivers' ability to quickly grasp critical information.