

MARKED CROSSWALKS

WHAT ARE THE OFFICIAL GUIDELINES?

The City of La Quinta follows the national guidelines outlined in the California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CAMUTCD). This Manual covers many aspects of the placement, construction and maintenance of every form of approved traffic control.

The CAMUTCD emphasizes uniformity of traffic control devices. A uniform device conforms to the regulations for dimensions, color, wording and graphics. The standard device should convey the same meaning at all times.

Consistent use of traffic control devices protects the clarity of their messages. As stated in the CAMUTCD, uniformity must also mean treating similar situations in the same way. This approach is very important when deciding on where to place marked crosswalks on the higher speed sections of the City road system.

WHAT IS A CROSSWALK?

Crosswalks are either marked or unmarked. The California Vehicle Code defines a "crosswalk" as the portion of a roadway at an intersection, which is an extension of the sidewalk lines of the intersecting street or is any other portion of a roadway, which is marked as a pedestrian crossing location by painted lines.

A marked crosswalk is any crosswalk, which is delineated by white or yellow painted markings placed on the pavement. All other crosswalk locations are therefore unmarked.



HOW ARE CROSSWALKS USED?

At marked or unmarked crosswalks drivers must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians. Crosswalks are marked mainly to encourage pedestrians to use a particular crossing. Studies conducted on crosswalks support

minimal installation of marked crosswalks at locations where there are no stop signs or traffic signals.

COLLISIONS AT MARKED CROSSWALKS

Recent research indicates that on multi-lane streets carrying volumes higher than 12,000 vehicles per day, pedestrian collisions are higher at marked versus unmarked crosswalks at uncontrolled locations especially on higher speed facilities.

This is because pedestrians often step off the curb into the crosswalk expecting drivers of vehicles approaching the crosswalk to stop. However, drivers frequently fail to stop and cause a collision.

At all crosswalks, both marked and unmarked, it is the pedestrian's responsibility to be cautious and alert before starting to cross the street.

Another frequent factor in causing collisions involves the driver of a vehicle in the lane nearest to the curb stopping for a pedestrian that is waiting to cross or who is already in the crosswalk. The driver of a second vehicle traveling in the lane next to the stopped vehicle tries to pass the stopped vehicle and hits the pedestrian crossing the street.

Pedestrians should be very cautious when walking in a crosswalk, especially when their visibility is limited by vehicles already stopped at the crosswalk as illustrated below:



WHERE CROSSWALKS ARE NORMALLY MARKED?

Crosswalks are marked at intersections where there is substantial conflict between vehicle and pedestrian movements, where significant pedestrian concentrations occur, where pedestrians could not otherwise recognize the proper place to cross, and where traffic movements are controlled. Examples of such locations are:

- ✓ Approved school crossings.
- ✓ Signalized and four way stop intersections.

It is the City's general policy not to paint crosswalks at mid-block locations where traffic is not controlled by stop signs or traffic

signals. Painted crosswalks are generally used where it is necessary to direct pedestrians along the safest route.

WHAT ARE SPECIAL SCHOOL CROSSWALKS?

Marked crosswalks established adjacent to a school building or school grounds must be painted yellow. Other established marked crosswalks may be painted yellow if the nearest point of the crosswalk is not more than 600 feet from a school building or grounds. Crosswalks are generally marked at all intersections on the suggested route to school, available from your local school. They are also generally marked where there is high conflict between vehicles and students (while crossing), where students are permitted to cross between intersections, or where students could not otherwise cross.

REQUESTS AND INQUIRIES

If you have questions, requests or suggestions concerning traffic, call the Public Works Department at

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