

Are crosswalk flags effective?

The **Crosswalk Safety Society of Nova Scotia** believes in the benefits of crosswalk flags.

Pedestrians tell us that they feel safer when they carry a flag.

Drivers tell us the flags in the roadside buckets get their attention and alert them to the crosswalk.

People like crosswalk flags, but is there any evidence they are effective?

Yes!



First, a 2006 report from the Transportation Research Board found they improved driver yielding rates compared to other, more expensive methods.¹

Recently, HRM staff produced a report on the use of our flags suggesting even better results than the national study!²

And now, the most recent vehicle-pedestrian collision data in HRM shows the biggest reduction in accidents occurred in the police divisions with the highest number of crosswalk flag installations.³

**Make your neighbourhood safer.
Contact us to arrange for crosswalk flags in your community.**

1 Transportation Research Board (TRB) Report 562

In 2006 the report 'IMPROVING PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AT UNSIGNALIZED CROSSINGS' was published by the Transit Cooperative Research Program of the Transportation Research Board.

“... anecdotal information indicated these crossing flags are effective in improving driver yielding behavior”

“The study sites with crossing flags had motorist yielding rates that ranged from 46 to 79 percent, with an average of 65 percent compliance.”

This compares to average effectiveness of

- 47% for overhead flashing amber beacons,
- 34% for median refuge islands, and only
- 17% for high-visibility, e.g. Fluorescent yellow-green crossing signs

The Report concludes

“pedestrian crossing flags and in-street crossing signs also were effective in prompting motorist yielding”

2 Halifax Transportation and Public Works

In the June 6, 2016 Staff report on crosswalk flags it was reported that as part of the 2015 traffic data collection staff undertook some observations and assessments of crosswalk locations with flags. Nine sites were assessed with locations representing different crosswalk and roadway types.

Staff observed overall driver yielding behaviour of **87%** of all crossings resulting in proper driver yielding, a result that far surpasses that of the TRB study.

3 Vehicle-Pedestrian Collision Data

Between October 15, 2014 and October 31, 2015 there were 44 installations of crosswalk flags in HRM. By Halifax Regional Police (HRP)/RCMP divisions they were located as follows

Police District/Division	Installations	Percentage
East (Dartmouth)	27	61%
Central (Peninsula)	8	18%
West (Bedford +)	5	12%
RCMP	4	9%
Total	44	100%

Compare that to the total vehicle-pedestrian collisions as reported by HRP/RCMP for the November 2015 through April 2016 (most current data released) period as compared to a year earlier.

Police District/Division	Percentage of Installations	Nov 2014 – Apr 2015 ²	Nov 2015 – Apr 2016 ²	Change
East (Dartmouth)	61%	38	17	(55 %)
Central (Peninsula)	18%	57	48	(16 %)
West (Bedford +)	12%	29	27	(7 %)
RCMP	9%	19	25	+ 32 %
Total	100%	143	117	(18 %)

As can be seen there is a strong correlation between the areas with the greatest number of crosswalk flag installations and reductions in vehicle-pedestrian collisions.

This early data reinforces what people have been telling us: crosswalk flags make a difference. In large enough numbers they appear to be impacting driver and pedestrian behaviour, even at crosswalks without flags.

Provided by the
Crosswalk Safety Society of Nova Scotia
crosswalksafety@eastlink.ca
www.crosswalksafety.ca