

Flashing signals hinder safety, road board finds

Flashing signals will be a thing of the past at 55 area intersections. Within 60 days, these will be changed to a 24-hour stop-and-go operation.

The board of Oakland County Road Commissioners ordered the change after a staff study determined that right-angle accidents are significantly higher during periods of flashing signal operation at such locations.

"Right-angle accidents generally result in personal injuries, which we're committed to preventing in every way possible. It has been our policy since 1977 to give priority to actions which can improve the safety of our road system," said road commission chairman Richard V. Vogt.

"THE STUDY was done as part of a comprehensive highway risk management program we initiated in 1977. Of all the studies we have done since, this is the most conclusive, and we cannot ignore its clear message," Vogt said.

"The study compared before- and after-accident data at several locations where signals had been changed from part-time flashing operation to full-

time stop and go, and data on other locations that continued to function part-time flashing throughout the same period.

"Several factors in addition to stop-go vs. flashing operation were considered, but the conclusion was inescapable that merely going to 24-hour stop-go operation at major arterials could significantly improve safety.

"Flashing signal operation was found to be not a significant safety factor at other types of intersections, such as that of an arterial with a lesser-used local road and will continue to be used in such situations under our jurisdiction.

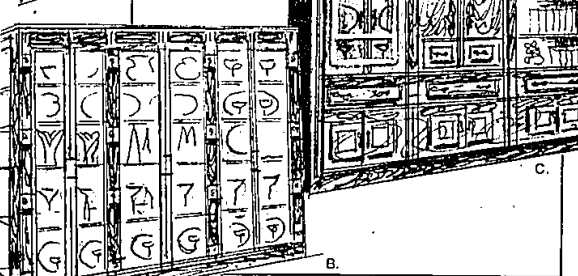
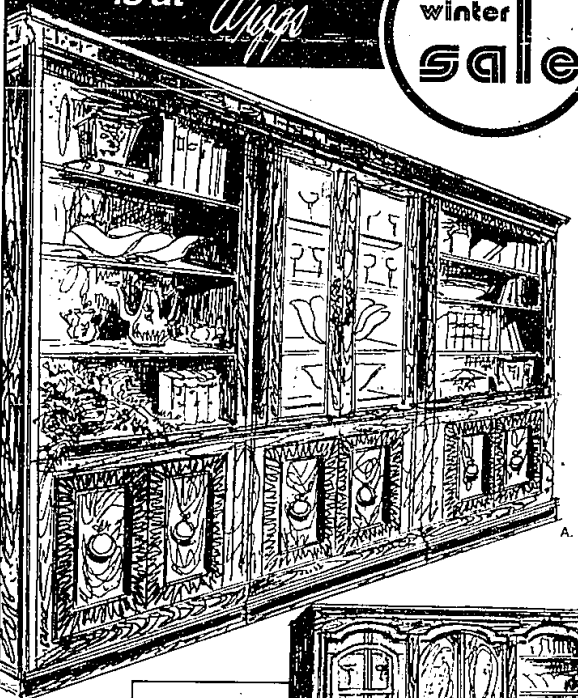
"WE DO NOT have jurisdiction over all intersections of arterial roads within the county. At intersections with state highways, which are all numbered 'I' 'M' and 'US' routes, the Michigan Department of Transportation (M-DOT) has jurisdiction.

"We have informed M-DOT of our findings and recommended consideration of eliminating flashing signals at such intersections."

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