



New Mexico DEPARTMENT OF  
**TRANSPORTATION**

**Michelle Lujan Grisham**, Governor  
**Michael R. Sandoval**, *Cabinet Secretary*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Secure your load, prevent roadside litter, save lives**

SANTA FE – The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) recognizes June 6 as “Secure Your Load Day,” a traffic safety campaign that encourages drivers to properly secure their loads to prevent roadway litter and crashes.

“Driving with an unsecured cargo is both against the law and extremely dangerous,” said Transportation Secretary Mike Sandoval. “Before drivers haul anything they should ask themselves if they would feel safe traveling behind their vehicle, is there a risk of debris or cargo falling or blowing out of the vehicle and if they had to break suddenly, what would happen?”

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, at 55 miles per hour, a 20-pound object that falls from a vehicle strikes with an impact of a 1,000 pounds.

National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) data for 2019 showed unsecured loads and road debris contributed to 739 deaths, more than 17,000 injuries and nearly 90,000 property damage crashes.

Washington resident Robin Abel started the national ‘Secure Your Load’ movement in 2004 after an unsecured load blinded and nearly killed her daughter, who was struck by a piece of particle board that flew out of a trailer ahead of her vehicle. At that time, there were no federal or state laws making unsecured loads a crime.

New Mexico law requires drivers to secure their loads or face a \$300 fine for dropping trash or debris on state roadways.

Fallen material from vehicles makes up about half of the debris littering roads, adding to the public cost of roadside litter pick-up. In 2020, the NMDOT accrued nearly 89,000 labor hours picking up road debris at a cost of \$3.2 million.

To secure cargo in your vehicle or trailer:

- Don’t overload or rely on the weight of your load to hold objects in place

- Tie loads down with rope, netting or straps
- Cover the load with a sturdy tarp, especially when hauling loose material like branches, logs, or miscellaneous objects
- Always double check to make sure your load is secure to prevent shifting
- Animals should be properly secured as well

For more information go to [www.secureyourload.com](http://www.secureyourload.com)

NMDOT partnered with New Mexico State Police to show examples of unsecured loads caught on camera in our state. The full video can be viewed [here](#).

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