



KAY IVEY
GOVERNOR

ALABAMA LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

201 SOUTH UNION STREET, SUITE 300 | P.O. BOX 304115 | MONTGOMERY, AL 36130-4115
PHONE 334.676.6000 | WWW.ALEA.GOV



HAL TAYLOR
SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 6, 2023

Paving the Way to Safety: Secure Your Load, Avoid Litter and Debris in the Road

MONTGOMERY — To help keep everyone safe on America’s roads, the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) is partnering with the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to remind all drivers to Drive Safe: Secure Your Load, Avoid Litter and Debris in the Road. It is every driver’s responsibility to ensure all cargo is safely secured and the load does not fall or spill while in transit. Items not properly secured pose a safety risk on our state’s roadways.

Every U.S. state has a law making it illegal for a driver to operate a non-commercial motor vehicle with an unsecured load. Violating these laws can carry state-specific penalties of up to \$5,000. Objects or debris can fall from vehicles and strike other vehicles or pedestrians, causing serious injuries or fatalities. For this reason, it is essential to properly contain your cargo.

ALEA Secretary Hal Taylor said, “Many drivers think that only commercial vehicle drivers are responsible for securing their cargo. We want citizens to know that it is every driver’s responsibility to ensure their cargo is properly secured to their vehicle to protect other vehicles, drivers, and bystanders. Troopers within [ALEA’s Motor Carrier Safety Unit \(MCSU\)](#) are dedicated to educating drivers, as well as companies, about the importance of properly securing loads in any vehicle or trailer before transporting to reduce unsecured-load incidents and prevent crashes on Alabama’s roadways.”

From 2016 to 2020, an average of 16,878 people were injured per year nationwide when a vehicle collided with another object that was not properly secured. During this same time period, an average of 732 people per year lost their lives. Non-commercial passenger vehicles accounted for 81 percent of these crashes, in which cargo was not properly secured.

Though June 6 marks National Secure Your Load Day nationwide, ALEA has been actively partnering with People Against a Littered State (PALS) in Alabama to spread information and bring awareness to the importance of securing your load, as well as preventing litter on the state’s scenic roadways. In 2022, ALEA first teamed up with PALS to develop Litter Law Brochures, which were distributed by ALEA’s Public Affairs Officers at safety events and placed in Driver License Examining Offices across the state. In March 2023, ALEA and PALS launched a statewide anti-litter campaign known as [‘Secure Your Load and Avoid Litter in the Road’](#) in an effort to save lives, prevent damage and keep Alabama beautiful.

Alabama PALS is a nonprofit statewide organization dedicated to providing and implementing anti-litter programs for all Alabama counties, cities, communities, schools and other groups

striving to enhance their environmental and economic impact through a litter-free, cleaner and more beautiful environment.

Director of ALEA's Department of Public Safety (DPS) Colonel Jon Archer reiterated that not only is dropping trash or debris from your vehicle against the law, but it is also extremely dangerous. Alabama State Law allows a fine of up to \$3,000 and 100 hours of community service for a misdemeanor littering offense. Learn about Alabama Littering Laws [here](#).

"Amidst the flurry of daily activities, it is vital not to underestimate the significance of diligently securing your vehicle's cargo. Before transporting a load, inspect and make sure to secure your load from every angle – top, sides, and rear – leaving no room for anything to be blown away or fall out. Ensure your load is safe even in unexpected scenarios such as sudden braking, encountering speed bumps, or potential collisions with other vehicles," Colonel Archer advised.

Follow these tips to ensure you properly secure cargo:

- Tie it down with rope, netting, or straps.
- Tie large objects directly to your vehicle or trailer.
- Consider covering the entire load with a sturdy tarp or netting.
- Don't overload your vehicle or trailer.
- Always double-check your load to make sure it's secure.

For more information on this campaign, please visit: [Secure Your Load](#). For additional information on PALS and how to help keep Alabama litter-free, visit: [ALPALS - Alabama People Against a Littered State](#).

###