



Tool Kit

Secure Your Load Media Campaign

May 24-June 17, 2021

From May 24 through June 17, 2021, the King County Solid Waste Division is joining the WA State Department of Ecology, Washington State Patrol, Washington State Department of Transportation, Washington Traffic Safety Commission, and other counties across the state to spread the public safety message about the importance of securing loads. Secure your load for safer roads!

June 6 is Secure Your Load Day

June 6 marks the five-year anniversary of the “Secure Your Load Day” safety campaign. Secure Your Load Day was conceived by King County resident Robin Abel, whose daughter was severely injured by an unsecured load in 2004. This day is set aside each year to remember those injured or killed because of unsecured loads and to increase public awareness of the issue. To learn more, visit secureyourload.com.

This Tool Kit has been developed for cities, public agencies, and other stakeholders and partners to help spread this important public safety message.

Contents of this Tool Kit include:

- Key messages
- Talking points
 - National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) Facts
 - Reporting Unsecured Loads
- State laws
- How to Secure a Load
- Newsletter blurb
- Social media posts
- Picture options

You can also share posts directly from Solid Waste Division social media channels:

- Instagram: @kingcountyswd
- Facebook: @kingcountysolidwaste
- Twitter: @kcdnrp

For more information about Secure Your Load, visit kingcounty.gov/secure-your-load, or contact Solid Waste Division Communications Planner Polly Young at polly.young@kingcounty.gov, or 206-477-5266.

For questions related to this tool kit, contact Solid Waste Division Communications Specialist Hilary Leonard at HLeonard@kingcounty.gov or 206-263-6842.

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Key Messages

- Unsecured loads are dangerous, illegal, expensive, and preventable.
- Properly secured loads prevent crashes, injuries, and saves lives.
- Unsecured loads result in roadside litter that is expensive to pick up.
- Securing your load is quick and easy. It only takes a few minutes and basic supplies to properly secure a load.

Talking points

1. King County Solid Waste Division encourages everyone to properly secure their vehicle loads to help keep roadways safe and clean and avoid fines. ***Secure your load for safer roads.***
2. A load is secure when nothing in the vehicle or trailer and any covering used can slide, shift, fall onto the roadway, or become airborne.
3. In 2020, the Washington State Patrol contacted 4,892 motorists for failing to secure their vehicles' load.
4. 12 million pounds of litter is dropped on Washington's roads and highways, annually. About 40% of that trash comes from unsecured vehicle loads.
5. According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2019 there were 739 deaths, 17,367 injuries and 89,915 property damage crashes caused by unsecured loads and road debris.
6. Motorists in Washington face a fine of up to \$5,000 plus jail time if an item falls off their vehicle and injures someone.
7. Law enforcement can issue a \$228 fine for transporting an unsecured load.
8. State law requires operators of transfer stations and landfills to assess a fee on customers who arrive at the facilities with unsecured loads.
9. State efforts removed a whopping 4.8 million pounds of litter from our state's highways and roads in 2019, and it's still just a fraction of the estimated 12 million pounds of litter that is deposited each year.

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10. Statewide litter stats 2019: <https://ecology.wa.gov/Waste-Toxics/Solid-waste-litter/Litter/Litter-statistics>
11. “Secure Your Load Day” is recognized every year on June 6th to remember those injured or killed because of unsecured loads. It was conceived by King County resident Robin Abel, whose daughter was severely injured by an unsecured load. For more information, visit secureyourload.com.

National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) Facts

According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2019 there were 739 deaths, 17,367 injuries and 89,915 property damage crashes caused by unsecured loads and road debris.

Reporting Unsecured Loads

Dial 911 immediately if you see a dangerously unsecured load. If you have witnessed or been the victim of a lost load, or observed an unsecured load, you can report it by contacting the [Washington State Patrol’s Load Loss and Securement](http://WashingtonStatePatrol.com) website and completing a Loss of Load Reporting form.

State Laws

- Driving with an unsecured load has been against the law in Washington State at least as far back as 1961.
- State law requires all loads transported on every public roadway to be secured and imposes monetary penalties up to criminal charges if property damage or injuries result from the unsecured load.
- State law requires each county to charge a fee for a person arriving at a transfer station or landfill with an unsecured load.
- Solid waste facilities around the state charge a fee to customers who arrive with an unsecured load. At King County’s solid waste facilities, the fee for an unsecured load is \$25.
- State law sets minimum fines for littering and illegal dumping. Littering is punishable by fines ranging from \$50 to \$5,000 in Washington. The largest fines are for “lit debris” — primarily cigarettes — and for large items that can cause accidents.

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- Local police departments, sheriff's offices, or health departments carry out most enforcement of litter law and many cities and counties have adopted local ordinances that are stricter than the state law.

How to Secure a Load

Securing your load is quick and easy. It only takes a few minutes and basic supplies to properly secure a load. Follow these simple tips:

1. Place lighter items below heavier items to keep them in place. Securely fasten the heavy items directly to your vehicle.
2. Tie down items using rope, netting, straps, or chains. Securely fasten large items directly to your vehicle.
3. Add extra protection by covering the entire load with a tarp or netting. Make sure that any covering is securely tied down.
4. Don't overload vehicles or trailers.
5. Double-check to be sure the load is secure.
6. Speed, weight, and gravity are not load securing devices. Ropes, straps, and netting are load securing devices.
7. View practical tips for securing loads in videos from the [King County Solid Waste Division](#), [Washington State Department of Ecology](#), and the [Washington State Patrol](#).

Newsletter Blurb

The King County Solid Waste Division and the Washington State Department of Ecology encourage all residents to take the time to properly secure their loads to improve road safety, avoid fees, and prevent litter. According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2019 there were 739 deaths, 17,367 injuries and 89,915 property damage crashes caused by unsecured loads and road debris. It only takes a few minutes and basic supplies such as rope, straps, and netting to secure a load. View practical tips and videos for securing loads on the [King County Solid Waste Division's website](#).

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Social Media Posts

These posts will work for Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Images below can be used interchangeably. To assist with tracking, please use **#SecureYourLoad**.

- Don't put other motorists lives at risk. Secure your load for safer roads. Learn how at www.kingcounty.gov/secure-your-load.
- A load is secure when nothing in the vehicle or trailer can slide, shift, or fall onto the roadway, or become airborne. Learn more at www.kingcounty.gov/secure-your-load.
- Even the smallest item falling from a vehicle can be deadly. See how to secure your load at www.kingcounty.gov/secure-your-load
- It only takes a few easy steps to secure your load and prevent crashes, injuries, and save lives. See how easy it is <https://youtu.be/aFk45Sbye3o>, or www.kingcounty.gov/secure-your-load.
- Ropes, netting, tarps and tie downs are all easy tools you can use to properly secure your load. Looking for more tips? Visit www.kingcounty.gov/secure-your-load.
- Even a "quick trip" to a recycling and garbage transfer station or helping a friend move requires tying down and securing all items. www.kingcounty.gov/secure-your-load.
- Anyone arriving at a King County garbage and recycling facility with an unsecured load is subject to a \$25 fee that is strictly enforced. Don't risk it. Secure Your Load! www.kingcounty.gov/secure-your-load.
- These pictures show why tying down, covering, and securing your load is so important. www.kingcounty.gov/secure-your-load.
- Dial 911 immediately if you see a dangerous unsecured load or hazardous debris in the roadway! www.kingcounty.gov/secure-your-load.

Thanks to King County resident Robin Abel, "Maria's Law" makes it a criminal offense if an improperly secured load results in injury or death. <https://vimeo.com/131059611>. www.kingcounty.gov/secure-your-load.

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Picture Options

(right click on the picture to save)



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