



NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION

# TRAFFIC SAFETY NEWS

## NMDOT TRAFFIC SAFETY DIVISION

NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | MOBILITY FOR EVERYONE |  
WWW.DOT.STATE.NM.US

JUL-SEP 2021



2021  
**PUBLIC SERVICE  
AWARD**  
RECIPIENT

**SAFER NEW MEXICO NOW**

IN RECOGNITION OF YOUR  
LEADERSHIP IN THE TRAFFIC SAFETY  
COMMUNITY AND FOR CHAMPIONING  
KEY LEGISLATION TO ADVANCE  
TRAFFIC SAFETY IN NEW MEXICO.

THE AWARD WAS PRESENTED  
AT THE VIRTUAL 2021 LIFESAVERS  
NATIONAL CONFERENCE  
ON APRIL 27, 2021.

### Safer New Mexico Now Receives Distinguished Traffic Safety Public Service Award

SOURCE: NMDOT

The New Mexico Department of Transportation Traffic Safety Division (NMDOT TSD) is pleased to announce Safer New Mexico Now (Safer) was selected as one of the 15 winners of the 2021 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Public Service Award.

"Safety is NHTSA's top priority, and we depend on our local and state safety partners to help us save lives on our nation's roads," said NHTSA Acting Administrator Dr. Steven Cliff.

Safer received a plaque with the following recognition:

Lisa Kelloff, Safer New Mexico Now, Albuquerque, New Mexico: In recognition of your leadership in the traffic safety community and for championing key legislation to advance traffic safety in New Mexico.

**The Traffic Safety Division would like to congratulate and recognize Safer for this great honor," said NMDOT Traffic Safety Director Jeff Barela. "The work that Safer and other partners in their traffic safety network does truly makes New Mexico roads safer for the traveling public."**

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### NMDOT & MVD Joint Motorcycle Testing Venture

The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and the Motor Vehicle Division (MVD) recently conducted a joint training venture with the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) to reinvigorate motorcycle licensure testing statewide. The event was held in Albuquerque on May 3, 2020, where Department leads Cora Anaya, the Traffic Safety Division Motorcycle Training Program Manager (NMDOT), and Htet Gonzales, Deputy Director of Field Operations (NMMVD) were joined by MVD Bureau Chiefs to participate in hands on application of the motorcycle riding test, which qualifies riders in New Mexico to receive the motorcycle endorsement on their license.

The group accomplished a myriad of objectives outlined in the training including: overview of the motorcycle laws, testing requirements, and standardization of the state testing program. The hands on training was accomplished real time on an actual testing site range with motorcycles ridden by MSF personnel. Each of the personnel present are qualified to set up, administer, and score the national motorcycle national Rider Skills Test (RST). The plan now is to take this initiative back to their jurisdictions, and qualify subordinates to conduct the testing statewide.

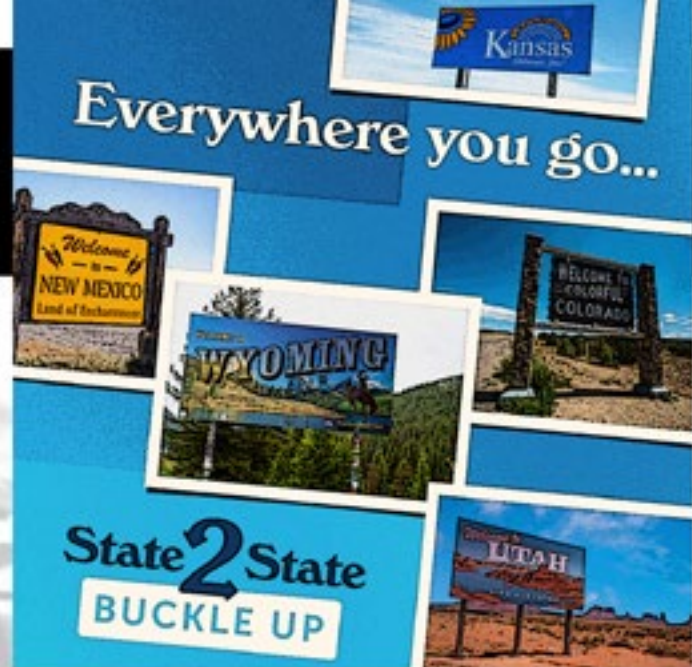
Subsequent to the training, MVD reports that they rolled out the Train the Trainer program statewide. Htet Gonzales stated **"MVD appreciated the opportunity to partner with NMDOT and MSF on this important venture. The training was great! It was interactive, thorough, and valuable. This was the first step to realign testing requirements and ensure standardization of motorcycle riding tests across the state. Our Bureau Chiefs have started providing this training to their perspective field offices. We look forward to future coordinated efforts."**

Both NMDOT and MVD event was an overwhelming success. This will be the first time in decades New Mexico will have this capability statewide. The overall goal is to better serve New Mexicans, and improve rider safety on our roads and highways.

# Multistate Campaign to Raise Seat Belt Safety Awareness

FIVE STATES JOIN NEW MEXICO TO INCREASE SEAT BELT USE ACROSS STATE LINES

SOURCE: NMDOT



The New Mexico Department of Transportation and local law enforcement agencies join Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Utah, and Wyoming reminding travelers to buckle up. The 'State2State. Buckle up' campaign wants travelers to stay buckled in every state no matter how far they are going.

The campaign coincides with the start of the national *Click it or Ticket* seat belt enforcement period, beginning May 24. Participating states will alert travelers on social media and digital highway signs.

**"Click It or Ticket is not about citations; it's about saving lives," said Transportation Secretary Mike Sandoval.**

In 2019, there were 9,466 unbuckled people killed in crashes in the United States. In New Mexico there were 141 traffic fatalities involving an unbuckled driver or passenger.

Drivers with out-of-state licenses were involved with 37.5 % of all fatalities on Interstates according to New Mexico data ran from 2016-2019. Of those fatalities, 42% were not restrained. In the fatal crashes involving out-of-state drivers, California, Arizona, Texas, and Colorado had the most drivers in fatal crashes on interstates.

To help make New Mexico roads a safer place, the New Mexico Department of Transportation and statewide law enforcement agencies encourage all drivers and passengers to do their part and buckle up no matter what state they call home.

**"As the summer travel season gets rolling, we are going to see more travelers from neighboring states in New Mexico," said Sandoval. "We want those travelers to be safe and buckle up, so they don't miss anything our beautiful state has to offer. Buckling up is the simplest thing you can do to prevent injury or death in a crash. Sadly, we see the results of not wearing a seat belts all the time. We see the loss of life and often, these tragedies could have been prevented."**

Seat belts reduce the risk of injury or death in a crash by 50%, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. New Mexico law states each occupant of a motor vehicle having a total weight of ten thousand pounds or less manufactured with safety belts in compliance with federal motor vehicle safety standard number 208 shall have a safety belt properly fastened about his body when the vehicle is in motion on any street or highway. New Mexico's current seat belt use rate is 91.8%, which is above the national average of 90%.

**State2State. Buckle up** is a multi-state seat belt safety campaign led by local transportation and law enforcement agencies from New Mexico, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Utah, and Wyoming. The summer-long seat belt awareness launches alongside National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) and the New Mexico Click It or Ticket May seat belt enforcement period.

## **Click It or Ticket Day and Night**

High-visibility seat belt enforcement is important 24 hours a day, but nighttime is especially deadly for unbuckled occupants. In 2019, 55% of passenger vehicle occupants killed at night (6 p.m.–6 a.m.) were not wearing their seat belts.

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CLICK IT OR TICKET](#)



## VIRTUAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

### COORDINATORS' SYMPOSIUM

**MAY 5, 2021**

NMDOT TRAFFIC SAFETY DIVISION  
AND SAFER NEW MEXICO NOW

More than 200 New Mexico law enforcement personnel, representatives from the New Mexico Department of Transportation Traffic Safety Division (NMDOT TSD), and national speakers gathered virtually on May 5 to attend the annual Law Enforcement Coordinators' Symposium (LECS). The annual event is hosted by the NMDOT TSD and Safer New Mexico Now (Safer), a nonprofit organization that leads effective efforts to advance traffic safety by coordinating innovative traffic safety programs, and maintaining meaningful partnerships with law enforcement agencies, healthcare providers, injury prevention specialists, advocates, educators, and families.

The LECS is conducted for representatives from New Mexico law enforcement agencies participating in NMDOT TSD-sponsored enhanced enforcement campaigns, including, ENDWI, BKLUP, and STEP. The LECS provides law enforcement representatives the opportunity to obtain current program information, legal and administrative updates, and to receive continuing education units.

This year's event featured local and national speakers presenting on a variety of topics, including leadership genetics in police departments, reinvesting in traffic safety and the impacts of COVID-19 on law enforcement, traffic safety and case law updates, investing in nighttime seat belt enforcement, and motivation for traffic enforcement. This was the second year LECS has been held virtually. The event was well received by attendees, receiving high marks in all areas of the event evaluation.

# Part 2

## SAVE THE DATE!

**LECS Part 2: Program Management**  
will be held virtually August 18, 2021.

This secondary portion will focus on regional and State updates and important program requirements and guidelines.

[CLICK TO REGISTER](#)

## Traffic Deaths Reach 13-Year High During Pandemic Despite Far Fewer Drivers On the Road

SOURCE: <https://www.ghsa.org/resources/news-releases/GHSA/NHTSA-Pandemic-Traffic-Deaths21>

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported that 38,680 people were killed on U.S. roadways in 2020 – the highest number since 2007 and an increase of 7.2% from the year before. Traffic deaths surged even though there was a significant decline in driving during the COVID-19 pandemic. Factoring in a 13.2% decrease in miles driven, the fatality rate in 2020 was 1.37 deaths per 100 million miles driven, up from 1.11 the year before.

This new data points to another tragic outcome of the pandemic – more deaths on our roadways caused by risky and dangerous driving like speeding, impaired driving and not wearing a seat belt. It's mind-boggling and extremely frustrating to see the tremendous loss of life from COVID compounded by preventable traffic crashes. As more drivers get back behind the wheel this summer, the spike in traffic deaths is an ominous sign for the safety of our nation's road users.

Throughout the pandemic, Americans have worked collectively to protect themselves and each other by wearing masks, social distancing and getting vaccinated. We must exhibit that same diligence when it comes to safety on our roads. Slow down, buckle up, stow your phone and never drive impaired. By doing so, we can end this deadly driving epidemic and save thousands of lives.

## Safer New Mexico Now Receives Distinguished Traffic Safety Public Service Award

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Safer was founded in 1985 by H.J. "Doc" and Lena Weiler after their son was killed in an unbelted crash. The Weiler family advocated for new legislation to support traffic safety laws in New Mexico with the goal of reducing roadway injuries and deaths, which at the time, New Mexico held the highest crash-related fatality rate in the nation.

Today, Safer continues their mission to lead effective efforts to advance traffic safety across New Mexico through car seat inspection and education, hosting free, monthly car seat clinics statewide. Their efforts continued during the pandemic by providing virtual inspections via Zoom for parents and caregivers. In addition, Safer provides teen driving and underage drinking prevention education resources, and coordinates educational community outreach, and law enforcement training programs in cooperation with the NMDOT TSD and law enforcement agencies statewide.

**"Safer New Mexico Now is honored and humbled to receive the prestigious NHTSA 2021 Public Service Award," said Safer CEO Lisa Kelloff. "We would like to express our sincere appreciation for this national recognition. We would also like to recognize we did not get here alone. The long-standing partnerships we have with NHTSA and the NMDOT TSD, as well as law enforcement agencies, healthcare administrations, national organizations, and traffic safety advocates statewide, has allowed Safer to help protect New Mexico families on our roadways for more than three decades," added Kelloff.**

**"Additionally, I would like to thank the Safer Team, each of whom is deeply dedicated to the Safer mission and exemplifies Safer's values," said Kelloff. "Their tireless efforts, especially through these unprecedented times, speaks volumes of their commitment to helping others. Collectively, they have made the State of New Mexico a safer place for us all. This award will allow us to continue to build and maintain meaningful change in traffic safety. We are grateful to work with and serve the families and communities of New Mexico."**



## Guidelines for Safe & Responsible Travel In New Mexico

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF COVID-19 IN NEW MEXICO, PLEASE VISIT THE NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

If traveling to New Mexico is on the horizon for you, we invite you to take a moment to review some helpful guidelines when visiting New Mexico.

Responsible travel will keep travel possible. We've made great strides in suppressing spread of COVID-19 on our path back to a new "normal," but there's still more work to do.

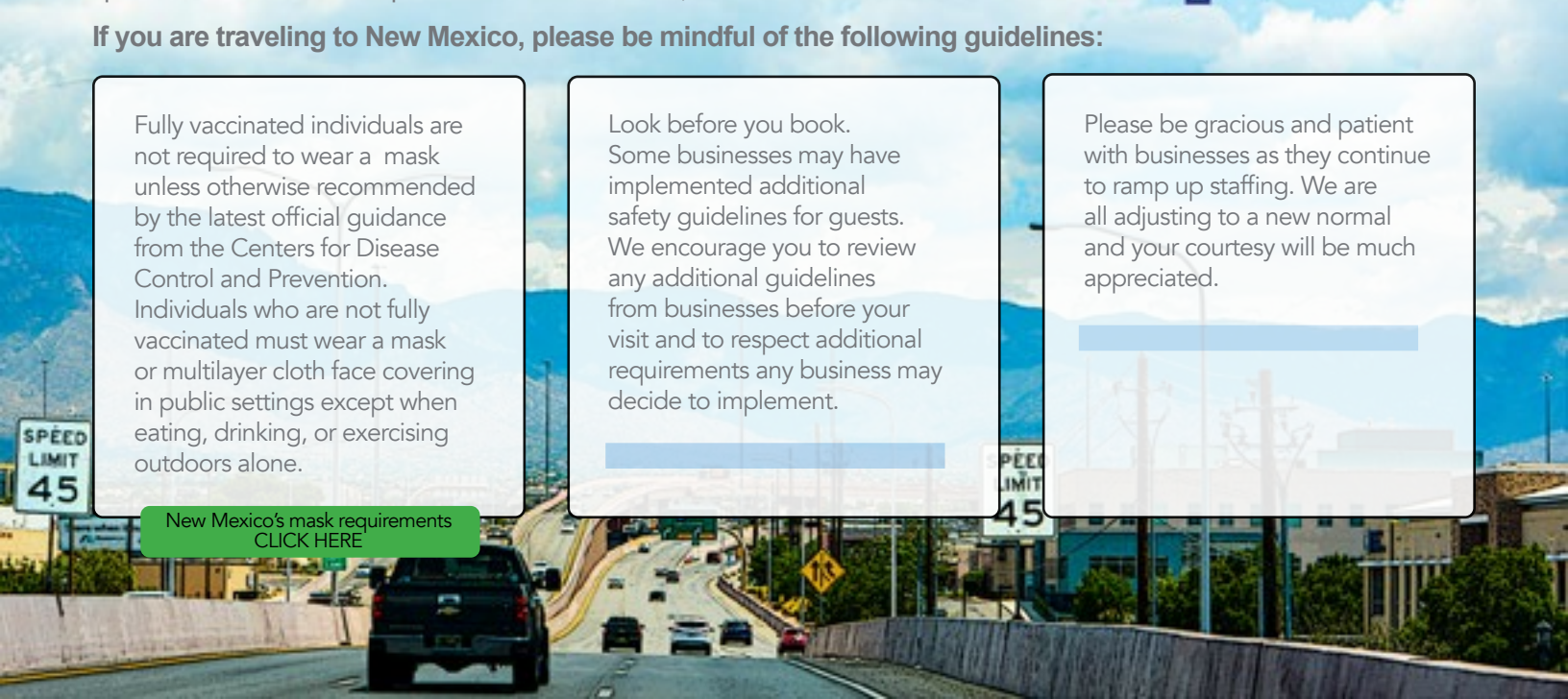
**If you are traveling to New Mexico, please be mindful of the following guidelines:**

Fully vaccinated individuals are not required to wear a mask unless otherwise recommended by the latest official guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Individuals who are not fully vaccinated must wear a mask or multilayer cloth face covering in public settings except when eating, drinking, or exercising outdoors alone.

New Mexico's mask requirements  
[CLICK HERE](#)

Look before you book. Some businesses may have implemented additional safety guidelines for guests. We encourage you to review any additional guidelines from businesses before your visit and to respect additional requirements any business may decide to implement.

Please be gracious and patient with businesses as they continue to ramp up staffing. We are all adjusting to a new normal and your courtesy will be much appreciated.







Due to ongoing updates to the calendar of events, please **CLICK HERE** or visit [www.safernm.org](http://www.safernm.org) for the most current list.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### UPCOMING IN-PERSON Law Enforcement Training Courses

**REGISTER**

FRIDAY  
**JUL 16, 2021**

**IN-PERSON STEP Training**  
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
San Juan County Safety City  
428 County Road 6480  
KIRTLAND

**REGISTER**

FRIDAY  
**AUG 20, 2021**

**IN-PERSON DWI Checkpoint  
Operation Training**  
2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.  
Eddy County Sheriff's Office  
1502 Corrales Dr.  
CARLSBAD

**REGISTER**

**VIRTUAL**  
LAW ENFORCEMENT COORDINATORS'  
SYMPOSIUM: PART 2

**PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

**AUG 18, 2021**  
8:30-11:30 AM

**REGISTER**

FRIDAY  
**AUG 27, 2021**

**IN-PERSON STEP Training**  
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Las Vegas Police Department  
LAS VEGAS

All participants are required to follow COVID-Safe protocols.

### UPCOMING IN-PERSON Car Seat Fitting Stations

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY / (800) 231-6145

THURSDAY  
**JUL 1, 2021**

**IN-PERSON Car Seat  
Fitting Station**  
4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
Sisbarro Buick-GMC  
425 W. Boutz Rd.  
LAS CRUCES

THURSDAY  
**JUL 15, 2021**

**IN-PERSON Car Seat  
Fitting Station**  
3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Carlsbad Police  
Department  
602 W. Mermod St.  
CARLSBAD

SATURDAY  
**JUL 17, 2021**

**IN-PERSON Car Seat  
Fitting Station**  
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Artesia Fire Department  
3300 W. Main  
ARTESIA

### UPCOMING VIRTUAL Car Seat Checks

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY / (800) 231-6145

FIRST AND THIRD  
**WEDNESDAYS OF  
EACH MONTH**



SECOND  
**SATURDAY OF  
EACH MONTH**

[CLICK TO VISIT CALENDAR](#)

#### July

Summer Enforcement Campaign  
June 20-September 27, 2021

July 1-8: Mini Superblitz  
(ENDWI and BKLUP)

July 16: STEP Training, Kirtland

July 20-23 :National Child Passenger  
Safety Certification Training Program,  
Santa Fe

July 31: National Heatstroke  
Prevention Day

#### August

Summer Enforcement Campaign  
June 20-September 27, 2021

August 3: National Night Out

August 18: LECS Part 2, Program Management

August 20-Sept 6: Driver Sober or Get Pulled Over  
(National DWI Crackdown)

August 20: DWI Checkpoint Operation Training,  
Carlsbad

August 20: CPST Renewal Course, Rio Rancho

August 27: STEP Training, Las Vegas

August 28: Casey's Car Seat Clinic, Rio Rancho

#### September

**National Baby Safety Awareness Month**

Summer Enforcement Campaign  
June 20-September 27, 2021

September 1-7: National Childhood  
Injury Prevention Week

September 17: STEP Training,  
Doña Ana County

September 19-25: Child Passenger  
Safety Week

September 25: National Seat Check  
Saturday (Statewide Clinics)

## Safer New Mexico Now Hosts At-Scene Traffic Crash Reconstruction Training Series

Safer New Mexico Now and the Institute of Police Technology and Management (IPTM), recently hosted an At-Scene Traffic Crash Reconstruction Training Series in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Twenty-nine students from 10 agencies statewide successfully completed all three courses in the series.

Through a variety of hands-on learning scenarios and controlled vehicle experiments, the students learned to analyze all the information to determine what happened before, during, and after a collision. These officers are now equipped with the skills necessary skills to conduct a thorough traffic crash investigation and properly document findings for courtroom presentation. The fully-trained officers have an in-depth understanding of the proper procedures for measuring, scale diagramming, and photographing in order to record physical evidence and essential facts available only at the crash scene.



The course is offered in collaboration with the New Mexico Department of Transportation Traffic Safety Division and is part of the New Mexico Law Enforcement Training Program (NMLETP). The NMLETP educates law enforcement personnel in the development, implementation, and management of traffic safety initiatives. All NMLETP courses are administered by highly-qualified instructors who have relevant field experience and are accredited by the New Mexico Department of Public Safety Law Enforcement Academy.

[FOR FULL COURSE OFFERINGS, CLICK HERE](#)

CLICK  
TO  
REGISTER

IN-PERSON  
**NATIONAL CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY  
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM: SANTA FE**  
JULY 20-23, 2021

## Law Enforcement Officers Certified as Drug Recognition Experts

**SOURCE: CHARLES FILES, NMDRE PROGRAM**

In conjunction with the New Mexico Department of Transportation, The New Mexico Drug Recognition Expert Program (NMDRE) recently celebrated the graduation of 18 newly trained Drug Recognition Experts. Graduates included officers from 14 police departments, sheriff offices, and New Mexico State Police officers throughout the State. By successfully completing this rigorous three-week course, these 18 officers are now certified to determine specific drug categories a suspected drug-impaired driver may be under the influence of.

"This program gives New Mexico Law Enforcement the necessary tools to identify and remove drug-impaired drivers from our roadways and hold them accountable," said Charles Files, State

Coordinator for the D.R.E. Program in New Mexico. "With drug impairment offering a new level of complexity in impaired driving cases, DRE officers are a critical component in our goal to ENDWI."

New Mexico has participated in the D.R.E. program since 1992. The program trains peace officers to detect and articulate the signs, symptoms, and indicia of drugs other than, or in addition to alcohol in subjects arrested for Driving While Impaired (DWI).

There are currently 76 DRE certified officers in New Mexico from 26 agencies and seven State Police Districts. To become a New Mexico DRE. candidate, a New Mexico peace officer must have support from the agency's Chief or Sheriff to attend the entire training and must meet several prerequisites.

### Content and Design by the Safer New Mexico Now Team

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