

# TRAFFIC SAFETY NEWS

## NMDOT TRAFFIC SAFETY DIVISION

NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | MOBILITY FOR EVERYONE |  
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MONICA WATRIN  
for Long-Standing  
Dedication



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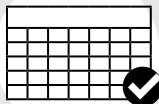


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New Mexico DEPARTMENT OF  
**TRANSPORTATION**  
MOBILITY FOR EVERYONE

## State Transportation Secretary Retiring

Santa Fe – Secretary Michael Sandoval of the state Department of Transportation will be retiring, effective May 1, 2022, after serving 27 years in state government.

Serving as secretary of NMDOT since 2019, Sandoval oversaw countless projects making historic investments in New Mexico's transportation infrastructure while leading 2,500 employees at one of the state's largest departments. Under his leadership, NMDOT implemented more than \$3 billion in construction programs over the last three and a half years. Before his appointment as cabinet secretary, he served as executive manager of the department's Modal Divisions, in which he oversaw hundreds of contracts, the state's twelve ports of entry, and major transportation projects including the Rail Runner, commercial vehicle permitting, and traffic safety. A dedicated member of the NMDOT team for over a decade, he also served as the director of the department's Office of Safety Programs, Planning Division, and Traffic Safety Division.

In his role as NMDOT secretary Sandoval also served as chairman of the Member Services Committee of the Governor's Highway Safety Association (GHSA) Executive Board. Born and raised in Santa Fe, he graduated from St. Michael's High School and received his Bachelor of Civil Engineering degree from New Mexico State University.

"I am deeply grateful to Mike for his many years of leadership at the Department of Transportation and his professional career in state government," said Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham. "Mike is truly beloved throughout all of state government – he has worked tirelessly over several decades to advance critically important projects improving the quality of life for New Mexicans and supporting state employees. I know he will be missed by his team at NMDOT, legislators, and myself, but I wish him all the best in retirement and his next chapter with his family."

**"My decision to retire did not come easily," said Sec. Sandoval. "I love my job and I am proud of the accomplishments and time I spent being of service to New Mexicans. When I think back on the last 27 years, it is the partnerships and relationships I made with employees, legislators, the public and private sectors, I am most proud of. They are the driving force behind my success in state government. I am grateful for every position I held, and I am honored to retire on such a high note working under the leadership of Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham as her appointed Secretary of Transportation," added Sandoval. "I believe the department is in a good place and it's time to carve out more time for my wife, children, family, and golf."**

Deputy Secretary Justin Reese will serve as acting secretary for the department while the administration conducts a comprehensive search to fill the position.



# FUEL SAVING TIPS

GAS PRICES ARE ON THE RISE. HERE ARE A FEW TIPS ON HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OUT OF YOUR NEXT FULL TANK.

SOURCE

Gas prices are on the rise. Here are a few tips on how to make the most out of your next full tank.

1

## Avoid High Speeds

As your speed increases, your aerodynamic drag increases. Driving 62 mph vs. 75 mph will reduce fuel consumption by about 15%. That being said, just go the speed limit.

2

## Do Not Accelerate or Brake Hard

Applying slow steady acceleration and braking, can increase your fuel economy by as much as 20%.

3

## Keep Tires Properly Inflated

Check your user's manual and keep your tires inflated to the recommended PSI. A single tire under inflated by 2 PSI increases fuel consumption by 1%.

4

## Keep Windows Closed, but try to use your AC Sparingly

Windows open, especially at highway speeds, increase drag and result in decreased fuel economy of up to 10%. If you can, don't use the air conditioning. The air conditioner puts extra load on the engine forcing more fuel to be used (by about 20%).

5

## Service Your Vehicle Regularly

Proper maintenance avoids poor fuel economy related to dirty air filters, old spark plugs, or low fluid levels.

6

## Use Cruise Control

Maintaining a constant speed over long distances often saves gas.

7

## Avoid Heavy Loads

Remove anything heavy from your trunk in the spring and pack lightly if you can.





**NHTSA**

## Finalizes First Occupant Protection Safety Standards for Vehicles Without Driving Controls

SOURCE

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration today issued a first-of-its-kind final rule to ensure safety of occupants in automated vehicles. This rule updates the occupant protection Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards to account for vehicles that do not have the traditional manual controls associated with a human driver because they are equipped with automated driving systems.

**"Through the 2020s, an important part of USDOT's safety mission will be to ensure safety standards keep pace with the development of automated driving and driver assistance systems,"** said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. **"This new rule is an important step, establishing robust safety standards for ADS-equipped vehicles."**

MORE



**“As the driver changes from a person to a machine in ADS-equipped vehicles, the need to keep the humans safe remains the same and must be integrated from the beginning,” said Dr. Steven Cliff, NHTSA’s Deputy Administrator. “With this rule, we ensure that manufacturers put safety first.”**



Before today’s rule, occupant protection standards were written for common, traditional vehicle features, including steering wheels and other manual controls. The rule updates the standards to clarify what is required of manufacturers when applying the standards to ADS-equipped vehicles without traditional manual controls.

The final rule clarifies that, despite their innovative designs, vehicles with ADS technology must continue to provide the same high levels of occupant protection as current passenger vehicles.

This rule is part of NHTSA’s ongoing efforts to ensure the public’s safety as vehicle automation evolves. NHTSA is actively engaged in monitoring and overseeing the safe testing and deployment of these vehicles. NHTSA’s approach to advanced vehicle technologies prioritizes safety across multiple areas, including data collection and analysis, research, human factors, rulemaking and enforcement.

Last summer, NHTSA issued a Standing General Order requiring crash and incident reporting for vehicles equipped with ADS or certain advanced driver-assistance systems. This reporting will help NHTSA investigators quickly identify defect trends that could emerge in these automated systems.

In addition, NHTSA initiated rulemaking last year to set safety standards for automatic emergency braking, a driver-assistance technology that can help avoid crashes with other road users, including pedestrians.

**THE RULE IS AVAILABLE HERE.**

In conjunction with the final rule, NHTSA is updating its [WEBPAGE](#) dedicated to building public understanding about automated driving systems. The page features an interactive infographic that explains the various levels of automation in a more user-friendly way.





**endwi** NMDOT

# nmdot attends state police dwi checkpoint

New Mexico Department of Transportation Staff Manager Kimberly Wildharber, along with Program Managers Nick Vargas and Carmelita Chavez attended a DWI Checkpoint operation held by the New Mexico State Police recently in Santa Fe.





# LAW ENFORCEMENT SPOTLIGHT

## New Mexico State Police

The New Mexico State Police welcomed sixteen new officers who graduated from the 98th recruit school on December 10, 2021. After completing a sixteen-week academy, our newest officers are out in the field to serve and protect their communities throughout New Mexico.

## NMCSSDP CELEBRATES MONICA WATRIN for Long-Standing Dedication

Safer New Mexico Now would like to extend its sincere appreciation and thanks to Monica Watrin, of the City of Albuquerque Division of Child and Family Development, for her dedication and participation in the New Mexico Child Safety Seat Distribution Program (NMCSSDP). While Monica is moving on to her next endeavor, her participation in the NMCSSDP has helped countless families and we are extremely grateful to have worked with her.

Monica has been a Child Passenger Safety Technician since 2002 and has worked with the NMCSSDP since 2000. Monica has been instrumental in the success of the City of Albuquerque Division of Child and Family Development distribution site. Since 2014, Monica has single-handedly distributed 1,266 car seats to New Mexico families in need, including providing each family with the education on how to properly install and use their seats. She has dedicated more than 1,000 hours to the program and has collected a total of \$17,377 of fees and donations that are put directly back into the program to assist other families. Thank you, Monica!



# Calendar of Events

Click for **CURRENT Event List**  
Due to ongoing updates, please click here for the most current list.

All participants are required to follow COVID-Safe protocols.

## April

National Distracted Driving Awareness Month  
Alcohol Awareness Month

APR 4-15	Traffic Crash Reconstruction Training – Rio Rancho (course full)
APR 7	Car Seat Fitting Station – Las Cruces
APR 16	Car Seat Inspection Clinic – Los Alamos Police Department (11 a.m. -1 p.m.)
APR 21	Car Seat Fitting Station – Artesia
APR 22	STEP – Carlsbad
APR 28	Car Seat Inspection Clinic – Anton Chico Head Start (10 a.m. to noon)
APR 30	Car Seat Inspection Clinic – Pecos, NM – Dollar General (10 a.m. to noon)

## May

Global Youth Traffic Safety Month  
Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month  
National Bicycle Safety Month

MAY 1-7	Mini Superblitz (ENDWI and BKLUP)
MAY 4-5	Virtual Law Enforcement Coordinators' Symposium
MAY 5	Car Seat Fitting Station – Las Cruces
MAY 17-20	National Child Passenger Safety Technician Training – Albuquerque
MAY 19	Car Seat Fitting Station – Artesia
MAY 19	New Mexico State Transportation Commission Meeting – Albuquerque (D3)
MAY 20	STEP – Gallup
MAY 21	Car Seat Fitting Station – Carlsbad
MAY 23-JUN 5	Click It or Ticket (National Occupant Protection Mobilization)

## June

National Safety Month

JUN 2	Car Seat Fitting Station – Las Cruces
JUN 16	Car Seat Fitting Station – Artesia
JUN 18	Car Seat Fitting Station – Carlsbad
JUN 20-SEP 27	Summer Enforcement Campaign
JUN 24	DWI Checkpoint Operation Training – Clovis

## UPCOMING IN-PERSON Law Enforcement Training Courses

COURSE  
FULL

**APR  
4-15**

**Traffic Crash  
Reconstruction Training  
RIO RANCHO**

Click to  
Register

**FRIDAY  
MAY 20**

**Selective Traffic  
Enforcement Program  
Training, GALLUP**

Click to  
Register

**FRIDAY  
APR 22**

**Selective Traffic  
Enforcement Program  
Training, CARLSBAD**

Click to  
Register

**FRIDAY  
JUN 24**

**DWI Checkpoint  
Operation Training,  
CLOVIS**

## UPCOMING IN-PERSON Car Seat Fitting Stations

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY  
(800) 231-6145

**THIRD THURSDAY  
OF EACH MONTH**

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

**THIRD SATURDAY  
OF EACH MONTH**

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

**FIRST THURSDAY  
OF EACH MONTH**

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

## UPCOMING VIRTUAL Car Seat Fitting Stations

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY  
(800) 231-6145

**FIRST AND THIRD  
WEDNESDAYS OF  
EACH MONTH**

**SECOND  
SATURDAY OF  
EACH MONTH**





# Content and Design by the Safer New Mexico Now Team

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## New Mexico Department of Transportation



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