

NAVIGATION LINKS:

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- ▶ NEW MEXICO STATE POLICE OFFICERS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR ENDWI EFFORTS
- ▶ NEW MEXICO LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS RECOGNIZED FOR COMBATING DRUG IMPAIRED DRIVING
- ▶ SAFER NEW MEXICO NOW HOST BUCKLE UP NEW MEXICO RECERTIFICATION TRAINING
- ▶ MARK MCCRACKEN INDUCTED INTO MANUFACTURERS ALLIANCE FOR CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY HALL OF FAME
- ▶ OLDER DRIVER SAFETY PROGRAM MAKES GREAT STRIDES
- ▶ JUST DRIVE! APRIL IS DISTRACTED DRIVING AWARENESS MONTH
- ▶ UPCOMING EVENTS
- ▶ TIPS FOR DRIVING IN THE WIND

Is New Mexico Preparing for Driverless Cars?



[SOURCE: NM POLITICAL REPORT]

In March, an Arizona woman was hit and killed when a self-driving car failed to recognize her while she was crossing the street. This marked the first national fatality involving an autonomous vehicle. The accident serves as a reminder that self-driving technology is still in the experimental stage, and governments are still trying to figure out how to regulate it.

Earlier this year, State Senator Jim White introduced a memorial during the last legislative session asking the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) to organize a summit to look into the details of preparing the State for autonomous vehicles. The NMDOT responded by bringing together local officials, technology experts, and industry representatives to discuss the technology and safety concerns surrounding bringing autonomous vehicles to New Mexico roadways.

One of the most important outcomes of the summit

was the need for states to establish goals and lay out a strategy before the fast-growing industry does it for them. Those in attendance agreed, but also supported the idea that legislators need to fully understand the technology before changing laws or other policies.

While full autonomy for vehicles is still a ways off, technological advances have made roadways safer. Many vehicles now come equipped with lane centering, automatic braking, speed control, and other enhancements that can make streets safer. Additionally, many trucking companies and manufacturers are already using automated systems to increase efficiency of hauling cargo.

The NMDOT's summit was the first step in bringing New Mexico into the self-driving future. Despite some of the most recent negative coverage of self-driving cars, Senator White doesn't expect any opposition to legislation that comes from the summit and other meeting taking place before next year's legislative session.

New Mexico Law Enforcement Officers Recognized for Combating Drug Impaired Driving

SOURCE: CHARLES L. FILES, NEW MEXICO DRE STATE COORDINATOR

The New Mexico Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) Program would like to recognize Officer Justin Wingerd of the Albuquerque Police Department and Officer Ryan Gray of the Los Lunas Police Department for their tireless efforts in combating drug impaired driving in New Mexico for 2017. Officer Wingerd and Officer Gray conducted the most enforcement evaluations in the State of New Mexico for 2017.

While Officer Wingerd and Officer Gray are a reliable resource for their respective agencies, the majority of their enforcement evaluations have been from cases in which they stopped the driver and their training has led them to pursuing a drug impaired driving investigation. Officer Wingerd is assigned to Albuquerque Police Departments' Southeast

CLICK TO CONTINUE
ON PAGE 5

Safer New Mexico Now Host Buckle Up New Mexico Recertification Training

On March 14-15, 2018, Safer New Mexico Now (Safer) hosted the annual Buckle Up New Mexico (BUNM) Recertification Training conference at the Sandia Resort in Albuquerque. This training is made available to current Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPSTs) who participate in New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) programs and Child Passenger Safety (CPS) events and who are in need of credits to maintain or renew their certification.

The BUNM Training features a number of experts in the field of CPS. Attendees have the opportunity to learn about the latest advances in child safety seat and vehicle manufacturing, occupant protection programming updates, and best practices. The 2018 BUNM featured a variety of presentations covering



important safety topics, including the proper use of booster seats, safe travel tips for children ages 8-15, newborn child restraint practices and misuse trends, car seat and features updates, selecting the proper and safest location for each passenger in a vehicle, as well as a number of hands-on activities to allow CPSTs to practice their skills.

During the conference, technicians also

participated in a child safety seat clinic. CPSTs inspected a total of 48 child safety seats, and replaced 13 unsafe seats. The child safety seat clinic is a free service funded by the NMDOT.

To maintain their certification, CPSTs are required to earn six continuing education units (CEUs) biennially. The 2018 BUNM Training was approved by the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy, the New Mexico Emergency Medical Services Bureau, and the Emergency Nurses Association for CEU accreditation.

NMDOT leadership attended and supported the conference. In addition, Safer received support from numerous corporate partners, including National child restraint manufacturers Evenflo, Britax USA, Graco Baby, Kids Embrace, Nuna, Safe Traffic Systems, mifold, and Dorel Juvenile.

Mark McCracken Inducted into Manufacturers Alliance for Child Passenger Safety Hall of Fame

During the 2018 Buckle Up New Mexico Recertification Training, Mark McCracken, a true advocate for child passenger safety, was posthumously inducted into the Child Passenger Safety Hall of Fame by the Manufacturers Alliance for Child Passenger Safety (MACPS). Mark unexpectedly passed away on September 9, 2017. His wife, Lee Ann McCracken and sons, Dillan and Kevin, accepted the award on his behalf.

The MACPS Hall of Fame honors those individuals who have left indelible impressions on the safety of their community and the Nation through their leadership, education, and advocacy for child passenger safety. Mark was an extraordinary person who brought so much heart to



every aspect of his life. His leadership was remarkable. He inspired those around him to do their best. His dedication to protecting New Mexico families began early in life and became his

life-long passion. Through his everyday actions he reminded us to live life with compassion for others. From the children and older drivers he helped



make safer, families he empowered through education, technicians he trained, to the loving family, colleagues, and friends he held so dearly, Mark made a profound and lasting impact on the lives he touched.

The presentation of his induction into the MACPS Hall of Fame was exceptionally touching for those who worked closely with Mark, and was especially impactful for his family. Mark would have been honored and humbled by this momentous recognition from his peers.

Older Driver Safety Program Makes Great Strides

The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and Safer New Mexico Now (Safer) are working to help people drive safely as long as possible. By empowering older drivers (ages 65+) through awareness, education, assistance, and other resources, we can all work together to make New Mexico roads safer.

The Older Driver Safety Program (ODSP) was instituted in 2014, at which time New Mexico went from virtually no formal programming to a tested and proven set of training material for older drivers and their families. Additionally, training curricula and supporting material was developed and implemented for appropriate partners that include medical providers, social and aging service providers, and law enforcement.

Now in its fourth year, the ODSP has helped reduce the number of crashes, as well as fatal and nonfatal injuries involving older drivers. According to the University of New Mexico Geospatial and Population Studies Traffic Research Unit, in 2017, there were 56 older driver fatalities reported in the State, lower than those reported in 2016.

As a component of the ODSP, Safer has partnered with CarFit, an educational program sponsored by the American Automobile Association (AAA), the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), and the American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. (AOTA) that offers older adults the opportunity to check how well their vehicles “fit” them. During CarFit events, teams of trained technicians work with drivers to ensure their vehicle features, including seats, seat belts, steering wheels, and mirrors, are properly adjusted for maximum comfort and safety. Each CarFit check takes approximately 20 minutes to complete, and often an occupational therapist is on hand to work one-on-one with drivers who have special mobility needs.

Older drivers account for 17% of all New Mexico drivers. The NMDOT and Safer are committed to keeping drivers safe at any age.





Just Drive! April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

[SOURCE: NSC.ORG/DDMONTH]

This April, the National Safety Council (NSC) is encouraging all motorists to observe Distracted Driving Awareness Month. The campaign also urges legislators throughout the country to enact stronger, more comprehensive laws to further prevent distracted driving injuries and deaths on our roadways.

According to the NSC State of Safety report, which grades states on actions and policies they have taken – or not taken – to reduce risk for all residents, significant work at the legislative level still needs to be done to address distracted driving in the U.S. New Mexico received a rating of C on the NSC's State of Safety report, ranking the state 17th in the Nation overall.

Since the report was completed last year, New Mexico joined 27 other states and D.C. in passing legislation to ban texting for all drivers, as well as completely banning cellphone use for teens and novice drivers. While this is encouraging, it is not enough. "No State currently has a law that completely bans all electronic-device use behind the wheel," said Deborah A.P. Hersman, President and CEO of the National Safety Council.

Cell phones, dashboard infotainment systems, and ever evolving voice

"It Was Just..."

It was just a quick call
It was just a short trip
It was just one drink
It was just a picture
It was just an email
It was just a glance
It was just a text
It was just a bite

'Just' is all it takes



command features in new vehicles all pose a threat to our safety. However, each death due to distracted driving is 100% preventable. Until a total ban on all electronic devices is instituted, The NSC promotes Distracted Driving Awareness Month every April in a united effort to recognize and eliminate preventable deaths from distracted driving.

So what can you do to be a more attentive driver? Remember that all it takes is one second to change a life forever. Pledge to not drive distracted and follow these simple tips to not drive distracted:

Don't make calls while driving – even

using hands-free or Bluetooth devices is a distraction

Use phone blocking devices or apps to ensure you will not be distracted by notification messages

Never text, browse or post to social media accounts, or read or send emails while driving – even at a red light

Input destinations into your GPS system before you start driving, never while the vehicle is in motion

Don't call or message someone else when you know they are driving

Practice defensive driving – always buckle up, designate a sober driver, and avoid driving while fatigued

You can help prevent distracted driving injuries or deaths. When you get behind the wheel – just drive.

The National Safety Council is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to eliminate preventable deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the road through leadership, research, education, and advocacy. To learn more about the NSC, Distracted Driving Awareness Month, or to take the pledge to be an attentive driver, visit nsc.org/DDmonth.



Due to ongoing updates to the calendar of events, please [CLICK HERE](#) or visit www.safermm.org for the most current list.

April

National Distracted Driving Awareness Month
Alcohol Awareness Month

6 Child Safety Seat Clinic – LAS CRUCES
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
SW Regional Public Health Office, 1170 N. Solano

7 Child Safety Seat Clinic – CLOVIS
11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Clovis Civic Center, 801 Schepps Blvd.

7 Saturday, April 7 – Child Safety Seat Clinic – TUCUMCARI
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Tucumcari Convention Center, 1500 Route 66

Child Safety Seat Clinic – ARTESIA
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Guadalupe Park, 401 W. Logan Ave.

14 Child Safety Seat Clinic – LAS CRUCES
12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Preciado Park at NMSU Campus, corner of Sweet Ave. and Gregg St.

19 Child Safety Seat Clinic – PUEBLO OF ACOMA
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Haak'u Learning Center, 15 Turtle Shell Rd.

20 Child Safety Seat Clinic – ISLETA PUEBLO
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Isleta Head Start & Child Care, 2 Sagebrush St.

27 Child Safety Seat Clinic – DEMING
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Luna County Court House Park, 700 Silver Ave.

28 Child Safety Seat Clinic – GRANTS
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Grants High School, 500 Mountain Rd.

Child Safety Seat Clinic – FARMINGTON
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
ENLACE, 3539 30th St.

May

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

1-7 Mini Superblitz (ENDWI and BKLUP)

8 Child Safety Seat Clinic – SANTA FE
8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
Busy Bugs PMS Early Head Start, 5600 Agua Fria St.

9-10 Law Enforcement Coordinators' Symposium:
Albuquerque

17 Transportation Commission Meeting:
DEMING

May 21 - June 3 Click it Or Ticket

22-25 National Child Passenger Safety Certification Training Program:
Albuquerque

31 Managing Police Traffic Services Training:
Albuquerque

June

National Safety Month

7 DWI Operations Training: Alamogordo

18 National Ride to Work Day

New Mexico Law Enforcement Officers Recognized for Combating Drug Impaired Driving

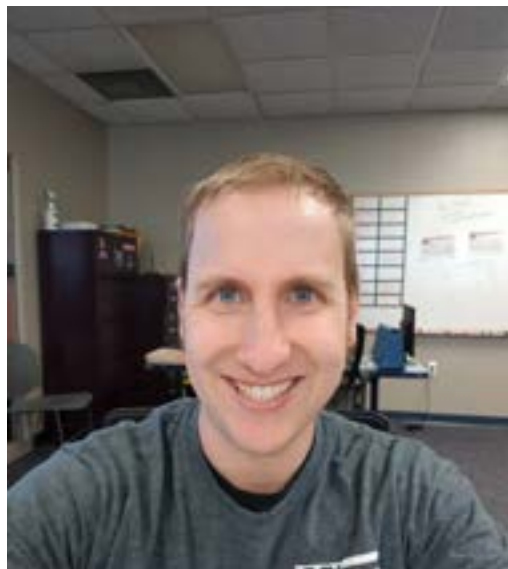
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Area command and has been a certified Drug Recognition Expert since 2016.

Officer Gray is assigned to Los Lunas Police Departments' DWI Unit and has been a certified Drug Recognition Expert since 2014. Officer Gray also achieved his Drug Recognition Expert Instructor Certification in 2017 and serves as a DRE Instructor for the State of New Mexico's Drug Recognition Expert Program. Thank you Officers Wingerd and Gray for your dedication in keeping New Mexico's roadways safe!



Ryan Gray



Justin Wingerd

Fitting Stations offer child safety seat inspection appointments during regular hours of operation at ten permanent New Mexico locations.

Alamogordo Third Saturday of each month	(505) 439-4300
Albuquerque: NE Second Friday of each month	(505) 856-6143
Albuquerque: SW Third Thursday of each month	(505) 856-6143

Albuquerque: Central First Friday of each month	(505) 272-6024
Artesia Third Saturday of each month	(800) 231-6145
Farmington Third Saturday of each month	(800) 231-6145

Las Cruces First and third Wednesdays of each month	(800) 231-6145
Las Vegas Last Wednesday (JAN, MAY-DEC)	(800) 231-6145
Rio Rancho First Friday of each month	(800) 231-6145
Santa Fe Second and fourth Fridays (APR-OCT) Second Friday (NOV-MAR)	(505) 471-3965 (800) 231-6145

Tips for Driving in the Wind

If it's springtime in New Mexico, it's windy! Drivers need to exercise caution and patience on the roadways when driving in high winds. Here are five tips for driving in windy conditions

Watch the Weather – If heavy winds are predicted for your route, think of taking a detour. Avoid trouble spots on the road, especially straight, open roads, bridges and overpasses, or between hills. It might take you a little more time to get to your destination, but you'll arrive alive.

Be aware of high-profile vehicles – Large trucks, vans, busses, and any vehicles towing cargo are more vulnerable to losing control or tipping over in high winds. Pay attention to who you share the road with.

Keep your hands on the wheel – Gusty winds can make it harder to steer your vehicle, so keep both hands on the wheel at all times while driving.

Keep your distance – Be sure to always maintain a safe distance while driving behind and next to other motorists. Turn on your headlights to see better through dust or dirt that the winds kick up.

Slow down – Driving slower than the posted speed limit in high winds can help lessen the dangers of the wind, give you better control of the vehicle, and allows you time to avoid any wind-generated objects in the road.

If at any time you feel like you cannot control the vehicle or it is unsafe to drive in high winds, simply pull over and find a safe place to wait until the wind dies down.



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