



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

# TRAFFIC SAFETY NEWS

## NMDOT TRAFFIC SAFETY DIVISION

NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | MOBILITY FOR EVERYONE |  
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### NMDOT Safety Campaign Encourages Drivers to Share the Road, Especially in Southeast New Mexico

SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.KRQE.COM/NEWS/NEW-MEXICO/NMDOT-SAFETY-CAMPAIGN-ENCOURAGES-DRIVERS-TO-SHARE-THE-ROAD/](https://www.krqe.com/news/new-mexico/nmdot-safety-campaign-encourages-drivers-to-share-the-road/)

According to a recent news release, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) Traffic Safety Division (TSD) announced that it has created a campaign designed to educate drivers on how to safely share the roads with truck traffic that come in from oil fields in southeast New Mexico.

NMDOT says roads used by oil field traffic are two-lane highways and narrow. Increased traffic, speeding, tailgating, and dangerous passing have led to increased crashes. "This is a very relevant campaign to keep those traveling on our roadways in southeast New Mexico safe," said District Two Engineer Tim Parker. "It's important to drive safely because lives really do depend on it."

**"Sharing the road means everyone, from everyday motorists to professional truck drivers, must take responsibility for their actions behind the wheel. This is vital for not only their safety but for the wellbeing of others on the road," said NMDOT Cabinet Secretary Michael Sandoval.**



### Manufacturers Alliance Child Passenger Safety Hall of Fame Inductees

SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.SAFERIDENEWS.COM/MACPS/CHILD-PASSENGER-SAFETY-HALL-OF-FAME-2017-INAUGURAL-INDUCTEES/](https://www.saferideneews.com/macps/child-passenger-safety-hall-of-fame-2017-inaugural-inductees/)

The Manufacturers Alliance for Child Passenger Safety (MACPS) is honored to announce the 2020 National Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Hall of Fame Inductees. The MACPS honors these individuals as they are recognized and remembered for the indelible impressions they have left on the safety of their community and/or the nation. Hall of Fame CPS advocates come from all walks of life: vehicle manufacturers, car seat manufactures, injury prevention programs, government agencies, first responders and even your neighbor who has a passion for child safety. They are recommended by members of the CPS community for their leadership in their field of design, manufacturing, education and/or advocacy.

"The Hall of Fame sub-committee reviewed an unprecedented number of applicants this year. We were astounded by the level of participation nationwide and the number of individuals who all deserved a place on this list", said Vera Fullaway, MACPS Chair. "It was an honor to lead this committee once again this year. I am so proud of all of the inductees and the accomplishments they have made and continue to make in this industry", noted Robert Wall, Hall of Fame Chair.

Among the inductees is Joseph Colella, a CPS advocate, consultant, speaker, instructor, and writer who works closely with Safer New Mexico Now to make a positive, long-term, impact on the community. Mr. Colella has helped develop and implement the National Child Passenger Safety Certification Training Program and is one of the program's original 16 certified instructors.

Mr. Colella has worked closely with Safer for more than 15 years to develop sound policies and practices regarding the State's occupant protection programs. Although he has been involved in implementing and improving CPS, occupant protection, and older driver training program efforts in 47 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, Israel, and Japan, he always takes time out of his busy schedule to assist Safer in advancing child passenger safety initiatives.

Other inductees include (\*posthumously):

*Arnold Siegel (CA)	Kathy Kruger (WA)
Kenny Cheng (Taiwan)	Carol Meidinger (ND)
Thelma Kuska (IL)	Barbara Baines (Canada)

Tomi St Mars (AZ)
Denise Donaldson (WA)
Charlie Vits (IN)
*Irene Rodríguez (TX)





## 2019 Fatality Data Show Continued Annual Decline in Traffic Deaths

SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.NHTSA.GOV/PRESS-RELEASES/2019-FATALITY-DATA-TRAFFIC-DEATHS-2020-Q2-PROJECTIONS](https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/2019-fatality-data-traffic-deaths-2020-q2-projections)

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration today released a preview of 2019 data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System and preliminary estimates for the first half of 2020. Alongside the release of the 2019 preview data and 2020 first-half fatality projections, the agency issued two companion reports, Special Report: Examination of the Traffic Safety Environment During the Second Quarter of 2020 and Drug and Alcohol Prevalence in Seriously and Fatally Injured Road Users Before and During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

Traffic deaths decreased nationwide during 2019 as compared to 2018. There were 36,096 fatalities in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2019. This represents a decrease of 739 (down 2%) from the reported 36,835 fatalities in 2018, even though vehicle miles traveled increased by nearly 1%. As a result, the fatality rate for 2019 was 1.10 fatalities per 100 million VMT – the lowest rate since 2014, down from 1.14 fatalities per 100 million VMT in 2018.

### Fatalities decreased in most major traffic safety categories in 2019:

- Passenger vehicle occupants (down 2.8%)
- Motorcyclists (down 0.5%)
- Pedestrians (down 2.7%)
- Pedalcyclists (down 2.9%)

Fatalities in crashes involving at least one large truck showed relatively no change, decreasing from 5,006 in 2018 to 5,005 in 2019. Large trucks include both commercial and non-commercial trucks with a gross vehicle weight rating over 10,000 pounds.

NHTSA also released preliminary fatality estimates for the first half of 2020. The second quarter of 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 public health emergency, showed a continued decline in overall traffic fatalities. The FARS data indicate that an estimated 8,870 people died in motor vehicle traffic crashes in the second quarter of 2020, a decrease of about 3.3% compared to the second quarter of 2019, which translates into 302 fewer fatalities as compared to the same period in 2019.

At the same time, at the height of the COVID-19 public health emergency, the total traffic volume decreased by more than 16% in the first six months of 2020. Because traffic volumes decreased more significantly than did the number of fatal crashes, the traffic fatality rate per 100 million VMT is projected to increase to 1.25 in the first half of 2020, up from 1.06 in the same period in 2019.

“Road safety is always our top priority, and while we are encouraged by today’s reports showing a continued decline in total fatalities in 2019 and into the first half of 2020, we are concerned by the trend since April showing an increased fatality rate,” said NHTSA Deputy Administrator James Owens. “Now, more than ever, we should be watching ourselves for safe driving practices and encouraging others to do the same. It’s irresponsible and illegal to drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol, taking risks not only with one’s own life, but with the lives of others.”

To assist stakeholders in evaluating the trend and identifying countermeasures, NHTSA researchers

compiled data from a wide variety of sources to produce a special report also issued today. The study suggests that during the height of the national public health emergency and associated lockdowns, driving patterns and behaviors changed significantly, and that drivers who remained on the roads engaged in more risky behavior, including speeding, failing to wear seat belts, and driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Traffic data indicates that average speeds increased during the second quarter, and examples of extreme speeds became more common, while the evidence suggests that fewer people involved in crashes used their seat belts.

NHTSA also released a study of seriously or fatally injured road users at five participating trauma centers during this time, finding that between mid-March and mid-July almost two-thirds of drivers tested positive for at least one active drug, including alcohol, marijuana, or opioids. In particular, the number of such drivers testing positive for opioids nearly doubled after mid-March, as compared to the previous six months, while marijuana use increased by about 50%.

Last week, NHTSA announced a series of workshops with stakeholders starting today to bring together State and local officials and safety advocates to discuss data and develop countermeasures to address these serious safety concerns. Over the summer, NHTSA launched a new campaign to remind motorists to drive safely and follow traffic safety laws. NHTSA’s high-visibility enforcement campaign to combat impaired driving ran through the Labor Day weekend and will be repeated later this year in time for the holidays.







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

**DUE TO PROTOCOLS IN PLACE TO ENCOURAGE SOCIAL DISTANCING AND TO MITIGATE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19, all IN PERSON Car Seat Fitting Stations and Clinics have been **canceled until further notice**. VIRTUAL Car Seat Checks are taking place by appointment only. Please call **(800) 231-6145** for additional information.**

### UPCOMING LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING COURSES

COVID PROTOCOLS  
WILL APPLY FOR IN PERSON SESSIONS

[MORE INFO](#)

FRIDAY  
**JAN 8, 2021**

VIRTUAL STEP Training  
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

[REGISTER](#)

FRIDAY  
**JAN 22, 2021**

IN PERSON DWI Checkpoint  
Operation Training  
**1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**  
Doña Ana County Sheriff's Office  
845 N Motel Blvd, LAS CRUCES

[REGISTER](#)

### Cy Palmer Memorial Clinic Raises Awareness of Proper Car Seat Use

SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.NAPT.ORG/FILES/NSBSW/BUS%20STOP%20SAFETY%20TIPS-2016UPDATE.PDF](https://www.napt.org/files/nsbsw/bus%20stop%20safety%20tips-2016update.pdf)

The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT), Safer New Mexico Now, and the Frank W. Yates Jr. Family Foundation recently hosted the annual Cy Palmer Memorial Clinic.

The annual car seat clinic is held as a celebration of life and remembrance of Cy Palmer, a 7-year-old who tragically lost his life as the result of a motor vehicle crash in 2017. Although he was wearing his seat belt, he was not using a booster seat.

Although this year's event was virtual due to the public health restrictions put in place by the Governor's office, nationally-certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians worked one-on-one with families and provided education on nine car seats. During Car Seat Inspection Clinics, technicians spend approximately 30 minutes per seat educating parents on the correct selection, installation, and use of their car seats and booster seats, including reviewing the parts of the car seat, how to find and use car seat labels, how to secure a car seat in the vehicle properly using the vehicle seat belt, how to check the seat for proper installation, and how to properly fit and adjust the harness on a child.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that using car seats decreases the risk of death by an estimated 71% for infants and 54% for older children. When a car, truck, or van suddenly stops in a crash, everyone and everything inside keeps moving. Car seats, booster seats, and seat belts help manage that energy so our bodies don't need to.

New Mexico state law states that all occupants must be properly restrained in all seating positions. For each child riding in your vehicle, be sure you are using the correct child safety seat. Any restraint device must meet federal standards and must be appropriate for the age and size of the child.

Car seat clinics are a public service funded by the NMDOT and are available to everyone. To learn more about Cy and the annual clinic, visit <https://www.facebook.com/saferNM/> to see a video interview with Cy's mom, Chelsea Matthews.

## 2020 Annual Law Enforcement Coordinators' Symposium Goes Virtual

Like so many events this year, the annual Law Enforcement Coordinators' Symposium (LECS) had to be held virtually in an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The annual event is hosted by the New Mexico Department of Transportation Traffic Safety Division (NMDOT TSD) and Safer New Mexico Now (Safer), and 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, LECS was originally scheduled to be held in person May 6-7, in Albuquerque. Due to COVID-19 and public health regulations put in place by the State, the May date was cancelled and the event was held virtually via Zoom on August 20, 2020. Approximately 150 law enforcement personnel, as well as representatives from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the NMDOT TSD attended the virtual symposium.

The event featured local and national speakers presenting on a variety of topics, including identifying myths associated with traffic enforcement, myths associated with impaired driving and the drugs that cause impairment, and a legal update. Additionally, a secondary portion of LECS was held virtually September 17, 2020. This meeting focused on regional and state updates, including federal program requirements, important grant guidelines, E-Grant Updates, and a Q&A session with the LELs. This was the first large-scale virtual training hosted by Safer and the NMDOT TSD and was well received by attendees, receiving high marks in all areas of the event evaluation.



## Cleaning Car Seats and Vehicle Seat Belts – What Not to Do

SOURCE: <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-and-safe-transportation-in-motor-vehicles/?etype=emailblastcontent&eid=6A5ACBA4-D9EF-430E-A587-C7BCAE559754>

During the COVID-19 pandemic, keeping things clean is more important than ever. But before you grab the disinfectant to clean the inside of your car – there's important information you should know.

While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that surfaces be disinfected using an Environmental Protection Agency-registered disinfectant, manufacturers say car seats and seat belts should be cleaned but must not be disinfected. The chemicals used in disinfectants can degrade the necessary strength of car seat and seat belt material, affecting their crashworthiness. In most cases, all parts of car seats and vehicle seat belts can only be cleaned with mild detergent and water. This will ensure the restraint system will perform as intended in the event of a crash.

So how do you keep your family safe? The American Academy of Pediatrics has released some transportation guidance for families to follow, including the following tips:

If a car seat or seat belt is always used by the same individual and not by anyone else, and the individual does not have symptoms of COVID-19, routine cleaning is appropriate

If a person (adult or child) tests positive for COVID-19, any seat, car seat, or restraint device that had contact with or was within 6 feet of should be cleaned. Car seats should be removed from the vehicle and stored out of reach or in a securely tied plastic bag for a few days, after which they may be cleaned following the manufacturer's instructions and returned to service

If an affected individual used a seat belt, the seating position in the vehicle should be taken out of service for a few days, after which the seat and seat belt may be cleaned and returned to service

If a family has another vehicle available, they may consider using the alternate vehicle during this time

# Road Trips During Coronavirus

## Staying Safe on the Road

[HTTPS://WWW.AARP.ORG/TRAVEL/  
TRAVEL-TIPS/SAFETY/INFO-2020/  
ROAD-TRIP-SAFETY-DURING-  
CORONAVIRUS-PANDEMIC.HTML](https://www.aarp.org/travel/travel-tips/safety/info-2020/road-trip-safety-during-coronavirus-pandemic.html)

Heading over the river and through the woods this holiday season? If you're planning a long drive, consider these tips from experts for staying safe and lowering your risk of getting sick both on and off the road.



### DECIDING TO TRAVEL

When considering your destination, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggests consider the following:

- Whether the area you're from or visiting experiencing heightened spread of COVID-19. If so, you may have a higher chance of becoming infected or infecting others and might want to reconsider your travel plans.
- If you or a loved one who is returning home have an underlying condition that might increase the risk for complications from the disease.
- If you'll be able to maintain a 6-foot distance between yourself and others during travel and while at your destination.
- Whether the destination requires that visitors quarantine themselves for 14 days upon arrival.

If you think that any of these situations apply to you, you might want to postpone your visit.

### PLAN YOUR ROUTE

If you do decide to travel, make sure to plan your route. Even if you've made the same trip multiple times, it's important to research your route so you don't run into any temporary closures. Map out the route you'll take and research the states you'll be passing through, and be aware of any relevant travel advisories.

### HAVE YOUR VEHICLE SERVICED

Before you leave, make sure your car is in good shape. Be sure to keep any supplies you might need in the vehicle and be sure to know where you can stop safely along the way if you need to.

### GET YOUR SUPPLIES IN ORDER

To limit extra stops while on the road, make sure you gather everything you need to make the trip. Recommended items include:

- Hand sanitizer
- Disinfecting wet wipes
- Disposable gloves
- Sealable disposable plastic bags
- Tissues
- Snacks and water

Don't forget your mask – or several of them! Wear a mask in all indoor public places or outdoor spaces where you can't maintain a 6-foot distance from others.

### STEP UP YOUR HYGIENE GAME

Good hygiene on the road is more important than ever. Be sure to wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after using the restroom and before eating. Wear disposable gloves while pumping gas; that way you don't have to wipe down the nozzle – you can just throw your gloves away. Pay for gas with cards, not cash to eliminate the face-to-face interaction.

### SLEEPING & DINING

If you need to stay in a hotel, call ahead to confirm your reservation and to inquire about any safety regulations that may be in place. The CDC recommends using your own sanitizing supplies on high-touch surfaces in the room – including wiping down exterior and interior doorknobs and handles, the TV remote and bathroom fixtures, and any surfaces on which you'll rest your belongings, like table tops or the bathroom sink. If you're staying more than one night, call the front desk and ask to forgo housekeeping services to limit the number of people in and out of your room.

Content and Design by the Safer New Mexico Now Team

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