WA State Patrol Reminds Drivers to Secure That Load

Local News

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The summer months are upon us and a lot of people have begun their spring cleaning, the Washington State Patrol wants to remind drivers of the importance of properly securing loads on their vehicles.

Washington State Law states; (RCW 46.61.655)

(1) No vehicle shall be driven or moved on any public highway unless such vehicle is so constructed or loaded as to prevent any of its load from dropping, sifting, leaking, or otherwise escaping therefrom.

“Maria’s Law,” a law was named for Maria Federici who was severely injured by an entertainment center that fell off an open trailer while she was driving on Interstate 405, has made it a crime to fail to secure a load that results in bodily injury. Conviction could bring up to one year in jail and $5,000 in fines. The person injured would also have access to a state compensation fund for crime victims.

To lower the risk of being a victim of a loss of load, drivers should:

· Secure the load and re-check while driving,

· If you're behind a vehicle who’s load does not appear secured, drop back and increase your following distance,

· Move into a different lane,

· Look around you to see what your options are in case there is a loss of a load,

· Sometimes, it's better to drive over small debris than swerve to avoid it, which can cause you to lose control of your vehicle.

If you have witnessed or have been a victim of a loss of load you should call 911 or the Washington State Patrol and provide the following information that is needed by law enforcement for the investigation:

· The location that you last saw the truck or trailer.

· Direction of travel (toward where.)

· What road or highway.

· Color/colors of the truck or trailer.

· License plate number.

· Truck Company's name.

· What happened?

· Are you a victim or a witness?

If you have witnessed or been a victim of a loss load, you can report loss of loads on the WSP web site. By providing us with detailed information about the area(s) you are concerned with, the WSP can then focus enforcement on areas in which loss of loads are occurring.

For more information on loss of load or load securement issues and how to report possible violations, go to www.wsp.wa.gov/traveler/cvd.htm#loadloss2