



New Mexico DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor
Ricky Serna, Cabinet Secretary

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It Only Takes a Spark
Roadway Fire Prevention

LAS VEGAS – As Eastern New Mexico continues to see drier than average conditions, and communities continue to recover from last year’s wildfires, it is important to understand how drought and wildfire risk are linked. Dry conditions, which produce fire fuel such as dry grass on New Mexico roadways, and weather patterns that produce high wind, low humidity, and low precipitation, will only enhance the chance of automobiles sparking brush and grass fires.

The New Mexico Department of Transportation would like to remind motorists how they can prevent fires from starting while traveling throughout the Land of Enchantment.

Below are some helpful tips to avoid starting a wildfire with your vehicle:

- Do not park in tall grass or brush, as heat from under your vehicle can set vegetation on fire.
- When pulling a trailer, attach safety chains securely; loose chains can drag on the pavement and cause sparks, igniting roadside fires.
- Check your tire pressure before you travel. Exposed wheel rims can cause sparks too.
- Observe "Red Flag" fire weather warnings. The National Weather Service issues these when conditions are ripe for wildfires.
- Make sure brake pads are to the task so you avoid sparks from metal on metal.
- Do not throw cigarette butts out your vehicle window. Either carry a special fireproof container in your vehicle, or use a half-full water bottle to extinguish them in.

The New Mexico Department of Transportation would also like to inform motorists the importance of “Wildfire Warnings, Watches and Behavior”, issued by the National Weather Service. These forecasts will aid in awareness, preparedness, and most importantly the prevention of grass and wildfire. Please remember, it only takes a spark.

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NMDOT
Mobility for everyone

Travis Martinez, District-4 PIO | Travis.Martinez@dot.nm.gov | 505 617 5900