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As summer comes to a close, high school students across Arizona are back in school. Many of those students are also preparing to drive for the first time. As these new drivers learn the rules of the road, one important law we hope they pay attention to is the law prohibiting littering from a vehicle. Another is the law requiring motorists to secure their loads during transport. Violating either of these laws can result in a \$500 fine - not a pleasant experience for cash-strapped teens.

Teen drivers should also recognize that while they risk harming their pocketbook, they are also risking the health of Arizona residents when toxic chemicals from litter seep into our groundwater. Unsecured loads that fall into roadways can cause serious traffic accidents and can potentially lead to lawsuits against the driver responsible. Roadway debris also causes traffic congestion and slowdowns that can make drivers late for school or work. Littering also ruins the state's beautiful scenery and impacts the economy by turning off tourists and prospective businesses, the same economy in which

students will be seeking jobs when they graduate.

To ensure that new drivers start driving with the best possible habits, the Maricopa Association of Governments suggests the following tips as part of its "Don't Trash Arizona" program:

- Use a Litterbag: Keep a litterbag in your vehicle.
- Secure Your Load: Tie down large loads with straps, ropes or bungee cords.
- Tire Maintenance: Properly maintain tires to avoid the degeneration of tire treads.
- Teach by Example: Demonstrate positive behavior to your friends by not littering and asking them not to litter from your vehicle. As the driver, you are responsible for what happens in your car.
- [Take the Pledge](#): Consider taking the Don't Trash Arizona Safe Loads = Safe Roads Pledge to show your commitment to keep Arizona roadways clean. You could even win a prize.



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