

1 **VEHICLE LOAD PENALTIES AMENDMENTS**

2 2021 GENERAL SESSION

3 STATE OF UTAH

4 **Chief Sponsor: Jani Iwamoto**

5 House Sponsor: Mike Winder

7 **LONG TITLE**

8 **General Description:**

9 This bill amends provisions related to penalties for operating a vehicle with an
10 unsecured load.

11 **Highlighted Provisions:**

12 This bill:

13 ▶ extends the time period for which a subsequent violation is subject to an increased
14 fine.

15 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

16 None

17 **Other Special Clauses:**

18 None

19 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

20 AMENDS:

21 **72-7-409**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2017, Chapter 150

23 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

24 Section 1. Section **72-7-409** is amended to read:

25 **72-7-409. Loads on vehicles -- Limitations -- Confining, securing, and fastening**
26 **load required -- Penalty.**

27 (1) As used in this section:

28 (a) "Agricultural product" means any raw product which is derived from agriculture,
29 including silage, hay, straw, grain, manure, and other similar product.

30 (b) (i) "Unsecured load" means the contents of a vehicle, operated on a highway, not
31 sufficiently covered, confined, fastened, or otherwise secured in a way to prevent the contents
32 from escaping the vehicle.

33 (ii) "Unsecured load" includes materials such as dirt, sand, gravel, rock fragments,
34 pebbles, crushed base, aggregate, any other similar material, or scrap metal or other loose
35 material on any portion of the vehicle not designed to carry the material.

36 (c) "Vehicle" means the same as that term is defined in Section [41-1a-102](#).

37 (2) Except as provided in Subsections (3) through (5), a person may not:

38 (a) operate a vehicle with an unsecured load on any highway; or

39 (b) operate a vehicle carrying trash or garbage without a covering over the entire load.

40 (3) (a) A vehicle carrying dirt, sand, gravel, rock fragments, pebbles, crushed base,
41 aggregate, any other similar material, or scrap metal shall have a covering over the entire load
42 unless:

43 (i) the highest point of the load does not extend above the top of any exterior wall or
44 sideboard of the cargo compartment of the vehicle; and

45 (ii) the outer edges of the load are at least six inches below the top inside edges of the
46 exterior walls or sideboards of the cargo compartment of the vehicle.

47 (b) The following material is exempt from the provisions of Subsection (3)(a):

48 (i) hot mix asphalt;

49 (ii) construction debris or scrap metal if the debris or scrap metal is a size and in a form
50 not susceptible to being blown out of the vehicle;

51 (iii) material being transported across a highway between two parcels of property that
52 would be contiguous but for the highway that is being crossed; and

53 (iv) material listed under Subsection (3)(a) that is enclosed on all sides by containers,
54 bags, or packaging.

55 (c) A chemical substance capable of coating or bonding a load so that the load is
56 confined on a vehicle, may be considered a covering for purposes of Subsection (3)(a) so long
57 as the chemical substance remains effective at confining the load.

58 (4) Subsection (2) does not apply to a vehicle or implement of husbandry carrying an
59 agricultural product, if the agricultural product is:

60 (a) being transported in a manner which is not a hazard or a potential hazard to the safe
61 operation of the vehicle or to other highway users; and

62 (b) loaded in a manner that only allows minimal spillage.

63 (5) (a) An authorized vehicle performing snow removal services on a highway is
64 exempt from the requirements of this section.

65 (b) This section does not prohibit the necessary spreading of any substance connected
66 with highway maintenance, construction, securing traction, or snow removal.

67 (6) (a) Any person suspected of operating a vehicle with an unsecured load on a
68 highway may be issued a warning.

69 (b) Any person who violates this section is guilty of:

70 (i) an infraction, if the violation creates a hazard but does not lead to a motor vehicle
71 accident;

72 (ii) a class B misdemeanor, if the violation creates a hazard that leads to a motor
73 vehicle accident; or

74 (iii) a class A misdemeanor, if the violation creates a hazard that leads to a motor
75 vehicle accident that results in the serious bodily injury or death of a person.

76 (c) A person who violates a provision of this section shall be fined not less than:

77 (i) \$200 for a violation; or

78 (ii) \$500 for a second or subsequent violation [~~within three years of a previous~~
79 ~~violation~~] within six years of a previous violation of this section.

80 (d) A person who violates a provision of this section while operating a commercial
81 vehicle as defined in Section 72-9-102 shall be fined:

82 (i) not less than \$500 for a violation; or

83 (ii) \$1,000 for a second or subsequent violation [~~within three years of a previous~~
84 ~~violation~~] within six years of a previous violation of this section.

85 (7) As resources and opportunities allow, the department shall implement programs or

86 activities that increase public awareness on the importance of properly securing loads.