

# Unsecured loads will be charged a \$25 fee — strictly enforced

Effective January 1, 2013



Secure your load for safer roads!



**King County**

Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
Solid Waste Division

Serving Community

Protecting Environment

Operating Excellence

[www.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste](http://www.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste)

## Vehicles arriving at County transfer facilities or the landfill with unsecured loads are charged a \$25 fee — strictly enforced.

**King County Code 10.12.040:** "... a fee shall be charged to all operators of vehicles with unsecured loads arriving at any staffed public or private transfer facility or landfill in the jurisdiction of King County."

**Washington State law – RCW 46.61.655:** "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."

In accordance with state law and county code, since 1994 the Solid Waste Division has charged a fee for vehicles with unsecured loads arriving at its transfer facilities or landfill. It is the responsibility of facility scale operators to assess the unsecured-load fee. Taking the time to secure your load helps keep communities safe and clean.

The unsecured-load fee is in addition to any penalties or fines by law enforcement officers. The fine for transporting an unsecured load is \$216. If an item falls off a vehicle and causes bodily harm, the driver faces gross misdemeanor charges and penalties of up to \$5,000 and/or up to a year in prison.

### What is an unsecured load?

An unsecured load has not been fastened in or attached to the vehicle with tarps, rope, straps, netting, or chains, so as to prevent any part of the load or the covering from becoming loose, detached, or leaving the vehicle while the vehicle is moving.

#### "But I'm just going a short way and I won't be driving fast."

Even if you are driving slowly for just a couple of blocks you are still required to secure your load. The law is clear – every vehicle that travels on every publicly maintained road must have a secured load.

#### "But what I'm hauling is so heavy it couldn't possibly fall out."

Just because you can't imagine it happening doesn't mean it hasn't happened. Each year, heavy items such as large truck tires, spools of wire, and large pieces of wood fall from vehicles and end up on our roadways creating hazards for motorists. Take the time to always secure your load.

#### "But my load is below the top of the truck bed."

Even with a small load, items can shift and become loose or airborne. Don't risk it – secure your load.

## Secure Your Load For Safer Roads!



**It's the Law!**



**These loads are not secure!** The rope and netting as attached are not adequate to ensure that nothing can leave the vehicle while it is moving.

## What is a secured load?

A load is secure when nothing can slide, shift, fall, or sift onto the roadway, or become airborne.

### To secure your load:

**Cover** your load with a tarp. Covering your load with a tarp and then securely fastening the tarp to the vehicle is good way to ensure that your load is secure.

**Tie down** using rope, netting, straps, or chains. Tie large items directly to your vehicle. Make sure that any covering is securely tied down.

**Put lighter items lower** and place heavier items on top to help keep them in place and secure the heavy items to your vehicle.

**Don't overload** your vehicle.

**Double-check** that your load is secure.

### Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- Is there any chance of debris or cargo falling or blowing out of my vehicle?
- Is my load secured at the back, sides, and top?
- What would happen to my load if I had to brake suddenly or if I hit a bump or if another vehicle hit mine?
- Would I want my loaded vehicle driving through my neighborhood?
- Would I feel safe if I were driving behind my vehicle?

## Why should you secure your load?

1. It prevents injuries and saves lives
2. It prevents litter
3. It will cost you money if you don't
4. It is the law

## Unsecured Load Facts

According to the Washington State Department of Ecology:

- Roughly 40 percent of litter on highways comes from unsecured loads.
- It is estimated that road litter causes 25,000 accidents in North America each year, nearly 100 of which are fatal.
- Every year, road debris causes about 400 accidents on Washington State highways.
- 40 percent of the litter-related violations issued by Washington State Patrol in 2007 were for a failure to secure a load; 21 percent were issued for debris escaping from those loads.
- More than 12 million pounds of litter comes from vehicles each year in Washington State.

## For more information

### King County Solid Waste Division

Website . . . . . [www.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste](http://www.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste)  
 General information . . . . . 206-477-4466  
 Toll free . . . . . 1-800-325-6165, ext 74466  
 24-hour recorded information . . . . . 206-296-6540



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Alternate formats provided upon request

206-477-4466, TTY Relay: 711

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