

## Ordinance 4-2005

Section I. Yakima County Code Section 6.02.030 and all Ordinances amending said section are hereby amended as follows:

“Unsecured Load” means a shipment of solid waste in or on a vehicle that is not covered with a tarp, inside an enclosed vehicle or otherwise secured or tied down by safety chains or other fastening devices in a manner that will prevent materials from spilling, escaping, falling or being blown or deposited outside the vehicle while the vehicle is in motion. For purposes of this definition, solid waste contained in trash bags that are not covered with a tarp, inside an enclosed vehicle or otherwise secured down is an unsecured load.

**Passenger vehicles \$6**

**Trucks (over 3 yards) \$18**

Adopted May 31, 2005

## Good Load

**Tie down** with rope, bungee cords, netting or straps. Tie items directly to your vehicle **including large items** like appliances and garbage cans. **Cover your load** with a sturdy plastic tarp or net.



Think about what would happen to your load **if you had to stop suddenly** or swerve. Put **lighter weight things** at the bottom of the load and **don't overload** your truck bed.

## Bad Load

If your load is **NOT** inside a vehicle, covered with a tarp and/or tied down with ropes, straps or a net, you have an



## **UNSECURED LOAD.**

County employees are required to issue you an unsecured load fine.

## Secure Your Load

Unsecured loads create litter and can cause accidents and injuries to motorists. Even if you're going a short distance and not driving on the highway, you are required by law to secure your load.



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## Why Should I Secure My Load?

Unsecured loads can cause serious injury and death:

- In February 2004, Maria Federici was critically injured near Renton, WA, when an entertainment center fell from the back of a trailer being pulled by a vehicle in front of her. A 2 by 6 foot piece of particle board flew through her windshield, hitting her in the face. Maria permanently lost her eyesight and has endured numerous surgeries including complete facial reconstruction. Maria's bill went into effect July 2005. Under the law, failure to secure a load that causes an injury is now a gross misdemeanor and carries a maximum punishment of one year in jail and a \$5,000 fine.
- A loose tarp causes fatal crash on I-5. In January 2006, a young man was killed and a five year old boy critically injured on I-5 in Tacoma after a tow truck crashed into their car while swerving to avoid a tarp.
- In February 2006, a woman and her young niece were nearly killed on HWY 101 near Hoquiam when a huge piece of plywood flew off a truck and right into their windshield. The plywood shattered the windshield and came within inches of the driver's face.



## An Unsecured Load Will Cost You

- The fine for transporting an unsecured load in Washington state is over \$200. If an item falls off a vehicle and causes bodily harm, the driver faces gross misdemeanor charges and penalties up to \$5,000 and/or up to a year in jail.
- Littering is punishable by fines ranging from \$50 to \$5,000. The largest fines are for "lit debris" —primarily cigarettes — and for large items that can cause accidents.
- In Yakima County, the unsecured load fee at our solid waste facilities can be \$6 or \$18 depending on the capacity of your vehicle. You can dispute your fine by obtaining a dispute form from the scale house attendant or administration office. Digital photos are recorded of disputed loads at the scales to assist us in determining if a violation was made.

**Thank you for covering your load!**



## Secure Your Load For Safer Roads

Across North America, over 25,000 accidents are caused each year by litter that is either purposefully dumped by motorists or that falls out of vehicles with unsecured loads. Nearly 100 of those accidents are fatal.

According to the Washington State Department of Transportation, road debris causes about 400 accidents every year on state highways. Approximately one-third of the litter-related violations issued by Washington State Patrol are for a failure to secure a load. Unsecured loads cause up to 25% of Washington State's roadside litter.



**YES, even HEAVY items need to be secured to your vehicle by ropes/tarps or both.**