

Council passes covered load law

Law will reduce litter, improve safety, KSB says

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A new Sedona law will penalize motorists who carelessly or intentionally litter within the city limits.

Violators may also be ordered to perform community service.

The Sedona City Council unanimously passed a covered load ordinance Tuesday, Jan. 10 that makes it illegal to operate or move a vehicle if the load is not covered, tied down or otherwise secured.

The law becomes effective on Saturday, April 1.

Whether a styrofoam cup or a pile of construction debris, if it flies out of a vehicle, the driver could face sanctions that range

from a written warning for a first offense to a minimum \$500 fine for a second offense in a 24-month period.

Any loose material such as sand, dirt gravel, rocks and mud that drops sifts, leaks or otherwise escapes a vehicle can also result in a minimum \$100 penalty.

Off-roaders don't need to worry about dropping a little mud from the tires.

The ordinance does not penalize motorists for dropping dirt, mud or snow that is picked up on a vehicle while operating on the road.

The state has a vehicle load statute, but it does not apply to city roads.

The Sedona Land Development Code currently requires all loads and materials entering or leaving a construction site to be covered.

The regulations don't apply to private vehicles or to commercial vehicles traveling through the city, according to city staff.

The new ordinance is expected to fill the gap, according to staff.

The Arizona Department of Transportation has said that the city can post signs on Hwy. 89A and Hwy. 179 near the city limits, according to the Jan. 10 staff report.

Keep Sedona Beautiful worked with city staff for more than a year to draft the ordinance.

The civic organization sponsors the Litter Lifters, a group of volunteers that pick up trash throughout much of the Verde Valley.

KSB members have said that the ordinance will be a benefit to the whole region in terms of litter and safety.

"Executing a strong and comprehensive education program regarding this new requirement throughout the Verde valley will ensure compliance and minimize problems," KSB president Barbara Litrell said in a Jan. 10 memo.

City staff also reviewed the ordinance with the Sedona

Licensed Contractors Association.

The association's board generally approved of the ordinance, according to a Dec. 28 letter to the city.

At the board's request, the City Council will discuss the possibility of a city transfer station on a future date.

The transfer station could reduce the distance that some loads need to be transported.

City residents might be able to use the facility for a fee, according to the report.

Preliminary discussions between city staff and Waste Management indicated that a site at the city's wastewater treatment plant could cost between \$75,000 and \$150,000, the staff report stated.

Preparation of a site would include grading, road work and the cost to fence the station out of site from the highway.

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