



STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
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**Federal Law Changes Licensing Process  
For Drivers Transporting Hazardous Materials**

Santa Fe- Effective January 31, drivers of commercial vehicles who transport hazardous material will now have to undergo stringent background checks by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), as proposed by the USA Patriot Act, said Larry Kehoe, Director of New Mexico's Motor Vehicle Division (NM MVD).

The Patriot Act requires individuals who apply for an initial Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) endorsement on a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) or renew a CDL with a HAZMAT endorsement to: provide proof of U.S. citizenship or proof of appropriate immigration status; submit a Federal Security Threat Assessment application; pay additional federal and state fees totaling \$125 (\$36 for a TSA assessment fee; a \$24 FBI fingerprint fee; \$10 for an in-state background check, and a \$55 state administrative fee to have their fingerprints taken at a Motor Vehicle Division office fingerprint location), and successfully complete a federal criminal history background check.

Effective January 31, 2005, Kehoe said, CDL drivers who apply for an initial HAZMAT endorsement will have to undergo the new requirements of the fingerprinting and must receive a favorable reply back from the TSA before the endorsement is issued. Drivers who want to renew or transfer a CDL with a HAZMAT endorsement have until May 31 before the new procedures go into effect. Customers who applied for an initial HAZMAT endorsement prior to January 31 but have not yet taken the required HAZMAT knowledge test must comply with the new federal requirements.

According to Kehoe, applicants should allow a minimum of 30 days from the day their fingerprints are taken for their applications to be processed. A driver will not receive the HAZMAT endorsement until NM MVD receives notification from the TSA that the driver has passed the criminal history background check, which could take several weeks. Drivers must pass their HAZMAT re-certification knowledge test prior to renewing, or they will receive a CDL without the HAZMAT endorsement. Those who renew a CDL with a HAZMAT endorsement before May 31 are not subject to the additional federal requirements and fees until their next renewal date. Customers can renew a license up to 90 days prior to the license expiration date.

Kehoe said customers who have not yet received a renewal notice from NM MVD can complete an "Application to Renew Commercial Driver's License" (Form OMB 16452-0027), available at [www.state.nm.us/tax](http://www.state.nm.us/tax) □ Motor Vehicle Division □ MVD Forms.

For more information on changes to the licensing of CDL HAZMAT Drivers as a result of the USA Patriot Act, or to obtain a copy of the Federal Security Threat Assessment Application, visit [www.state.nm.us/tax](http://www.state.nm.us/tax) □ Motor Vehicle Division □ MVD Forms.