

Little-known vehicle law costing drivers money, points

By Kathryn Reed

Drivers failing to slow down or move into an unoccupied lane when emergency vehicles are on the shoulder with lights on could face a hefty fine and several points on their record.

“Move-Over” is the law in 48 states, including California and Nevada.



Not slowing down when an officer has his lights on could be costly.

The problem is not many people know about it.

It's been on the books in California for several years, but was set to expire Dec. 31, 2009. Lawmakers renewed the bill and included Caltrans workers in the language. Nevada has had the law for about six years.

Although every state has different nuances to the regulations, the gist is drivers must go into the left lane when there is one and it's safe, or slow down while passing emergency vehicles with lights on.

In Nevada, it's the law on all roads. In California, it's just on freeways. In the greater Lake Tahoe area that would be west of Fresh Pond to Placerville on Highway 50 and then outside of Placerville headed west. All of Interstate 80 would be subject to this law.

It's not just all law enforcement vehicles with lights on – fire trucks, ambulances, and the amber lights of tow trucks and highway workers count, too.

“Primarily the reason why it was adopted in our state and other states is because officers were struck and killed doing their job,” Nevada Highway Patrol Trooper Chuck Allen said. “You have to reduce your speed to less than what is posted. There is nothing more irritating than walking back to the patrol car and a vehicle zooms by and there is a free travel lane.”

Fines vary in different jurisdictions, but law enforcement contacted by *Lake Tahoe News* said to expect to pay several hundred dollars and have multiple points on your driving record if caught not slowing down or moving over.

Officers recognize that it can be difficult to catch people in the act because they are working a stop and because the slowing down part is subjective.

Lt. Tim Malone with the California Highway Patrol said it's easy enough for officers to radio a colleague about a driver who has violated the law.

“I can't tell you how many times our cars have been hit while parked,” Malone said.

Lt. Les Lovell with the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department is in favor having California's law more stringent like Nevada's.

“The reality is I think it should be applied to every

thoroughfare. This is a good public safety law that keeps people from being injured," Lovell said.

For more information about Move Over, [click here](#).