



**COLORADO**

Department of Transportation



**THE MOUNTAIN RULES**

## Truck Safety Campaign

### What is this Campaign?

- **A strategic safety partnership:** As part of the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) *Whole System – Whole Safety* initiative, and in light of the recent runaway truck incidents that resulted in fatalities, CDOT has established a strategic partnership with the Colorado Motor Carriers Association, the Colorado State Patrol and in-cab driver alert providers PrePass Safety Alliance and Drivewyze.
- **A comprehensive safety-focused effort:** To inform and educate in-state and intra-state trucking companies and drivers of the challenges of driving in Colorado's mountains—what to beware of—and to remind them *SLOW, STEADY and SAFE FOR THE LONG HAUL*.
- **The first of its kind for Colorado:** *The Mountain Rules* will be utilizing the I-70 Mountain Corridor as a pilot area for truckers to implement new safety elements and protocols.

### Why Do We Need *The Mountain Rules*?

- Colorado's high elevation and topography can be challenging and require motorists to proceed with extra caution. Truckers have it especially hard in the mountains. When driving a vehicle that is up to 70 feet long and weighing up to 80,000 pounds, the terrain along the mountain corridor can increase the likelihood of brake failure.
- Colorado experiences severe weather events that make driving difficult in the mountains, with high winds and storms that can bring extreme snow and hail. Colorado is also susceptible to hazards such as rockfalls, fires and floods. All of these elements can cause additional challenges and problems for trucks along the I-70 Mountain Corridor.

### Driver Alerts

- *The Mountain Rules* is an industry-informed effort. Using a focus group with the help of the Colorado Motor Carriers Association, CDOT was able to identify the best approach for providing alerts, including timing of advance notifications, locations and frequencies for reminders and the type of alerts (audio and/or visual).
- Driver alerts are subscription-based and include in-cab alerts that notify drivers of steep grades, locations of runaway truck ramps and areas for brake checks and cooling.

### Runaway Truck Ramps

- Runaway truck ramps exist to provide refuge when a vehicle loses its brakes traveling at higher speeds on steep downgrades.
- Runaway truck ramps are usually located on steep, sustained grades in mountainous areas.
- Long descending grades can result in reaching high-vehicle speeds, and heavy truck brakes can overheat and fail through extensive use.
- Colorado has five runaway truck ramps along the I-70 Mountain Corridor. See the table on the next page for location information.

## Runaway Truck Ramp Usage

- Runaway truck ramps are used most frequently in the summer.
- The Lower Straight Creek runaway truck ramp along westbound I-70 near Mile Point 212 is the most heavily used runaway truck ramp not only in Colorado, but also in the U.S. The ramp is estimated to be used once per week in the summer months.
- Key areas for hot brakes along I-70 include westbound traffic just east of Silverthorne near exit 205, and eastbound traffic near Georgetown at exit 228.

## The Mountain Rules Check Areas

- CDOT is preparing to use existing chain stations as dual-purpose facilities for Chain Ups/ Chain Downs and Brake Check/Cooling Stations.

## Reported Runaway Truck Ramp Usage along I-70\*

Mile Point, Direction, Name	Timeframes of Use	Number of Reported Uses
MP 182, Westbound, Upper Vail	11/24/2016 - 8/6/2017	4
MP 186, Westbound, Lower Vail	7/7/2017 - 11/1/2017	3
MP 209, Westbound, Lower Straight Creek	8/29/2016 - 4/25/2019	8
MP 212, Westbound, Upper Straight Creek	8/26/2016 - 5/24/2019	0
MP 257, Eastbound, Mt. Vernon Canyon	8/26/2016 - 4/2/2019	2
<b>Total Reported Uses Along I-70</b>	<b>8/26/2016 -5/24/2019</b>	<b>17</b>

Source: CDOT, Mountain Corridor SAP I-70 Ramp Use Database, August 2016 through May 2019.

Note: Mile Points are approximate. Some ramp uses are unreported.\*

## Sample Sign for Installation at Chain Stations along I-70

This is an example of signs that have been installed at six locations along eastbound I-70 from the Eisenhower Johnson Memorial Tunnels to the Genesee exit.

