

NMplates.com
New Mexico License Plates
Newsletter #7
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Albuquerque plate meet, Sunday, March 15, 2020

Planning is now underway for the annual Albuquerque plate meet, which has been set for Sunday, March 15, 2020. Watch for further news on the meet from Michael Wiener, ads in *PLATES* and at Michael’s new website: <https://nmplatemeet.com>

1912/1913 Manufacturer confirmed

It has long been believed that New Mexico’s 1912/1913 plates were manufactured by the S.G. Adams Company of St. Louis because of their striking similarity to New Hampshire’s 1912 plates which are positively known to have been made by that company. ALPCA member Rick Holben recently unearthed a 1912 article in the *Santa Fe New Mexican* newspaper which explicitly states that these plates came from a manufacturer in St. Louis. Though the name of the company is not stated

in the article, this information removes any remaining doubt as to the source of the state's first-issue plates.

U.S. Official plates verified to have started in 1928

ALPCA member and former Archivist Eric Tanner has turned up a 1928 newspaper article confirming that New Mexico's U.S. Official plates were first issued in that year. No surviving examples are known from 1928, 1929, or 1930, and it is likely that there were very few issued in those years. Nonetheless, we can now hold out hope that such examples may surface someday.

1950 Official plate found

Over the past 50 years or more no example of a New Mexico 1950 Official plate has been reported as having been seen. But just within the last month two examples turned up from different sellers on eBay. Neither of these is in great condition, but the better of the two is illustrated at:
<https://nmplates.com/Official.htm>

Electric Vehicle Registration Statistics

Electric Vehicle registration figures for all years available, i.e., fiscal years 2009-2017, are now on the website at:
<https://nmplates.com/RegStats.htm#ElecVeh>

1975 Redesign and General Reissue of Non-Passenger Plates

In 1975 there was a general redesign and reissue of virtually all types of non-passenger plates. The changes that took place are illustrated and described in detail at:
<https://nmplates.com/1975NonPassengerRedesign.htm>

Many additional vintage photos of cars, trucks, motorcycles, taxis, etc., displaying their New Mexico license plates, have been added.

See <https://nmplates.com/CarPhotos.htm> and especially the years 1921, 1945, 1947, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958 undated State Police, 1964, 1968, 1984, to mention a few. As mentioned in an earlier Newsletter, it is best to clear the last hour of your browser's history to make sure that the browser loads all of the latest additions.

Letter “O” no longer available for Vanity plates

New Mexico has never been known to use the letter “O” in serial numbers on any regular issue license plates, but it has been available for decades on Vanity plates. Now even Vanity plates have lost the letter “O.” If you request a Vanity that contains the letter “O,” and the choice is not otherwise already taken, you will receive your requested plate, but with the numeral zero “0” substituted in place of the letter “O.” A consequence of this change is that the two characters are now considered one in the same, and there cannot be issued, for example, be both an AO plate and an A0 plate. And if you request AO, you will receive A0.

On-line replacement of vanity plates suspended

For a couple of years now replacement plates, both regular issue, and Vanity, could be ordered on line as a “reprint” of the existing plate. Now, however, Vanity plate replacements can no longer be ordered on line, and any attempt to do so generates a confusing message to the effect that “You cannot order a replacement plate for this type of vehicle. You must visit an MVD office.” In actual fact, the type of vehicle has nothing to do with it. The problem is simply that Vanity plates can no longer be ordered on line, and you must go to an MVD office to order a replacement. It is unknown whether this is a temporary or permanent change.

Many new plate varieties have been identified, including, but not limited to those listed below. See them at: <https://nmplates.com/Varieties.htm>

- 1920 Porcelains without the blue porcelain “1920” and with two different styles of the numeral “1” and different lettering for the “NM”.
- 1948 Passenger with two different dies used on the same plate.
- 1950 Truck with two different styles of numeral “1” on same plate.
- 1960 Sample sticker and tab in two completely different styles.
- 1968 Motorcycle varieties
- 1971 Passenger on the 1965/1969 base with an embossed 71 date!
- 1976 Vanity, rare third variety.

Additional county runs illustrated

After 12 years of work, an ALPCA member has completed a county run on the 1965 Passenger base plate consisting only of plates with 4-digit serial

numbers after the county number. That having been completed, he has started work on a county run consisting only of plates with 3-digit serial numbers after the county number. See both of them at:

<https://nmplates.com/CountyRuns.htm>

Tourism publications and advertisements

A large number of very colorful vintage tourist booklets, brochures, and pamphlets published by the New Mexico State Highway Department, New Mexico State Tourist Bureau, and their successor organizations are now illustrated on the website at:

<https://nmplates.com/TourismPublications.htm>

Additionally, many vintage advertisements placed in national magazines by the N.M. State Tourist Bureau are illustrated on this webpage.

Two new license plate types introduced

The long-anticipated Active Duty plate for service members on active duty has been spotted on the road in small numbers, but we do not yet have a photograph of it. If you happen to have one of these plates which can be photographed, please let us know.

A new type of On Highway plate for all terrain vehicles (ATVs) has been introduced in partnership with the State Game and Fish Department. These plates authorize ATVs that are fully equipped to be street legal to be operated on public roads, but *only* in local jurisdictions which have passed ordinances explicitly authorizing their use in this manner. The plates are motorcycle size, black, red, and yellow on a reflective white background. We do not have a satisfactory photograph of this plate,, and if you happen to have one of these plates which can be photographed, please let us know.

***Early New Mexico License Plates* book SOLD OUT**

About a year ago the last two unsold copies of the Early New Mexico License Plates Book were discovered on a shelf in a storage cabinet, but these have also now been sold. There are no current plans to print more of the books.