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CMT Pulls Jason Aldean's Controversial 'Try That In a Small Town' Video: Exclusive

The outlet gave no reason for yanking the clip.

By [Melinda Newman](#) +

CMT has pulled [Jason Aldean \(https://www.billboard.com/artist/jason-aldean/\)](https://www.billboard.com/artist/jason-aldean/)'s incendiary video for his new single, "Try That In a Small Town."

The visual, which his label Broken Bow Records/BMG, released on Friday (July 14), was in rotation on CMT through Sunday (July 16), playing in the morning music video hours. It is unclear how many times CMT played the video before pulling it on Monday. Other than confirming the outlet had yanked the video, CMT declined to comment on the decision to cease playing the clip.

The video, which has received more than 346,000 views on YouTube since its release, features Aldean performing in front of courthouse with an American flag hanging from the entrance. The performance is interspersed with footage of a flag burning, protesters screaming and attacking police in various scenarios, and robbing a convenience store. It's unclear where the footage was taken from, but at one point, a Fox News chyron appears with the words "state of emergency declared in Georgia." Aldean is from Macon, Ga.



Jason Aldean - Try That In A Small Town (Official ...



Toward the end, the violent scenes are juxtaposed against images of Americana such as a small girl playing hopscotch and a flag rising, as a news anchor's voice comes on talking about farmers dropping their crops for the day to help a neighbor. A wizened male face comes on screen and earnestly says, "It's what this community and a lot of farm communities stand for: Somebody needs some help, they'll get it."

Upon the release of the video on Friday, Aldean posted to his 4.1 million followers on Instagram: "When u grow up in a small town, it's that unspoken rule of 'we all have each other's backs and we look out for each other.' It feels like somewhere along the way, that sense of community and respect has gotten lost. Deep down we are all ready to get back to that. I hope my new music video helps y'all know that u are not alone in feeling that way. Go check it out!"

Written by Kelley Lovelace, Neil Thrasher, Tully Kennedy and Kurt Michael Allison, the song is an often confrontational take, with lyrics challenging those who "carjack an old lady at a red light" or "pull a gun on the owner of a liquor store" or "cuss out a cop" to try that in a small town and "see how far ya make it down the road/ around here, we take care of our own."

In a later verse, Aldean, who was on stage when the worst gun massacre in U.S. history took place at the Route 91 Festival in Las Vegas on Oct. 1, 2017, sings, "Got a gun that my granddad gave me/ They say one day they're gonna round up/ Well, that sh-t might fly in the city/ Good luck."



After the video was removed from CMT's rotation Tuesday, the [country](#) (<https://www.billboard.com/t/country/>) singer posted a lengthy [message to his Instagram Stories](#) (<https://www.instagram.com/stories/jasonaldean/3149820054346690442/>) to further explain the song and its video. "I have been accused of releasing a pro-lynching song (a song that has been out since May) and was subject too the comparison that I (direct quote) was not too pleased with the nationwide BLM protests. These references are not only meritless, but dangerous," he began, adding that the lyrics do not reference race or point to it, and that all the news footage he used was real. Referencing being on stage at Route 91, he said "NO ONE, including me, wants to continue to see senseless headlines or families ripped apart. ... 'Try That In A Small Town,' for me, refers to the feeling of a community that I had growing up, where we took care of our neighbors, regardless of differences of background or belief." His statement did not address CMT's decision to pull his video.

The single, which will be featured on Aldean's forthcoming album, debuted on Billboard's Country Airplay chart eight weeks ago and rises 26-25 for the chart dated July 22. After news spread about CMT pulling the video and Aldean released his statement, the song rose from 11-1 on iTunes Country Top 40 chart on Tuesday.

Aldean kicked off a new amphitheater tour this weekend. He [succumbed to heat stroke](#) (<https://www.billboard.com/music/country/jason-aldean-reschedules-hartford-show-cut-short-heat-exhaustion-1235373470/#:~:text=There%20was%20a%20combination%20of,knows%20how%20hot%20>) his July 15 show, but will return to the road on July 20.



Jason Aldean 'Try That In a Small Town' Controversy

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