

Tow Bulletin



Memorial Day May 25

May 2009

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PLEASE DISTRIBUTE THIS INFORMATION TO ALL TOW CONTRACT EMPLOYEES

Memorial Day Holiday. . . *Don't forget*
~ Monday, May 25th will be observed as the Memorial Day Holiday. For purposes of a gate fee, treat the 25th as you would a Saturday or Sunday.

Originally called "Decoration Day," the tradition began as a way to honor soldiers who had died in the Civil War. After World War I, it was expanded to include American casualties of any war or military action. The traditional emblem of Memorial Day is the poppy – as in the 1915 poem by John McCrae, a medical officer in World War I.

"In Flanders Fields"

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row. . .*

Take a moment to remember the American women and men who are still risking their lives around the world in service to our country! . . .

Insurance and Bond Documents . . .

Management of each Tow Contractor's insurance coverages and bond is now the responsibility of the Towing Coordinator. Please let your agents know that the "certificate holder" address should be changed to Towing Coordinator, P.O. Box 8572, Portland OR 97207-8572. Regulatory Assistant, Dennis LoGiudice will be handling this paperwork. ***Questions may be***

directed to me or to Dennis at (503)865-2464...

Inventory and Condition Reports...

Although the standard Tow Contract invoice provides space for towers to note pre-existing damages and personal items in a towed vehicle, some companies also use a separate sheet for this information. If your company chooses to note these things on a separate form, please remember to indicate on the invoice that such a form exists and **make sure that the citizen gets a copy** when they pick up the vehicle. Towers are not allowed to require the citizen to sign the inventory sheet as a condition of release of the vehicle.

3.41.25 Tow Contractor will not require any vehicle owner/owner's agent to make any statement or sign any document relieving the Tow Contractor from responsibility for the condition of the vehicle or its personal effects prior to the owner's/owner's agent's inspection of vehicle or personal effects.

If a citizen disagrees with the information listed in the inventory or notations of damage, they are allowed to make notes to that effect on the tow invoice or inventory sheet...

Vehicle Access . . . Once again, I have received complaints about towers who are uncooperative when insurance staff need



access to inspect or photograph a towed vehicle. The Tow Contract specifically provides that towers must cooperate with citizens and their agents to help them gather information about a towed vehicle.

3.19.3 *Tow Contractor will allow owner/owner's agent, with valid proof of ownership or authorization, access to a towed vehicle for purposes of inspecting and/or documenting its condition at anytime until the Tow Contractor forecloses a possessory lien as provided by ORS Chapter 87. Tow Contractor will provide such access during regular business hours without charge. Tow Contractor may assess an after hours release fee, at the rate specified in this Tow Contract if the owner/owner's agent requests access outside of regular business hours.*

Until you have foreclosed the lien, you must help the owner or their authorized agent, with proper identification and without a fee, except a possible gate fee. It makes no difference if the last insurance company you helped chose not to pick up the vehicle. A tower can't hold a vehicle "hostage" for payment. ***Failure to allow this access could result in penalties!..***

Training Opportunity . . . If you're looking for effective, detailed training for your drivers, an opportunity is coming up in May.

**Light/Medium-Duty
Training and Certification
May 16-17, 2009**

- Presented by Dave Lambert, North American Towing Academy, Inc.
 - 2-days of classroom and hands-on training, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm
 - Location: Speed's Towing
14325 NE Sandy Blvd., Portland
- Cost:** Pre-registered students - \$200.00

Pay at the Door – \$235.00

This training is approved by the City of Portland Tow Board to satisfy the contract requirement for driver certification. Also approved by Clackamas County Sheriff's Department. ***For information contact:*** Dave Lambert, 407-765-5149 or Dave Reichert at Speeds SuperTow at 503-572-6424. ***Additional information at*** <http://www.TheNATA.com>

Watch Out for Those Deals on the Side . . . Rumors have circulated for some time now that certain repair shops offer a "referral fee" to tow drivers willing to recommend - or *persuade* - a citizen to have their wrecked or disabled vehicle taken to that shop to be patched up. Please remind all tow staff that **this is specifically prohibited** by the Tow Contract.

3.41.12 *Tow Contractor will not require performance of repair work on a vehicle involved in an accident or breakdown in connection with providing towing service for such vehicle. **Tow Contractor will also not endorse any automotive repair or body shop or attempt to influence a vehicle owner/ owner's agent to chose a particular repair or body shop.***

Proof that a driver was participating in such a scheme could disqualify that person from all Tow Contract work. Proof that his/her company *knew* the activity was happening could cause the company to lose their tow contract. Don't let this happen to you. ***It's just not worth it!..***



Notifying Tow Desk of a Release . .

.The Tow Contract requires that a tower send a fax to Tow Desk with information about the release of a vehicle not later than 8 hours after the time of the release. It also requires that the tower use the standard “Vehicle Release Notification to Tow Desk” form. So far, so good.

However, some towers are not very careful about how they fill out the form. Make sure your staff is following these requirements:

- Fill out all the information – the date and actual release time is required on release to owners (RO)
- If you want to use one form for all releases on the same day, draw one neat line through the earlier releases. You must start a new form for each day. **DO NOT put releases from more than one day on a single form.**
- Take time to PRINT LEGIBLY! Press hard enough to imprint the back copy. Check it before you give the citizen their copy.
- BE ACCURATE! Don’t guess about the time of a release. Remember there are two places on the invoice (with two different purposes) for information about the time of a release:
 - 1)**Released by/Release time** – this is where you note the ID number of the person notifying Tow Desk and the **time of the notification fax; and**
 - 2)**(Release) Date and Rls Time**. These are located next to the signature line because they are the date and time that the vehicle owner signs the invoice. The “Rls Time” on the fax notification sheet is the time that the release notice is

sent to Tow Desk.

- Check that all your machines – credit card receipt printer, fax, etc. – have accurate time stamps that match up with the Tow Desk time. If there is a question about the time of a release, the VISA receipt given to a citizen may be used for verification.

Sloppiness in release reporting can cost you! . . .

\$\$\$\$\$, part deux . . . As we said last month, the City’s new accounting system has resulted in some changes in duty assignments. For example – billings to the Bureau of Maintenance, such as Tow by the Hour fees, must now be sent to:

Gil Torres
Bureau of Transportation
2929 N Kerby
Portland OR 97227
(503)823-4758

. . .And Another Thing . . . Remember that Agency rates don’t go up until July 1, 2009. Several towers have made the mistake of billing PPB Seizure World mileage at the citizen rate. The Police Bureau pays the out of district mileage to Seizure World, so it’s paid at the Agency rate of \$3.00/mile. ***After July 1, the agency mileage rate will be \$3.50 per out of district towed mile. . .***

Employee ID Numbers . . .

Remember: an employee identification number assigned by the City serves only as a unique identifier. It does not necessarily mean that the holder has passed either the DMV or criminal background checks.



When you hire a new employee, send in the completed “Immediate Notice of New Hire/Notice of Termination form” along with the required documents. *Check out the monthly update report to be sure the employee has been entered...*

April Response Times . . . Out of 1871

tow requests:

21 to 30 minutes – 61 tows (Down from 76)

31 + minutes – 31 tows (Down from 34)

3 Failures to Respond (Down from 5)

Less than 5%:

21st Century D7	Oregon (0%)
21 st Century D5	Retriever
A&B D2	Sam’s
A&B D8 (0%)	Security
Beaver	Sergeant’s D8 (0%)
City	Speed’s D8 (0%)
Newhouse D5	United Service Alliance
Northwestern	

5 to 9.9% :

21st Century D4	Loop Hwy
A&B D7	Newhouse D8
Buck's	Safeguard
Handy Andy’s	Speed’s D5

10% or more

Crown	Newhouse D4
Gerlock (1 of 6 tows)	Sergeants D3

100% Response . . .

- 21st Century D4** 65 requests
- 21st Century D5** 45 requests
- 21st Century D7** 61 requests

- A & B D2** 228 requests
- A & B D7** 64 requests
- Beaver** 43 requests
- Buck’s** 40 requests
- Gerlock** 6 requests
- Newhouse D4** 66 requests
- Retriever** 230 requests
- Sam’s** 74 requests
- Security** 176 requests
- Sergeant’s D3** 43 requests
- Sergeant’s D8** 51 requests
- Speed’s D8** 60 requests

In addition, the following companies passed only 1 tow in April:

- Crown Towing** 48 requests
- Loop Hiway** 74 requests
- Newhouse D8** 58 requests
- Northwestern Towing** 42 requests
- Safeguard** 67 requests
- Speed’s D5** 40 requests

The overall pass percentage for April was 1.17% ...

Next Contract Workshop . . .

1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Thursday, May 28, 2009
Room 600, Rivers Conf room
111 SW Columbia Street

Don’t wait until the last minute. Register by Tuesday, May 26th. Class starts by 1:35 so be on time! *Late-comers may be turned away...*

...mg

