Tow Bulletin

April, 2010

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PLEASE DISTRIBUTE THIS INFORMATION TO ALL CONTRACT TOW EMPLOYEES

This Month . . .

4/12 Deadline 16:30 for submission of completed bid applications for the AB Tow Contract

4/13 – 5/3 Qualifying inspections of equipment and facilities for AB Tow Contract

No Tow Board meeting

Next month…

May

5/3 Last day to pass qualifying inspections

5/19 Tow Board 1:30 p.m. in the 8th floor conference room of 111 SW Columbia St

Award of 2010-2013 Abandoned Vehicle Tow Contract

5/31 Memorial Day holiday

Collecting the "Deficit Balance" . . .

In these lean times, it is more critical than ever that Tow Contractors make use of all available revenue sources, including billing the registered owner for any deficit balance that remains after a towed car has been liened and auctioned. However, in their eagerness to leave no source of revenue unturned, some towers are overlooking an important condition of that privilege ~ if the seller has reported the sale to DMV and signed off the title, they are no longer responsible for the vehicle in any way. The easiest way to verify that the registered owner isn't responsible for the bill is to check the DMV record for a "flag" - 11 (notice of sale) and/or 49 (seller notice received with new owner information).

Remember:

- It doesn't matter if the seller didn't provide the new buyer's information
- It doesn't matter if the buyer has not re-registered the vehicle in their name

Want to check it out for yourself? Go to http://www.leg.state.or.us/ors/803.html and read ORS 803.117. ***Be sure before you damage someone's credit rating…***

Same Old Song . . .

But we're going to keep singing until everyone gets it! Apparently some folks in the industry still don't understand (or believe?) that they are *required* to clean up debris and "injurious substances" from the scene of a motor vehicle accident. Here is a list of reasons that towers have given for not fulfilling this obligation:

- "I don't have to clean because I didn't spread the absorbent, the (fire dept., police, ODOT, etc.) did it." Wrong! State law, City code and the Tow

Earth Day – April 22

Contract make no distinction about how the mess got there, the tower is responsible to clean it up – that includes picking up all glass, debris and used grease sweep.

- "There was another tower coming/already there and that was their part." Wrong! Even when more than one tower responds, each has 100% responsibility for clean up.
- "That's ODOT's job." Wrong! ODOT lends a hand to minimize the spread of vehicle operating fluids and contain debris and soiled absorbent. But, it's the tow operator's job to clean up after crashes.
- "It didn't come from my tow." Okay, maybe - but if there is debris and spilled gunk on the pavement, it should still be cleaned up before it goes into the catch basin.

For your reference:

Oregon Revised Statutes: ORS 822.225 Failure to remove injurious substance; penalty.

Speaking of Catch Basins . . . The Bureau of Environmental Services tells me they haven't gotten a call from any tower on the "Report Pollution" line in months! I understand that it isn't always a smooth process, but *it **is** required.* Since January 1, 2010, there have been 638 Private Non-Preference tows of "wrecked" vehicles. Even if some of those wrecks didn't result in spilled fluids or broken glass, I'm sure that the majority of these tows should have been reported to BES. Please remind your drivers and make sure that every truck still has its window sticker displayed where the driver can see it ***and use it! It's part of your job...***

"Taking a Lane" . . . ODOT would like to remind towers that blocking a lane of traffic while hooking up or recovering a vehicle is only allowed if you have first taken all the steps required by Oregon Revised Statute:

1) Determine that the salvaging operation requires stopping the wrecker or tow vehicle in the roadway.

This may seem like a no-brainer, but it's not. Don't assume that it will be necessary or even wise to block a traffic lane. In fact, you should avoid it, if possible!

2) Place warning signs or signals as prescribed under ORS 815.070 at a suitable distance in each direction upon the roadway.

So what do they mean by "suitable?" It isn't defined specifically, but if you lay out flares or warning devices the same way you would for a wreck, you're probably in the right ballpark.

3) Activate tow vehicle warning lights described in ORS 816.280.

This means amber or red, intermittent lights, visible from 500 feet. If you think you need to block a lane, okay - ***but don't forget to take care of all three conditions, or risk having your tow canceled by the Road Authority - ODOT. . .***

A "Change of Address" . . . For now anyway, the Revenue Bureau will remain in the Columbia Square building at SW 1st and Columbia St. But remember, City emails have changed…

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Earth Day – April 22

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Don't forget the dot(.) between the first and last names…

Stylin'... Don't be "The Invisible Tower" when working at a tow scene. Make sure you can be seen in an ANSI-approved reflective vest or jacket. ***The life you save may be your own!...***

March Response Times . . . Out of 1573 tows in March:
21 to 30 minutes – 43 tows (Down from 62)
31 + minutes – 24 tows (Down from 29)

Failures to Respond: 3 tows (Up from 2)

Less than 5%:

21st Century D4	Northwestern
21st Century D5	Retriever
A&B D2	Safeguard
A&B D7	Sam's
A&B D8	Security
Beaver	Sergeants D8
Gerlock	Speed's D8
Newhouse D8	

5 to 9.9% :

21st Century D7	Newhouse D5
Handy Andy's	Sergeant's D3
Loop Hwy	Speed's D5

10% or more

Buck's/9T9	Newhouse D4
Crown	

100% Response . . .

21st Century D4 54 requests
21st Century D5 44 requests
21st Century D7 92 requests
Beaver 49 requests
Buck's/9T9 43 requests
Gerlock 3 requests
Handy Andy's 32 requests
Loop Hwy 46 requests
Newhouse D5 44 requests
Northwestern 47 requests
Security 115 requests
Speeds D5 49 requests

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

Newhouse D8 89 requests
Retriever 111 requests
Sam's 65 requests
Sergeant's D8 68 requests
Speeds D8 73 requests

The overall pass percentage for March was 1.52%...

March All-Stars. . . Companies with no passes and no late responses:

Beaver
Gerlock
Northwestern

Next Contract Workshop . . . Do you check the monthly report of your employees to make sure that they all have up to date certifications? Why not? There are several employees among the Tow Contractors who have worked more than six months without attending the mandatory workshop. Don't be caught short-handed!

1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Thursday, April 29, 2010

Room 600, Rivers Conf room
111 SW Columbia Street
Register by Tuesday, March 23rd to be sure of a seat. Class starts by 1:35 so be on time!
Late-comers may be turned away…

...mg