

## The Oregonian

### 5 things to know about Portland's new disabled-parking rules (free parking ends July 1)

*By Joseph Rose*

The days of a disabled-parking placard doubling as an unlimited free parking pass for Portland's primo metered spots are about to end.

Starting July 1, drivers with basic blue disabled parking permits will be required to pay in metered spaces. And just to make sure no one can argue confusion or ignorance, PBOT is blanketing downtown with brochures about the new rules.

"Officers are placing the brochures on all vehicles parked at a metered spot that display a placard," said Diane Dulken, a Bureau of Transportation spokeswoman.

Yes, blanketing.

As I wrote in November, I have been cursed with a sixth sense that kicks in whenever I walk past parked cars in downtown Portland. Everywhere I look, I see blue disabled placards hanging from rearview mirrors.

Block after block after block is lined with vehicles – hundreds of them, from beaters to BMWs – whose owners have for years received unlimited free parking in the city's most desirable metered spaces.

After a while, you get the unshakeable feeling that a lot of able-bodied commuters are getting their hands on disabled permits and scamming a compassionate city out of millions of dollars in parking revenue each year.

After a walkabout with a parking enforcement officer last fall, Novick noticed the same thing and moved to rectify the situation.

Last month, the City Council changed the Portland parking ordinance to require motorists with a basic dark blue disabled placard to pay as of July 1. (The light blue wheelchair user placard still allows users to get free parking under state law.)

You can download the full brochure from PBOT.

Here five things to know about the new parking rules:

- People with basic placards still get a deal on metered parking. In a one-hour, 90-minute or two-hour spot, for instance, you can pay for an hour but stay for up to three.
- Have a hard time walking to the meter? The city will start offering "handy scratch-off permits" that allow you to pay from your vehicle, so you don't have to visit the meter and return to your vehicle to place a meter receipt.
- For those who live or work in a metered district but can't reasonably use public transit or an existing garage, you'll be able to purchase a monthly parking permit at a discount from PBOT. The permit allows users to park within three blocks in all directions.
- To improve access for drivers who need it most, the city is installing 50 more parking spaces around downtown reserved for people using disabled placards. Of course, pay to park rules will apply. The city is also installing 30 free-parking spaces reserved for persons holding wheelchair placard.
- If you have additional questions about the new rules, call PBOT at 503-823-5185 or email [disabledparking@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:disabledparking@portlandoregon.gov).