Tow Bulletin

"Tow Contractors providing quality towing services to public agencies and citizens of Portland since 1974."

July, 2008

Vol. 16, Issue 7

Marian Gaylord, Towing Coordinator, (503) 823-5146

PLEASE DISTRIBUTE THIS INFORMATION TO ALL CONTRACT TOW EMPLOYEES

All You Yankee Doodle Dandies. . .
Friday, July 4th – Independence Day - will be an official City and Contract holiday. As always, ***towers are not required to staff their office that day and gate fees apply. . .***

PIT, FIST, HIT Task Force Tows…
On July 1 the Portland Interdiction Task Force (PIT) will merge with the Oregon State Police Financial Investigation Strike Team (FIST) and become the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Interdiction Task Force (HIT). Regardless of whether they call it PIT, FIST or HIT, it's a police tow with a formal hold for Drugs and Vice Division.

You may get some "strange" requests - vehicles may sometimes be taken to a precinct for investigation and then later be re-towed to Rivergate. You may be asked to tow a vehicle from way outside the city limits. In any case, please accomodate the officers to the best of your abilities.

Towers will bill the city just as when you take any other vehicle to Rivergate. Leave a copy of your invoice with the attendant, then bill the Portland Police for your fees. And remember: ***If the vehicle ends up back at your storage lot, a release will be required before anyone can redeem it…***

What to Do When it's Hot, Hot, Hot! . . . Don't be a victim of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. American Red Cross advises:

- Don't wait until you're thirsty to have a cool drink of water - in this kind of weather, a person should drink about twice the usual recommended amount or about a gallon per day, *minimum*
- Avoid beverages with caffeine such as coffee, cola drinks, tea, Jolt, Mt. Dew. Caffeine and alcohol are diuretics and can cause further dehydration
- Ice or a cool cloth applied to the wrists or the back of the neck can help to relieve early symptoms of heat exhaustion. It's also not a bad idea to carry a small cooler with ice and water in your truck.
- Watch for early signs of distress from too much heat – cramps, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea, clammy skin. If a

person is exhibiting any of these signs and their skin is dry and hot, they need medical attention. Get out of the heat, drink cool liquids, rest. Don't ignore these warning signs.

Heat stroke can cause brain damage and even death in as little as 20 minutes. . .

The Check's in the Mail? . . .

Occasionally, a tower will call, angry that they haven't been paid timely by an agency for a "city" tow. There is much muttering about bureaucratic inefficiency. Okay, I understand that it's frustrating when the money isn't rolling in as expected. But the towers have an important role in the process, too ~ ***Send it to the right place!***

When I looked into the latest complaint, once again I found that towers are not careful about making sure they send their bills to the right people. Sure, the agencies are all served by the same contract, but they aren't all located in one big room!

Every January, we publish a list of names and addresses for agency contacts and billing. Here, again is a reminder:

- **Billings to the Portland Police Bureau** ~ (AFU tows, tows to Seizure World)
  Bill Rath
  Police Fiscal Services
  1111 SW 2nd Avenue, Room 1406
  Portland OR 97204
  (503) 823-0486

- **Billings to City of Portland Fleet Services** (City fleet vehicles – police cars, etc.)
  Janice Young
  Bureau of General Services
  1120 SW 5th Avenue, Room 1204
  Portland OR 97204
  (503) 823-6943

- **TBTH billing**: towers must get a signature *and billing information* at the scene when doing Tow-by-the-Hour tows. If your driver fails to do this, there may be no other way to get the information!

If a TBTH tow is to be paid by the City Maintenance Bureau, send the bill to:
Emilie Ibandez
2929 N Kerby
Portland OR 97227
(503)823-7040

- **Billings to Multnomah County Fleet** ~ (County-owned Heavy vehicles)
  Adrianna Lucas
  Multnomah County Transportation
  1620 SE 190th Avenue
  Portland OR 97233-5999

(County-owned, Portland Public Schools, facilities maintenance…)
Percy Winters
301 N. Dixon
Portland OR 97227

Make sure your staff are filling out the invoices completely, and *read what it says*. If it isn't obvious who is responsible for paying, and you send it to the wrong place, it may simply be tossed without explanation. The bill-payers don't have time to figure out who it should go to and forward it if you send your bill to them in error. And one more thing ~ If you don't get your payment on time, don't just send a duplicate bill, call and find out why! ***Don't make it even harder to get paid for your work…***

Check Those Daily Reports!. . .

Every day – except Sunday – Tow Desk sends every Tow Contractor a list of the previous day's release activity. Towers are *required*

to check this list every day and inform Tow Desk right away if there are errors or omissions. If everyone was checking this report as they should, we should never have the long lists of unreleased vehicles like those that were sent to each company last month.

3.27.5 Tow Contractor shall be responsible for reviewing the daily report, provided by Tow Desk each morning except Sunday, showing all vehicle releases of the previous day. Tow Contractor shall immediately notify Tow Desk of any discrepancies found in the daily report of vehicle releases.

New Rules of the Road . . . Not quite sure how to apply the new pedestrian right-of-way rules? Not *aware* of the new pedestrian right-of-way rules?! Here is the language from the Oregon Revised Statutes describing drivers' obligations regarding persons crossing a street:

811.020 Passing stopped vehicle at crosswalk; penalty. (1) Drivers may not pass a stopped vehicle at a crosswalk if the driver:

(a) Approaches from the rear another vehicle that is stopped at a marked or an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection to permit a pedestrian to cross the roadway; and

(b) Overtakes and passes the stopped vehicle.

811.025 Failure to yield to pedestrian on sidewalk; penalty. (1) The driver of a vehicle commits the offense of failure to yield to a pedestrian on a sidewalk if the driver does not yield the right of way to any pedestrian on a sidewalk.

811.028 Failure to stop and remain stopped for pedestrian; penalty. (1) The driver of a vehicle commits the offense of failure to stop and remain stopped for a pedestrian if the driver does not stop and remain stopped for a pedestrian when the pedestrian is:

(a) Proceeding in accordance with a traffic control device or crossing the roadway in a crosswalk; and

(b) In any of the following locations:

(A) In the lane in which the driver's vehicle is traveling;

(B) In a lane adjacent to the lane in which the driver's vehicle is traveling;

(C) In the lane into which the driver's vehicle is turning;

(D) In a lane adjacent to the lane into which the driver's vehicle is turning, if the driver is making a turn at an intersection that does not have a traffic control device under which a pedestrian may proceed as provided under ORS 814.010; or

(E) Less than six feet from the lane into which the driver's vehicle is turning, if the driver is making a turn at an intersection that has a traffic control device under which a pedestrian may proceed as provided under ORS 814.010.

(2) For the purpose of this section, a bicycle lane or the part of a roadway where a vehicle stops, stands or parks that is adjacent to a lane of travel is considered to be part of that adjacent lane of travel.

(3) This section does not require a driver to stop and remain stopped for a pedestrian under any of the following circumstances:

(a) Upon a roadway with a safety island, if the driver is proceeding along the half of the roadway on the far side of the safety island from the pedestrian; or

(b) Where a pedestrian tunnel or overhead crossing has been provided at or near a crosswalk.

To Surcharge, Or Not?. . . A temporary fuel surcharge of $3.00 is now in force for all "citizen-paid" tow services. At this time, the surcharge does not apply to Agency-paid tows (i.e.; *Any tow of an Agency-owned vehicle or any vehicles towed in error by order of an Agency, for which the Agency bears financial responsibility.*) So, what does this mean for vehicles towed to Rivergate or the Hansen Building?

The City or Multnomah County collects the towing fees from the citizen when they get their release, and **the tower is correct to**

bill the Agency for the collected towing fees, *including the fuel surcharge. . .*

Criminal Background and DMV Records . . .

The Board recently voted to tighten the standards for tow employees regarding criminal history and driving records. So how does a tower avoid spending time and money on a new hire that ultimately won't be approved? Industry Rep, Bob Wilson has done some checking to learn what resources are available to private businesses for pre-qualifying job applicants. There are several local providers that for a reasonable fee can give you an idea of what a background/DMV check is likely to turn up. If you are interested in this service, call Bob Wilson at Newhouse and Hutchins for contact information. ***Know who you're dealing with. . .***

June Response Times -

June, 2008 out of **2443** tow requests:
21 to 30 minutes 119 tows (up from 100)
31 + minutes 38 tows (up from 25)
7 Failure to respond (down from 10)

Overall 6.42% in late responses (up from 5.31%)…

Less than 5% late responses:

21st Century D4	Loop Hi-Way
21st Century D5	Northwestern
A&B D2	Oregon
A&B D8	Retriever
Beaver Towing	Sams
Gerlock	Security
	Speeds D8

5 to 9.9% late responses:

21st Century D7	Newhouse D5
Buck's/9T9	Sergeants D8
	Speeds D5

10% or more late responses

A&B D7	Newhouse D4
Andy's	Newhouse D8
Handy Andy's	Sergeants D3
United Service Alliance	

100% Response . . .

In the month of June, there were 7 Tow Contractors that responded to all requests for Contract tows.

21st Century D4	118 requests
Andy's Towing	70 requests
Gerlock	8 requests
Retriever	170 requests
Security Towing	163 requests
Sergeants D3	**84** requests
Speed's D5	120 requests

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

21st Century D5	102 requests
21st Century D7	107 requests
A & B D2	146 requests
A & B D7	118 requests
A & B D8	83 requests
Beaver Towing	98 requests
Buck's/9T9	66 requests
Handy Andy's	53 requests
Sergeant's D8	83 requests

The overall pass percentage for June was 1.68%...

Next Contract Workshop. . .

The next Contract Workshop is scheduled for

Thursday, July 31, 2008.
1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Room 600, Rivers Conf room
111 SW Columbia Street

Don't wait until the last minute. ***Register by Tuesday, July 29th…***