Tow Bulletin

January, 2010

Vol. 17, Issue 1

Marian Gaylord, Towing Coordinator, (503) 865-2489

PLEASE DISTRIBUTE THIS INFORMATION TO ALL CONTRACT TOW EMPLOYEES

Mark Your Calendars. . . Here is the list of official City holidays for 2010:
New Year's Day – Friday, Jan.1
M L King, Jr. Birthday – Monday, Jan. 18
Presidents' Day – Monday, Feb. 15
Memorial Day – Monday, May 31
Independence Day – Monday, July 5
Labor Day – Monday, Sept. 6
Veterans' Day – Thursday, Nov. 11
Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, Nov. 25
Christmas Day – Saturday, Dec. 25
New Year's 2011 – Friday, Dec. 31

This Month . . .

Martin Luther King, jr. Birthday
Monday, January 18th
(Gate Fee applies all day)

Civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. recognized the power of service to strengthen communities and achieve common goals. The King Day of Service builds on that legacy by transforming the federal holiday honoring Dr. King into a national day of community service grounded in his teachings of nonviolence and social justice. The aim is to bring people of all ages and backgrounds together to improve lives, bridge social barriers, and move our nation closer to the "Beloved Community" that Dr. King envisioned. Thousands of projects are planned across the country, if you're interested, ***check out*** http://www.mlkday.gov/ ***for more information…***

A "To-Do" List for 2010. . . I was thinking it might be useful for both the Tow Contractors and the Tow Board to have a *best guess* schedule of meetings and projects for the coming year.

January

1/1 New Year holiday
1/18 M.L. King, Jr Birthday holiday
1/20 Tow Board 1:30 p.m. in the 8th floor conference room of 111 SW Columbia St – Discussion of the Abandoned Vehicle Tow Contract (AB Tow Contract) for July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2015

February

2/15 Presidents' Day holiday
No Tow Board

March

3/17 Tow Board 1:30 p.m. in the 8th floor conference room of 111 SW Columbia St – Approval of bid materials for AB Tow

Contract and discussion of first draft of AB Tow Contract

3/22 Release of AB Tow Contract bid applications to interested parties

April

4/12 Deadline 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

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

5/31 Memorial Day holiday

June

6/30 2005-2008 Abandoned auto Tow Contract expires

No Tow Board

July

7/1 2010- 2013 Abandoned auto Tow Contract begins

7/5 Official observance of the Independence Day holiday

7/21 Tow Board 1:30 p.m. in the 8th floor conference room of 111 SW Columbia St

August

No Tow Board

September

9/6 Labor Day Holiday

9/15 Tow Board 1:30 p.m. in the 8th floor conference room of 111 SW Columbia St

October

No Tow Board

November

11/11 Veteran's Day Holiday

11/17 Tow Board 1:30 p.m. in the 8th floor conference room of 111 SW Columbia St

11/25 Thanksgiving Holiday

December

No Tow Board

12/24 Official observance of Christmas Holiday

12/31 Official observance of New Year Holiday

Remember it's all subject to change without much notice!...

A Service Call is a Service Call, Right?. . . Maybe not~ The Tow Contract specifies that Tow Contractors are obliged to provide road service to Agency vehicles. And what qualifies as "road service?" Contract Section 1.35 defines it as

"…tire changes,
jump starts,
winch outs,
and delivery of up to two (2) gallons of gasoline..".

The contract does not require towers to provide these services to citizens. If you choose to accept a request to provide service to a citizen's vehicle, you need to make clear what it will cost and find out who will pay for it. Don't assume that the Agency will have contact information for that citizen.

One more note, it doesn't say *lockouts*. ***This service isn't required even for Agency vehicles. . .***

Billing the City . . . I've gotten complaints from several Bureaus about towers sending the wrong invoice copy when billing for services provided to the City. ***Remember:*** It is treasury policy that they can only pay if they have the *pink* copy ~ not the white and not the yellow. Regardless of how it's, "always been done before," ***be sure to send the pink invoice copies with your bill to speed up the process of being paid by the City…***

And While We're on the Subject . . .

As everyone should know, the City's "Code Hearings Officer" (CHO) hears citizen appeals and makes rulings on whether a contract tow is valid – should the officer have ordered the tow? When a tow is ruled invalid, the CHO refunds the entire tow bill to the citizen and sends a "Notification of Invalid Tow" form indicating the types of fees and the amounts that CHO will pay.

If a tower wishes to be paid for expenses incurred when filing for a possessory lien, documentation of such expenses must be provided to CHO. The Contract says:

5.4.14.1 *After* a vehicle has been in storage for 7 days, the Tow Contractor may recoup lien-filing expenses *actually incurred*.

So, if you want the City to pay for the cost of processing your lien, you must also provide receipts or other itemized list of expenses you have borne. ***No documents - no lien fee...***

Important Reminder: How to Handle a Hold . . .

Now and then we need to be reminded of the proper handling of a vehicle when a temporary or formal hold has been applied to it. There are two types of hold – Formal and Temporary. Here are the characteristics of each type:

Formal:

- Ordered by any Agency officer
- Restricts access to both the towed vehicle and its contents
- **For an indefinite period – does not expire**
- Allows for completion of investigation
- May go to a police facility (Rivergate or Hansen Building) **or** to the tower's lot
- Tower should refer all inquiries about the vehicle to the police agency that towed it
- Must be stored inside police hold storage at the tower's lot

Temporary:

- Ordered by any Agency officer
- Restricts access to both the towed vehicle and its contents
- **Limited duration – expires after 72 hours, not counting weekends or holidays – may be lifted earlier**
- Goes to the tower's lot
- Allows for completion of investigation
- Tower should refer all inquiries about the vehicle to the police agency that towed it
- Must be stored inside police hold storage at the tower's lot

Notice: Temporary and formal holds are handled the same except for the length of time. If a citizen calls about a car with a hold, don't even acknowledge that you have the car – refer them to the agency. ***Make sure all staff members understand these conditions. . .***

Reporting Vehicle Info to Tow Desk . . .

It is very important that the information that you report to Tow Desk at the completion of a tow is ***accurate***. This means that the VIN and license plates must be reported based on your actual observation of the vehicle.

Don't Report the plate number from your pager – you must check both the front and back plates on the vehicle

Don't Report a plate ***or*** VIN from paperwork inside the car – you must check the VIN plate inside the windshield on the

dashboard and both the front and back license plates

Don't Forget to tell Tow Desk the issuing state of a vehicle's license plates – if nothing is specified, it will be assumed to be an Oregon plate

Accurate records are just as important as hooking up the car – don't quit until the job is done!. . .

Neatness Counts . . . Make sure that VINs and license plates are entered accurately and legibly on the invoice. When writing license plates or VINs on tow invoices and release sheets, **make letters twice as big as the numbers.** For example:

$_{1}$GNDU$_{06}$E$_{8}$WP$_{311984}$

This will help to prevent mistaking 5's and S's or 1's and L's, etc.

Jack Frost Nipping at Your Nose? . .

Think we're all done with snow and ice? Think again - January has historically been the month when the worst winter weather hits in Portland! So, here's the annual run-down on how to prevent dangerous loss of body heat:

Radiation – if you have uncovered skin, you radiate! Cover your hands, head and feet.

Conduction – water and steel both conduct heat away from your body if you touch them – it's the old "tongue stuck to the flagpole" trick – *"I triple-dog dare ya!"*

Convection – this is conduction when one of the objects is in motion, think "wind chill"

Evaporation – sweating and breathing both cool your body.

The measure of "*cold challenge*" is the combination of all the conditions that make it cold: temperature, wetness, wind.

Think it's not cold enough for hypothermia? Think again- *any temperature below 98.6 can be linked to hypothermia*!

Signs of hypothermia:

Shivering – if it can be stopped voluntarily, the hypothermia is mild. If not, the level is moderate to severe.

Loss of motor coordination, confusion. Blue tint to the skin.

What should you do?

1. **Reduce Heat Loss** – add dry clothing, blankets, shelter.
2. **Give food and fluids** – carbohydrates, protein and fat – a candy bar can help. Give them liquids, warm- *not too hot* - in temperature.
3. **External heat source** – crank up the heater, but be careful not to put them too close. They might not feel a burn.

Signs of frostbite:

- Area may be painful or numb.
- May look red or bluish. In severe cases, the tissue may be white and hardened.
- Ears, nose, fingers and toes are most susceptible.

What do you do?

1. **Re-warm** the affected area gently. Try blowing warm air on it or placing it against a warm body part like an armpit. Immersion in warm, **not hot,** water is also effective.
2. **Don't rub the area!** This can cause tissue damage because ice crystals within the cells may cause tearing.

One last caution: Always wear gloves when handling fuel in the cold. Spilling white gas on bare skin can result in instant frostbite from evaporative cooling.

This information is provided only to give you a few tips for recognizing hypothermia and frostbite. It is not a substitute for real medical help. If you think you or someone near you is hypothermic or has frostbite, get medical attention as soon as possible. ***Thanks to Rick Curtis and Princeton University for this information. . .***

There's a Reason They're Called *Standard* Invoices . . . When re-printing invoice forms for Contract tows, it may be tempting to re-arrange the boxes or change wording. However, **do not make any change** to this standard form without first checking with the Towing Coordinator. The reason for standardizing the information and locations of information on the invoice is to make it easier to see that it is correctly filled out and to facilitate auditing. ***Use of a non-standard invoice on a Contract tow may be grounds for invalidation of the tow and a full refund of fees. . .***

For The Record . . . Here's the annual list of contact information for the Agencies. (Agency readers, please let me know if this information is not accurate.) Tow Contractors ~Save this information for easy reference:

- Correspondence, complaint responses, penalty waiver requests, monthly reports, service fee payments, driver numbers, truck inspections, insurance papers, bond certificate, etc.…

Towing Coordinator
P.O. Box 8572
Portland OR 97207-8572
(503) 865-2489
FAX: (503) 823-9068
e-mail: mgaylord@ci.portland.or.us

Dennis LoGiudice
Regulatory Program Specialist
P.O. Box 8572
Portland OR 97207-8572
(503) 865-2464
FAX: (503) 825-3421

- Police records questions
  Portland Police Records
  1111 SW 2nd Avenue, Room 1126
  Portland OR 97204
  (503) 823-0044

- Billings to the Portland Police Bureau
  Police Fiscal Services
  Amie Hoodenpyl
  1111 SW 2nd Avenue, Room 1406
  Portland OR 97204
  (503) 823-0486

- Billings to City of Portland Fleet Services
  Kyle Nickels
  Bureau of General Services
  2835 N Kerby
  Portland OR 97227
  (503) 823-823-1834

- TBTH billing to Maintenance Bureau
  Stores
  Maintenance Operation
  2929 N Kerby
  Portland, OR 97227
  (503)823-4758

- Portland Streetcar billings:
  Carol Cooper, Office Manager
  Portland Streetcar
  1516 NW Northrup Street
  Portland OR 97209
  (503)823-2900

- City of Portland Parking Enforcement
  Parking Enforcement Information
  1120 SW 5th Avenue, Room 730
  Portland OR 97204
  (503) 823-5195 x3

- Billings to Multnomah County Sheriff's Office
  MCSO Auto Records
  12240 NE Glisan St
  Portland OR 97230
  (503) 251-2520
  FAX: (503) 261-2812

- Billings to Multnomah County Fleet
  Adrianna Lucas
  Multnomah County Transportation
  1620 SE 190th Avenue
  Portland OR 97233-5999

- Port of Portland
  Port of Portland Police
  (503) 460-4221

- Tri-Met
  Anna Turner
  HOP 1
  4012 SE 17th Avenue
  PORTLAND OR 97202
  (503) 962-5883

- ODOT
  Geoff Bowyer
  ODOT- Incident Response
  123 NW Flanders St
  Portland OR 97209
  (503)731-4703

Drivers must make sure they get the right information about who to bill!. . .

Driver ID Numbers. . . Drivers are not allowed to perform Contract tows until they have been assigned a City ID number. If you have a new driver who needs a number, you must complete and submit the "Immediate Notice of New Hire/Notice of Termination" form with a signed Confidentiality Agreement, and copies of the driver's license and social security card. ***Numbers are generally not assigned without submission of all required documentation…***

December Response Times . . . Out of 2,102 tows in December:
21 to 30 minutes – 106 tows
31 + minutes – 72 tows
Failures to Respond: 1 tow

Less than 5%:

A&B D2	Northwestern
Buck's	Speed's D8
Loop Hi-Way	

5 to 9.9% :

21st Century D4	Oregon
21st Century D5	Retriever
21st Century D7	Safeguard
A&B D7	Sam's
A&B D8	Security
Crown	Sergeants D3
Newhouse D4	Sergeant's D8
Newhouse D5	Speed's D5
Newhouse D8	

10% or more
None

100% Response . . .

21st Century D4	74 requests
21st Century D5	60 requests
21st Century D7	77 requests
Beaver	55 requests
Gerlock	6 requests
Handy Andy's	41 requests

Retriever	209 requests
Sam's	72 requests
Sergeant's D8	85 requests

In addition, the following companies passed <u>only 1 tow in December:</u>

Newhouse D5	49 requests
Safeguard	78 requests
Security	176 requests
Sergeant's D3	53 requests
Speed's D5	58 requests

The overall pass percentage for December was 1.66%**...**

…mg and DL

<u>Next Contract Workshop</u> . . .

1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Thursday, January 28, 2010
Room 600, Rivers Conf room
111 SW Columbia Street

Register by Tuesday, January 26th to be sure of a seat. Class starts by 1:35 so be on time! ***Late-comers may be turned away…***