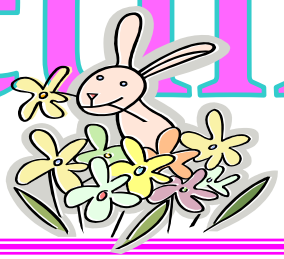
Tow Bulletin



April, 2011

Vol. 18, Issue 4 Marian Gaylord, Towing Coordinator, (503) 865-2489

PLEASE DISTRIBUTE THIS INFORMATION TO ALL CONTRACT TOW EMPLOYEES

This Month…

Friday April 1st

Change of Regular Office Hours for Tow Contractors

As of April 1 ~ **1000 to 1800**

Monday - Friday

No gate fee on releases:

0800 to 1000 M – F

Monday, April 18th

Beginning of Passover

Friday, April 22nd

Earth Day

Celebrate Mother Nature

No New Applications in September

… At the March meeting of the Towing Board of Review, the Board voted unanimously not to accept new contract applications until the current contract is finished with the two optional one-year extensions provided in the Contract. This includes applications for additional contracts.

10.2 *The Towing Board of Review acting on behalf of the Agencies, reserves the right in its sole discretion, to extend this Tow Contract for one year at a time, up to two additional years. No rights of the Tow Contractor will extend beyond the term of this Tow Contract and approved extensions. However, all necessary Contract obligations of Tow Contractor will survive termination of this Tow Contract.*

If the Board chooses to exercise both its extension options, the next Request for Qualifications (application) for the Tow Contract will be available in June, 2013. ***Hopefully, tow volume will have recovered some by then…***

~ April events in history~

April 1, 1877

First Easter egg roll at the White House

Money Matters. . . The Board also heard a request from the Industry Representatives for an increase in the daily storage rate on Contract tows. The vote was unanimous to approve a $1.00 increase in the daily rate – from $21.00/day to $22.00/day. This amount was ascertained by applying the US Department of Labor "Inflation Calculator" to find the amount of change between 2008, when this contract commenced and 2011. The actual amount of increase due to inflation is only $0.59. ***A full dollar increase was approved to cover at least the 2011-2012 extension year. . .***

Speaking of Costs… The Board approved a "fuel surcharge" of $4.00 per tow. Remember that agencies do not pay this additional fee on the tow of agency vehicles. At the May meeting of the Board, the surcharge will be reviewed and either extended or canceled, ***depending on what the prices at the pump are doing…***

New Office Hours . . . Also approved at the March Tow Board meeting was a change in the required office hours of Tow Contractors. As recommended by the Industry Reps and supported by the Towing Coordinator, **as of 12:01 a.m., April 1, 2011**, towers under contract to provide towing and storage services for the City and agencies must staff as follows:

3.29.1 An attendant will be on duty at the Tow Contractor's primary storage facility during regular business hours…

1.21 Regular business hours: ***1000 to 1800,*** *Monday through Friday*

1.9.1 The gate fee is not chargeable for vehicles released between 0800 and 1000, Monday through Friday

Anytime a vehicle owner asks to have a car released between 0800 and 1000, Monday through Friday, the Tow Contractor will, as always, have someone at the release location within thirty (30) minutes of the time agreed on by the vehicle owner. ***This is intended to give some payroll relief to towers who may be struggling financially…***

~April Events in history~
19 April, 1775
The first battle in the War of American Independence took place at Lexington, Massachusetts (British 1 - Colonists 0).

Update on Dealing with Animals in towed vehicles . . . Due to the same belt-tightening that towers and other agencies continue to experience, there are a few "refinements" to the procedure for proper treatment of animals in a vehicle that is towed. Multnomah County Animal Services (MCAS) is still the place to call, but their phone hours have been shortened. If you find someone's "best friend" in a car you've been ordered to tow, please follow these steps to protect the welfare of the animal:

1. Try to determine if the animal is injured or in any type of distress. If the weather is too cold or too hot, place the vehicle in inside storage until MCAS can pick up your *guest.*
2. Call MCAS as soon as you complete the tow. They may be able to help you decide whether the animal should be picked up by MCAS immediately, or later – in case the vehicle owner is planning to pick up the car right away.

In any case, if you have not heard from the vehicle owner within 2 hours of completion of the tow, call MCAS at (503)988-7387 and press "0" to speak to the county dispatcher to arrange for county staff (or, after hours, "Critter Gitter") to transport the animal to the shelter. ***Make sure all your staff know what to do, even in the wee hours of the night/morning. And for your convenience…***

Phone Hours for MCAS. . .

Shelter Operations Schedule
Shelter Hours:
11:00AM-6:00PM Tuesday,Thursday,and Friday,
12:00PM-6:00PM Wednesday,
11:00AM-4:30PM Saturday & Sunday

Closed Monday and Holidays

Call Center:
Telephone : (503)988-7387
10:30AM-5:00PM press "0"
Monday,Tuesday,Thursday,and Friday,

12:00PM-5:00PM Wednesday

Shelter Location:
1700 W Columbia River Hwy, Troutdale, OR 97060

Contractor Reviews for Extension Eligibility . . . Performance reviews for current Tow Contractors are proceeding on schedule. Check out your trucks and storage facilities before you are surprised by an inspection! ***Results will likely be presented at the September 21 Tow Board meeting. . .***

Complaint Responses . . . If you receive notice of a complaint from Jenny or the Towing Coordinator, there are specific steps established by the Board that you are supposed to take in resolving it. Briefly:

1. Investigate any allegations with the involved staff member(s). Check your own documentation of the tow for inconsistencies with the complaint.
2. Send a written statement to the Towing Coordinator within the allotted time, explaining what happened according to your investigation. This may include a written statement by the employee. You may also propose a resolution of the complaint.

When your written response is received, the Towing Coordinator evaluates the information you have provided against the complainant's statements to develop a final determination. This determination may dismiss the complaint, assess penalties, direct a refund, direct a change in procedures or any combination.

Failure to respond will result in additional penalties.

The tower always has the option of requesting a penalty waiver. Such a request should always detail what went wrong, why it won't happen again or steps that you will take to prevent a recurrence. If your waiver request is denied, you have the right to appeal that decision to the Tow Board at its next meeting. Whatever you decide, ***your response must be in writing. . .***

~April events in history~
April 27, 1937

The nation's first Social Security checks were distributed

"Report Pollution" . . . Got spills? Got "kitty litter?" Got mystery fluid? Call the Bureau of Environmental Services at the Report Pollution number displayed on the sticker in every contract tow truck. *Regardless of who puts down the absorbent*, a tower should never leave a scene without picking up all absorbent material *AND* calling the Report Pollution number **503-823-7180.** ***The list of information you must provide is on the sticker…!***

March Response Times . . . Out of 1571 tows in March:
21 to 30 minutes – 64 tows (no change)
31 + minutes – 33 tows (no change)
Failures to Respond: 5 (up from 2)

Late Responses . . .

Less than 5%:

21st Century D5	Safeguard
A&B D2	Sam's
Loop	Security
Northwestern	Sergeant's D8

Speed's D8

5 to 9.9% :

21st Century D4	Handy Andy
21st Century D7	Newhouse D5
A&B D8	Newhouse D8
A&B D7	Retriever
Beaver	Speed's D5

10% or more

Buck's/9T9	Newhouse D4
Crown	Sergeant's D3

Gerlock

No Passes in March . . .

21st Century D4 68 requests
21st Century D5 52 requests
21st Century D7 75 requests
Handy Andy's 32 requests
Loop Hwy 67 requests
Newhouse D5 51 requests
Retriever 115 requests
Sam's 25 requests
Security 104 requests
Sergeant's D3 38 requests
Sergeant's D8 85 requests

Only 1 pass in March:

A & B D7 87 requests
A & B D8 95 requests
Beaver 46 requests
Crown 48 requests

The overall pass percentage for March was 1.59%...

Next Contract Workshop . . .

1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Thursday, April 28, 2011
Room 600, Rivers Conf room
111 SW Columbia Street

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

P.S. . . None of the people who were registered for the March 31st workshop actually showed up! Please make sure your staff that are signed up know it, and are reminded of the appointment. These classes are conducted as a service to the tow companies to help them avoid penalties.
Don't abuse it. . .

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