

LINCOLN POLICE DEPARTMENT

Towing Vehicles and Hazards

Date Issued: 08-14-2009

Review: 08-14-2011

Policy

- To strictly adhere to RSA 262:32 when handling abandoned vehicles.
- To have a uniformed method of handling vehicles that need to be towed.

Purpose

The purpose of this order is to cover:

- Vehicles that create a hazard
- Towing Vehicles
- Abandoned Vehicles
- Highway Hazards

Disabled Vehicles

Ref: Assistance to Motorist General Order regarding assistance to the drivers

Disabled Vehicles or Parked Vehicles	Officer shall....
Blocking the roadway creating a safety problem (61.4.2)	Call for a tow truck Position the cruiser for maximum visibility and safety Remain on scene until hazard cleared
Not creating a safety hazard – on side of roadway with owners present	Contact the owners choice of tow services however, if the vehicles position could create a hazard and the service contacted would take a long time in arriving., the department tow list shall be utilized
Unoccupied or abandoned vehicles not creating a hazard (61.4.3 a)	Check NCIC and DMV records Obtain a case number – location, time and date. An effort shall be made to contact the owner regarding removal After twenty-four (24) hours, the vehicle can be removed under RSA 262:32 Authority to Tow (<i>four (4) hours on interstate</i>)
On private property – Unlawfully parked or abandoned (61.4.3b)	Shall tow to assist and at the request of the property owner , but the owner shall be advised that in further problems they should go directly to the tow company
Requested by Fire Dept or other emergency agencies	Shall tow, but the requesting agency and supervisor authorizing it shall be included in the narrative record

- Records on towed vehicles shall be maintained for a minimum of nine (9) years and must include officer's name, time, date, reason and location of towed vehicle (61.4.3c).
- The owner of the vehicle pays all expenses of the tow and storage.
- If the owner wishes to challenge that there were not sufficient grounds for towing and storage, he must contact the Chief of Police in writing within fifteen (15) days.
- The Chief will determine if sufficient grounds did exist. If they do not, the police department will pay the expense.

Highway Hazards (61.4.2)

- Roadway defects, signs missing or damaged, debris in the road, missing or damaged traffic control devices or damaged guardrails etc. shall be reported to Dispatch.
- If the hazard poses an immediate danger or if traffic control is necessary, the officer will provide security or traffic control until the hazard is removed.
- The dispatcher will record the incident and in the case of an immediate danger contact the proper agency to correct the problem.
- In other incidents the information is to be left for the day supervisor to make the proper notification and record it.

Tow Companies

Annually, a request will be sent to all area tow companies to see if they wish to be placed on our tow list (March 15).

Selection and Requirements

- Preference will be given to companies within town.
- Insurance –should provide an insurance certificate.
- Provide twenty-four (24) hour coverage.
- If special equipment available, (i.e.: truck towing), it should be noted.
- Company is responsible for picking up debris.
- Meet all New Hampshire Inspection Requirements and RSA's regulating towing
- Must respond in a reasonable time.
- Rates must be posted and provided to the police department.
- Provide a list of insurance coverage or road services that they belong to.

It is understood that the tow company shall charge the owner and not the Town of Lincoln.

Tow List

- The Chief Dispatcher will maintain a list of approved tow companies in dispatch and will ensure that it is current.
- The list will be used in rotating order and will include a separate telephone directory of specialized tow companies and tow companies not on our rotating list.
- If an approved tow service is unavailable, the dispatcher can contact any available tow service.
- Problems with tow companies, i.e.: lack of service, delays or complaints should be directed to the Chief of Police

Responsibilities

Administrative Assistant	March 15 – forward letter to all tow companies outlining our requirements to be placed on rotating list
Chief Dispatcher	Maintain current tow list in dispatch Advise the Chief of any complaints, lack of service or problems with authorized tow companies
Chief of Police	Select tow companies that comply with the criteria set. Investigate any complaints, lack of service received regarding authorized tow companies Respond to any complaints regarding towing of cars without sufficient reason