

July 2024 – June 2025



WASHINGTON COUNTY TOWING HANDBOOK

Revised as of 07/01/2024



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1. INTRODUCTION

The Washington County's Sheriff's Office (WCSO); Hagerstown Police Department (HPD); Boonsboro Police Department (BPD); Hancock Police Department (HKPD); and Smithsburg Police Department (SPD), (together referenced as - Law Enforcement) work with Washington County's Emergency Communications Center (ECC) to maintain a rotational list of towing companies for all Law Enforcement Response Areas. Collectively the tow companies used for Law Enforcement towing are referenced as "Tow List." Tow companies included on the Tow List are dispatched by ECC to provide towing services on an on-call, as-needed basis.

Tow companies included on the Tow List must meet all criteria set forth in this handbook and are solely responsible for meeting and maintaining the criteria, as well as passing all lot and vehicle inspections administered by WCSO on a random, and as-needed basis at the sole discretion of Law Enforcement.

The Tow List is created by Washington County Tow Board members comprised of the following members: Sheriff of Washington County or identified designee; Chief of Hagerstown Police Department or identified designee; and Director of Emergency Communications or identified designee. Emergency Communications also provides a Tow Policy Coordinator (TPC) to oversee the program. The list is maintained and rotated by the ECC.

The Tow List is updated annually for a 12-month period from July 1st through June 30th. New handbooks and fee schedules are issued prior to the start of the new Tow List; however, the handbook and/or fee schedule may be revised at any time throughout the term of the Tow List at the sole discretion of Tow Board. Revisions, when applicable, are sent to all companies on the Tow List and are available by request to the TPC.

Tow companies that pass the inspection process are added to the Tow List. The final determination of which tow companies are included on the Tow List and the company's associated response areas are made at the sole discretion of the Tow Board.

Tow companies not in agreement with the fee schedules are permitted to withdraw their names from the Tow List at any time.

2. BASIC REQUIREMENTS

The required provisions are all of the rules Law Enforcement requires of the tow companies included on the Tow List. The tow companies are solely responsible for meeting all of the basic requirements as follows:

- Tow companies must have been in business AND under the same ownership for a minimum of one (1) year.
- Proof of ownership must be provided with initial application and annually each year thereafter. Acceptable proof of ownership documents include: Articles of Incorporation, Operating Agreement, or IRS K-1 Tax Schedule.
- Tow companies must arrive at the scene within 35 minutes of being notified by the ECC as determined by the ECC computer-aided dispatch system. Heavy tows will be permitted an additional 10 minutes and must be at the scene within 45 minutes of being notified. Failure to arrive on scene within the allotted time frame will be considered a REFUSAL to perform services.
- Tow companies must meet all applicable Maryland Vehicle Law requirements (i.e., Maryland Law Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, any federal, state, or municipal acts, statutes, rulings, ordinances and/or regulations affecting safety and/or towing of vehicles).
- Tow companies must be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for dispatch by the ECC.
- Tow lots must be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for vehicle retrieval.
- Tow companies must have a business office and a storage lot in Washington

County, MD. It must be staffed by a person who is able to conduct business (i.e. process credit card payments, release vehicles, etc.) and be open Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM.

- Tow companies may not conduct their towing business from a residence.
- Tow companies may not subcontract any ECC call.
- Tow companies must accept cash, Visa®, Mastercard®; however, may accept other major credit cards at their discretion.
- Tow companies are not permitted to respond to the scene of a Law Enforcement incident unless requested to do so by ECC or the vehicle owner/operator.
- Tow companies assume all responsibility and liability for any formal or informal legal actions, demands, and damages resulting from a call for service.
- Tow companies are required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) prior to being added to the Tow List.
- Tow companies are subject to the oversight of the Tow Board. All actions, complaints, issues, infractions, etc., will be investigated through a formal review by the Tow Board. The Tow Board will have the sole authority to remove a tow company from the Tow List permanently or for a specified period of time dependent upon the type of infraction(s), number of infractions, history, etc.
- Tow companies may appeal a Tow Board's decision.
- The owner of the tow company must send a written request on company letterhead to the Tow Policy Coordinator requesting a hearing within thirty (30) days of the Tow Board's original decision. A hearing will be scheduled within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the written request.
- The owner of the tow company must attend the hearing unless they have clearly authorized in writing on company letterhead that their representative may represent the company in all matters.
- Tow companies suspended for any amount of time may be subject to an inspection of their facility and/or vehicles before re-instatement.

3. COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

All companies included on the Tow List must meet the following communication requirements:

For communication purposes, tow companies must have:

- One phone number available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for use by the ECC (voicemail does not meet this requirement).
- One active email address for follow-up communication.

The ECC will only maintain ONE phone number for each tow company on the Tow List. There will be no alternate phone number listed for “after hours” or “weekends”.

Tow companies must notify the ECC in the event of any delay which may cause them to miss the 35 minute on-scene deadline (45 minutes for heavy tows).

Tow companies are responsible for asking follow up questions for clarification from ECC to ensure that they are fully prepared to meet the service requirement.

The tow company is solely responsible for reporting any changes to a tow company’s name, ownership, operators, equipment, location, insurance, or lot. If ownership changes, the tow company will be considered a new tow company and, as such, must submit an initial application and abide by all requirements of a newly created tow company. If a transfer of ownership is within a company, refer to Section 18 pages 20-21 for steps to remain on the Tow List. Changes of any kind must be reported to the TPC within five (5) business days. Failure to do so may result in formal review by the Tow Board.

4. VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS

Tow companies performing tows of vehicles 10,001 or greater pounds (medium/heavy tows) are required to have a tow vehicle capable of handling these vehicles.

Each truck used in the completion of an ECC service call must meet the requirements that a Commercial Motor Vehicle Inspector verifies by inspection. All trucks must have the following:

- Tow Board provided vehicle sticker (distributed at annual inspection)
- Operable overhead lights
- Shovel
- Heavy duty broom
- Operable fire extinguisher
- Receptacle for debris
- Flood lights to illuminate night scenes
- Absorbent material in sufficient quantity
- DOT required signage
- Seatbelts
- Brake system operable
- Undamaged frame
- Fuel system without leaks
- DOT required lighting
- Securement devices fully intact (i.e., no cuts, tears, breakage, etc.)
- Operable steering system
- Suspension is defect free (upon visual inspection)
- Tires defect free with sufficient tread
- Body secured to vehicle and free of defect
- Wheels that are defect free
- Rims that are defect free
- Hubs that are defect free
- Windshield fully intact and defect free
- Operable, defect-free windshield wipers
- Windshield wiper fluid

5. STORAGE LOT REQUIREMENTS

Storage lots must meet all requirements for zoning and safety.

Requirements for all storage lots are as follows:

- Storage lots must be in Washington County, MD, and must be in compliance with all zoning requirements.
- Storage lots cannot be shared with any other entity, regardless of their purpose. In the event of a storage lot that exists on a leased parcel with multiple tenants or units, such as a shopping center or other multi-tenant parcel, the tow company's lease, contractual, or ownership provisions and/or plats must separately and distinctly designate the tow company's leased premises, on which the tow company's storage lot and business office must occupy, and which cannot be shared with any other entity, regardless of their purpose.
- Storage lots must be large enough to accommodate any vehicles stored and the vehicles must be instantly accessible by vehicle owners upon request.
- Storage lots must be secured with:
 1. A permanently installed 6' fence that completely surrounds the lot with no breaks, no holes, no flaws, must reach from the ground level to a minimum of 6' from beginning to end and for the entire circumference of the lot when measured at any point therein.
 2. Fence must be securely locked at any time vehicles are stored as a result of an ECC call and after business hours.

The following requirements will be verified via inspection by the approved Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL):

- The storage lot must be in Washington County, MD.
- The business office shall be at the same physical and mailing address as the storage lot.

- The core business hours, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday (longer will be permitted if, in fact, the office is opened longer) must be clearly posted.
- The office must be staffed during core business hours of 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. The staffed person must be authorized to contact financial business transactions on behalf of the company.
- There must be one phone number answered 24 hours a day and 7 days a week for both customers and Law Enforcement.
- The business phone number shall be visibly posted so that an owner may call to pick up their vehicle after hours.
- The office shall be inoffensive to the public. (i.e., relatively clean with no visible pornography, etc.).
- The fence to the storage lot shall be locked and secured (i.e., after business hours when the business is unoccupied).
- The storage lot shall be exclusively utilized by a single tow company. Tow lots cannot be shared.
- There shall be adequate parking and movement area in the storage lot for vehicles to enter and leave, and for vehicle owners to retrieve personal items when necessary.
- The storage lot shall have a permanently installed 6' fence that completely surrounds the storage area and secures the lot.
- The 6' fence maintains a secure perimeter with no breaks or holes. No land barriers will be considered in substitution of this requirement.
- The lot must have the ability to store vehicles for Law Enforcement (light and/or heavy duty).
- Vehicle owners must be allowed to remove any and all personal items from their vehicles that are not permanently affixed and the vehicle tags.
- The storage lot must have adequate lighting. Minimum lighting is defined as either 10-20 lux or 1-2 foot candles.

6. TOW RECORDS

Tow companies are responsible for all aspects of record maintenance. Law Enforcement may request, and must be given immediate access to, any records for a Law Enforcement tow at any time. Failure to provide detailed records within 24 hours of request may result in formal review by the Tow Board.

Tow companies must maintain accurate records in compliance with Maryland Transportation Article, Section 15-113.1(c) for a period of one (1) year from the date of tow (hard copy of invoices required). However, in accordance with the law, tow companies “may satisfy the record requirement if the required record is a computerized record that is accessible at the automotive repair facility or vehicle storage facility during business hours or other hours of operation, contractor shall make available for inspection” [Sec 15-113.1] by Law Enforcement, the LEL and/ or TPC to contain all of the following information:

- Date/ time vehicle was stored.
- Location towed from.
- Description of vehicle, to include the year, make, model, and VIN number.
- Notation of release slip requirement.
- Date released by tow company.
- Name, date of birth, address, and telephone number of person vehicle released to.
- Records of fees and charges.

This information will be available for Law Enforcement’s review upon their demand and at their sole discretion. Additionally, the TPC will periodically review invoices to ensure that the Fee Schedule is honored.

7. CODE OF CONDUCT

Inclusion on the Tow List requires the tow company and all employees to adhere to a high level of conduct and professionalism as they are representing Law Enforcement in performing a tow service. The tow company and all employees shall conduct themselves in a manner that reflects most favorably upon Law Enforcement.

The phrase “reflects most favorably” pertains to the perception of the citizens, the tow company’s peers in the towing business, and Law Enforcement employees. Conduct unbecoming shall include that which tends to bring Law Enforcement into disrepute, or reflects discredit upon.

Any breach of this code may be punishable by cancellation or suspension of a tow company’s contract at the sole discretion of Tow Board.

Tow companies suspended for any amount of time may be subject to an inspection of their facility and/or vehicles before re-instatement.

Tow companies are required to report any witnessed criminal activity or unreported motor vehicle accident. Failure to do so may result in removal from the Tow List at the sole discretion of Tow Board.

8. USE OF REGISTERED SEXUAL OFFENDERS PROHIBITED

AT NO TIME SHALL ANY TOW COMPANY UTILIZE ANY REGISTERED SEXUAL OFFENDER TO PROVIDE ANY TYPE OF SERVICE AS A RESULT OF A LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICE/ TOW CALL.

Any violation of this will result in immediate removal from the Tow List for a period not less than 24 months from the date of infraction.

“Registered Sexual Offender” shall be defined as any offender who is convicted and must register with the Maryland Sex Offender Registry. Tow companies are responsible for checking the Maryland Sex Offender Registry before hiring personnel to ensure that a registered sexual offender will not be utilized during any tow service requested by Law Enforcement.

9. TOW OPERATOR VERIFICATION

Tow companies shall provide Law Enforcement a copy of the driver’s licenses for all tow operators who may respond to any ECC call for service. All tow operators will be thoroughly checked to ensure that their driver’s license is valid and that they are not a convicted sexual or violent offender prior to responding on any Tow Board requested tow.

A tow company found to be utilizing a tow operator that is not included on the approved operator’s list for the company will be subjected to formal review by Tow Board.

Law Enforcement reserves the right to do any checks as necessary at any time that they deem it necessary with or without the consent or knowledge of the tow company to confirm that a tow company’s operator is listed as a driver for that tow company; meets the minimum requirements of a tow operator; has a valid driver’s license; and is not a convicted sexual or violent offender.

At the scene of a vehicle pickup, Law Enforcement may request at any time, and for any reason, to view the driver’s license of the tow operator for review, verification, etc.

10. CRASH SCENE RESPONSIBILITIES

The ECC will use the Tow List to contact tow companies for various types of vehicle removal, including automobile collisions. Tow companies have cleanup responsibilities associated with the removal of the vehicle(s).

Debris Removal:

The tow company will not begin the scene cleanup process, or attempt to move any vehicles, until the investigating deputy or officer on the scene gives them verbal authorization to do so. It is the tow operator's responsibility to seek out the investigating deputy or officer at the scene and request permission to begin the cleanup and removal process. Tow truck operators are responsible for adhering to Maryland Transportation Article, Section 21-1111(c). Tow truck operators are responsible for the removal of all debris, not only from the roadway, but the entire scene itself. Debris shall not be swept to the side and left on the scene. All tow vehicles will maintain a usable supply of absorbent (i.e., kitty litter and/or sand), shovel(s), heavy duty broom, fire extinguisher, receptacle for debris (bucket/trash can), flood lights for scene illumination at night, and any additional materials (at the discretion of the tow company) needed to fulfill the obligation to remove debris.

At no time shall debris or cleanup materials be placed in the vehicle to be towed.

The tow company shall ensure insomuch that is it able to do so, that vehicle and contents are protected from further damage during and after the tow, and throughout storage. Protection shall include such things as rolling up windows when and if able to do so, securing the contents of vehicle, etc.

The tow company shall ensure insomuch that it is able, that vehicle contents remain in or with vehicle and are returned to the vehicle owner at time of pickup.

The cleanup of the scene will be to the on-scene deputy or officer's satisfaction, not the tow truck operator.

Disposal of all waste/fluids from damaged vehicles must be disposed of properly and in accordance with Environmental Regulations (Environment Article, Sections 5-10A-01 through 5-10A-03 & Natural Resources Article.)

Incidents involving hazardous material, or any common vehicle fluid in excess of fifteen (15) gallons, will be handled by a HAZMAT team.

Coordinated Highways Action Response Team (CHART) assists on US and State Routes within Washington County. The mission of “CHART” is to clear the incident and re-open the roadway, minimizing traffic congestion and the opportunity for secondary crashes. The scene involvement of “CHART” is not to “tow”, but to “relocate” vehicles to a safe location to await the tow company. Issues or concerns surrounding “CHART” will be directed to the TPC and addressed.

11. MULTIPLE VEHICLE SERVICE CALLS

If a crash scene has more than one (1) vehicle to be towed, the ECC will contact a tow company to handle each vehicle involved in the collision. If any vehicle involved in a collision is towing another unit [vehicle, trailer, etc.] the original tow company will be asked to handle the towing of the additional unit. An on-scene law enforcement officer may request that an on-scene, or nearby tow company, handle the towing of additional vehicles if the roadway must be cleared to ensure public safety in a timely manner. Officers will abide by an owner’s request for a specific tow company provided the tow company can respond to the scene within a timely manner. The 35 minute requirement (45 minutes for heavy tows) still applies to all vehicles involved.

A tow company called by the ECC for a specific tow, but subsequently canceled due to the reassignment of an on-scene tow by a law enforcement officer, will be placed back on the top of the tow rotation list by ECC personnel.

12. TOW CALL REFUSALS

Law Enforcement understands that there may be occasions wherein a tow company must refuse a call for service.

Tow companies must arrive at the scene within 35 minutes of being notified by the ECC (45 minutes for heavy tows). The TPC, at its sole discretion, may make an allowance for unexpected traffic, weather, road conditions, etc. Tow companies are obligated to advise the ECC if they are unable to respond or will be delayed in their response time and exceed the 35 minute on-scene deadline (45 minutes for heavy tows).

The following conditions are considered refusals:

- Failure to respond to the tow scene within the 35 minute on-scene deadline (45 minutes for heavy tows) without notification to the ECC.
- Failure to respond when requested, regardless of reason.
- Explicit refusal to respond.
- Three or more refusals in a 90-day time period will result in a formal review by the Tow Board.

13. OUT OF SERVICE STATUS

In the event that a tow company will be out of service for a period of time, the tow company is responsible for contacting the TPC (in writing) and the ECC (by telephone) at least 24 hours prior to the start of the out-of-service period. The tow company will be taken out of the rotation for the time period requested.

At the end of the out-of-service period, the tow company must contact the TPC to be returned to the list. These situations will not be listed as a refusal.

It is the tow company's sole responsibility to ensure that it is taken off of the rotation list and their sole responsibility to ensure that its name is returned to the list when its business resumes.

14. VEHICLE RELEASE

Each tow company will arrange for release of the vehicle(s) towed and/ or stored within a reasonable time period. During non-business hours and on federal holidays this time frame is defined as ninety (90) minutes from the time the owner or the owner's authorized agent makes contact with the tow company and requests the pickup of the vehicle. If a vehicle is not released within seven (7) days, the tow company must attempt to contact the owner of the vehicle and must also contact the TPC. Email notification may be made by sending an email to the towing@washco-md.net.

15. VEHICLE HOLDS

In the event of any tow initiated by Law Enforcement where the vehicle owner is not present on the scene, the deputy or officer will complete the appropriate storage report for their agency and acquire the tow operator's signature.

Vehicles will be towed at the direction of law enforcement personnel when the following circumstances exist:

- The vehicle was involved in a motor vehicle crash that has rendered it inoperable.
- The vehicle operator is arrested and no other immediate disposition is available for the vehicle.
- The vehicle is subject to a Maryland vehicle traffic law offense. An example could be uninsured, unregistered, switched license plates or illegally parked.
- The vehicle is related to criminal offense that includes recovered stolen vehicles, evidentiary value, confiscated vehicles or safekeeping.
- Under reasonable circumstances to accomplish lawful objectives or in the interest of public safety.

WCSO/HPD Procedures for towing motor vehicles:

- Officers will furnish the on-scene tow operator the report number for the incident when a vehicle is towed and a hold is requested. Vehicle holds are at the direction of agency personnel and will be communicated directly to the tow operator if a hold is placed on a vehicle.
- If a hold exists on the vehicle, the owner or claimant will be required to go to the office of law enforcement having jurisdiction and contact the acting Duty Officer. At that time, ownership will be established and a release will be given. The release will identify the vehicle and will be signed by agency personnel authorizing the release. Any unauthorized release of a vehicle that has a hold will result in the termination of the tow company from the approved Tow List.
- The release authorized by this agency does not automatically determine the tow bill and accrued storage fees have been satisfied. The tow company will be responsible for maintaining a record system to ensure they have received payment for services.

Vehicle holds towed to the WCSO/HPD impound lot:

- Agency personnel may tow abandoned vehicles to the WCSO/HPD impound lot in accordance with Maryland Transportation Article, Title 25, Subtitle 2.
- Agency personnel can also authorize the towing of vehicles to be stored in the WCSO/HPD impound lot.
- The tow operator is required to provide a copy of the tow bill to the deputy/officer at the time the vehicle is stored in the WCSO/HPD impound lot. The tow bill will show the amount billed and will be forwarded to the Chief Deputy/or administrative personnel responsible for a timely payment from services.
- Vehicles stored in the WCSO/HPD impound lot will be released according to the law enforcement jurisdiction's policy.

16. TOW BOARD

The Tow Board provides oversight of the Tow List and is constructed of the Director of Emergency Communications, Hagerstown City Police Chief, and Sheriff of Washington County. The TPC and LELs will act as advisory members. Responsibilities include:

- Investigate and resolve billing, process and/or performance complaints by Law Enforcement and/or vehicle owners.
- Review performance.
- Conduct periodic unannounced tow company & vehicle inspections.
- Conduct formal reviews.

The Tow Board will meet annually or on an as-needed basis to ensure that inquiries and complaints are resolved to the satisfaction of the Tow Board, officers, and vehicle owners in a timely manner.

The Tow Board performs formal reviews when a tow company has been deemed by the Tow Board to be in disregard of handbook requirements; has made an egregious error in performance; has utilized an unlisted tow operator in response to an ECC call for service; has utilized an unregistered or uninsured tow truck in response to an ECC call for service; falsification of tow bill or price gouging; or at the discretion of Tow Board. Discipline may include permanent removal or temporary suspension from the Tow List at the discretion of the Tow Board. All Tow Board determinations will result in a decision letter being sent to the tow company.

Disciplinary actions of a non-egregious and/or non-safety related nature, as determined by the Tow Board, will be purged from tow companies records three (3) years after their occurrence.

Tow companies with complaints regarding the process, their billing for a specific incident, or any other issues may petition the Tow Board to be heard by sending the TPC a letter on company letterhead requesting a hearing.

17. TOWING AND STORAGE FEES

Towing and storage fees are set by the Tow Board. The fee schedule will be issued annually to coincide with the release of the annually updated handbook. Tow companies included on the Tow List must honor the fee schedule.

Towing for Law Enforcement – There will be no additional charges or an increase in price for an evidence/impound tow. All tows performed at the direction of Law Enforcement will be based on the approved towing and storage fee schedule - No Exceptions.

All tow fees from a Law Enforcement tow will be presented in writing to any operator, agent, or vehicle owner upon request. Exceptions include vehicles that are stored due to an arrest; Law Enforcement investigation; abandonment; a motor vehicle crash where all occupants are removed to a medical facility; or at the direction of the LEL.

All tow companies will provide a LEGIBLE and DETAILED receipt of payment to the owner of the vehicle or authorized agent of the owner to whom the vehicle is released. This receipt will detail the specific charges for each service provided and will be utilized in conjunction with the price list to settle any fee disputes.

18. HOW TO GET ON THE TOW LIST

In order to be included on the Tow List, tow companies must:

- Fill out an application, which may be obtained by downloading from the Washington County website at <https://www.washco-md.net/emergency-services/es-towbook/> or by contacting the TPC at towing@washco-md.net.
- Have trained and experienced tow truck operators, adequate tow trucks, a vehicle storage lot that meets all required items in Section 5, and within the boundaries of Washington County, MD.
- Have been in business AND under the same ownership for a minimum of one (1) year.

- Proof of ownership must be provided with initial application and annually each year thereafter. Acceptable proof of ownership documents include: Articles of Incorporation, Operating Agreement or IRS K-1 Tax Schedule.
- To be considered for the Heavy Duty tow list, ones' company must also meet the requirement and tow vehicles under 10,000 pounds.
- Submit a fully completed Law Enforcement Tow Application with a check or money order for each tow company made payable to Washington County Treasurer in the amount of \$250 for the initial application fee.
- Thereafter, an updated Law Enforcement Tow Re-application must be submitted with a check or money order for each tow company made payable to the Washington County Treasurer in the amount of \$50 for the annual tow re-application fee.
- Agree to all provisions in this handbook by signing the statement of understanding and agreement located at the bottom of the Law Enforcement Tow Application form.
- Pass a lot inspection and truck inspections (Use the Towing List Application Process checklist to ensure that all requirements are met.)
- If an established tow company that is currently on the Washington County Tow List in good standing and transfers ownership within the company, the company may apply for consideration to remain on the tow list.

The following steps must be completed for consideration for transfer of ownership within the company to remain on the tow list:

1. Submit a fully completed Law Enforcement Tow Application with a check or money order made payable to Washington County Treasurer in the amount of \$200 for the initial application fee.
2. Proof of ownership must be provided with initial application and annually each year thereafter. Acceptable proof of ownership documents includes Articles of Incorporation, Operating Agreement or IRS K-1 Tax Schedule.
3. Once the application has been received, the new owners must meet with the Tow Board.
4. After the meeting and review of the application, the Tow Board will make the final decision on the company's status to remain on the Tow List.

Once the transfer of ownership within the company has been approved to remain on the Tow List, the following procedures will be followed:

- The tow company will be on a one-year probation.
- During the one-year probation, there will be quarterly billing inspections.
- Increased performance reviews.

19. CONTACTS

General Tow Inquiries

Email - towing@washco-md.net

TPC Contact

Andrea Allen, Administrative Assistant
Phone: 240-313-2915

ECC Contact (24 hours)

Phone: 240-313-4345

LEL Contact(s)

Hagerstown Police Department Contact
Email - pdinfo@hagerstownpd.org

Washington County Sheriff's Office Contact
Email - msullivan@washco-md.net

20. FISCAL YEAR 2025 TOW FEE SCHEDULE

General Fees:

DESCRIPTION	UNIT	FEE
After Hours Tow Fee Monday-Friday, 5 PM - 8 AM Weekends or Holidays	Per Occurrence/Per Vehicle	\$50
No Key Fee - Applicable only if steering column is locked with no available key and Off Road Recovery fee is not also charged.	Per Occurrence/Per Vehicle	\$35
Debris Clean-up	Per Crash	\$60
Off Road Recovery - Only covers tows from non-travel portion of roadways. Travel portion includes shoulder of roadways.	Per Crash	\$100
Rollover (can not charge in addition to Off Road Recovery) One hour minimum; then 15-minute increments after 1 st hour.	Per Hour	\$175
Road Service (Non-Tow)	Per Occurrence	\$100
“Fuel Fee” to Disable Vehicle		
5 gal @ \$6/gal = \$30	Per 5 gal	\$30
2 gal @ \$6/gal = \$12	Per 2 gal	\$12

For vehicles 10,000 pounds and under:

DESCRIPTION	UNIT	FEE
Disabled Vehicles / Non-crashed	Per Occurrence/Per Vehicle	\$140
Crashed Vehicle	Per Occurrence/Per Vehicle	\$165
Secondary Tow	Per Occurrence/Per Vehicle	\$90
Vehicle Removal - Applicable for parked vehicles that are against the sidewalk/curb and inaccessible from front and rear requiring skating and winching.	Per Occurrence/Per Vehicle	\$100
LEC to Lot		
Mileage - Applicable only for tows from the incident scene to a destination other than the tow company impound lot. One way charges only.	Per Mile	\$4
Storage - No Charge - First 4 hours (24/7). If picked up within the first 24 hours, maximum charge \$50 (time in until time out).	Per 24 Hours or any part thereof	\$50

For vehicles 10,001 pounds to 26,000 pounds, the following fees apply:

DESCRIPTION	UNIT	FEE
All Towing Services	Per Hour	\$330
Mileage - Applicable only for tows from the incident scene to a destination other than the tow company impound lot. (One way charges only.)	Per Mile	\$4.50
Storage - No Charge - First 4 hours (24/7) - If picked up within the first 24 hours, maximum charge \$70 (time in until time out).	Per 24 hours or any part thereof	\$70

Vehicles that exceed 26,001 pounds, the following fees apply:

DESCRIPTION	UNIT	FEE
All Towing Services	Per Hour	\$500
Mileage - Applicable only for tows from the incident scene to a destination other than the tow company impound lot. (One way charges only.)	Per Mile	\$4.50
Storage - No Charge - First 4 hours (24/7) - If picked up within the first 24 hours, maximum \$90 (time in until time out).	Per 24 hours or any part thereof	\$90

In keeping with the Tow Board's commitment to training for Tow Operators, the Board will allow an additional upcharge for the following nationally recognized tow operator training organization (Equivalent will be determined by the Tow Board):

Classifications with Minimum Training Requirements:

10,000 pounds or less require a Wreck Master 2/3 or equivalent. **(Additional Charge of \$5.00)**

10,001 to 26,000 pounds require a Wreck Master 4/5 or equivalent and 26,001 pounds and up require a Wreck Master 4/5 or equivalent. **(Additional Charge of \$10.00)**

Rotator Tow Trucks require a Wreck Master 6/7 or equivalent. **(Additional Charge of \$15.00)**

Tow companies can add the additional charge to the cost of the tow for the category the driver is certified in or below.

Example: A driver is certified as a 26,001 pound and up Wreck Master 4/5 or equivalent but is towing a 10,000-pound vehicle. The tow company can add an additional charge of \$10.00 for the driver's certification. (You cannot add up the total number of certifications and charge for all the certifications. You can only charge for the highest certification that driver is certified for.)

Tow companies will need to provide the Tow Board with a list of current drivers who are certified and will be participating in this program along with their valid training certificate or card. The tow company can only add the upcharge for those tows that a driver who is certified is towing and not for all tows by other non-certified drivers. Violations of the upcharge will result in disciplinary action against the tow company up to and including termination from the Approved Tow List.

In addition to the current requirements for each invoice, the following must be added to each invoice, the driver's certification number and the vehicle's GVRW for verification when the law enforcement liaison does their billing compliance checks.

21. DEFINITIONS

BPD – Boonsboro Police Department

CHART – Coordinated Highways Action Response Team; moves vehicles to the side of the road.

Decision Letter – Determination of discipline issued by Tow Board.

DOT – Maryland Department of Transportation

ECC – Washington County’s Emergency Communication Center; dispatches tow companies for service calls

2025 Fiscal Year – July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

Formal Review – Investigation by Tow Board

HKPD – Hancock Police Department

HPD – Hagerstown Police Department

Law Enforcement – A cooperative effort of the Washington County Sheriff’s Office, Hagerstown Police Department, Boonsboro, Hancock, and Smithsburg Police Departments to utilize a common Tow List administered by Emergency Communications Center

Law Enforcement Response Area – Individual areas of the County serviced by Law Enforcement; areas assigned by Tow Board based upon tow company location.

LEC – Law Enforcement Center where vehicles may be towed, at the request of Law Enforcement on-scene, in special circumstances.

LEL – Washington County’s Law Enforcement Liaison, responsible for tow company facility and vehicle inspections.

Registered Sexual Offender – Any individual who is convicted of any sexual offense requiring registration with the Maryland Sex Offender Registry.

Secondary Tow – Tow from LEC to the tow company’s lot upon completion of Law Enforcement investigation; call goes to tow company that originally towed the vehicle to the LEC.

SPD – Smithsburg Police Department

Tow Board – Tow Board; oversees the operation of the Tow List.

TPC – Tow Policy Coordinator; oversees day-to-day operations of the Tow List.

Tow List – Rotational list of tow companies utilized by Emergency Communications Center for tow service calls from Law Enforcement.

WCSO – Washington County Sheriff’s Office



PATROL DISTRICTS

Washington County Sheriff's Office

