



ABANDONED VEHICLES

INDEX CODE: 1910
EFFECTIVE DATE: 10-15-03

Contents:

- I. Definition
- II. Public Property
- III. Private Property - Used by the Public
- IV. Private Property - Personal Use
- V. Tow Records
- VI. Proponent Unit
- VII. Cancellation

I. DEFINITION

A motor vehicle is abandoned when it has remained illegally on public property for more than forty-eight hours (48) hours, or has remained on private property for more than forty-eight (48) hours without the consent of the owner, or for more than ten (10) days in a commercially operated garage.

II. PUBLIC PROPERTY

A. Officers investigating complaints of abandoned vehicles on public property will:

1. Determine if the vehicle is stolen, wanted in connection with an official investigation, or a traffic hazard;
2. If the positioning of the abandoned vehicle causes a traffic hazard, the vehicle should be removed, but only after the officer makes reasonable efforts to contact the owner/operator and provides a reasonable opportunity for him/her to remove the vehicle.
3. Attach a warning tag to the vehicle to indicate that the vehicle will be taken into police custody if it is not moved. If the vehicle has not been removed after forty-eight hours has elapsed since the warning tag was attached, it will be towed. Abandoned vehicles should be towed during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) unless they are a traffic hazard.

B. *Owner notification must be made in accordance with Index Code 1909, Section VIII.*

III. PRIVATE PROPERTY - USED BY THE PUBLIC

A. Abandoned vehicles will be removed from private property used by the public only in response to a complaint from the owner or lessee of the property and if the vehicle significantly affects the business conducted on the private property in question (i.e. blocking a travel lane within a parking lot, blocking an entrance, etc.). Officers responding to these complaints will furnish the owner or lessee a Form CS-77 (Application for Authority to Dispose of an Abandoned Motor Vehicle) and instruct them to complete and sign the form before towing. Vehicles will not be towed without the Form CS-77 having been completed. Officers may obtain these forms at the district stations or from the Traffic Safety Section.

B. Boats abandoned on navigable waterways and along the tidal shorelines of Anne Arundel County should be referred to the Department of Natural Resources Police.

Index Code: 1910
Effective Date: 10-15-03

Abandoned boats should be handled in the same manner as an abandoned vehicle. If on a trailer, the boat trailer's information should be used to fill in the VEHICLE INFORMATION sections of the tow report. In all instances, the boat make, model, hull identification number, boat registration number and registered owner's name and address should be noted in the narrative section of the tow report. Notification must be made in accordance with Index Code 1909 Section VIII for both the boat and/or the trailer.

C. Officers investigating these complaints will also complete the procedures set forth in Section II for towing from public property.

IV. PRIVATE PROPERTY - PERSONAL USE

A. In response to complaints made by citizens of abandoned or junked vehicles in their community, not on a public right-of-way (such as in a neighbor's yard), the officer will refer the complainant to the County's Inspections and Permits Department.

B. Citizens requesting the removal of abandoned vehicles from their own private property (not used by the public) should be advised to contact a private tow company.

V. TOW RECORDS

Vehicle Inventory (tow) reports will be submitted to and filed by Central Records according to the retention schedule determined by the custodian of records.

The Communications Section is responsible for maintaining a log of vehicles towed by the department. The Traffic Safety Section will monitor the departmental tow procedure, ensuring that the department complies with all provisions of the law.

VI. PROPONENT UNIT: Traffic Safety Section.

VII. CANCELLATION: This directive cancels Index Code 1910, dated 12-18-00.