

Hamden Police Department General Orders

Policy Number: 022-001

Effective Date: August 01, 2005

Section: Traffic Services

Rescinds:

Title: Towing Vehicles

Approved By:

Approval Date:

PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for the removal of vehicles in the town of Hamden.

POLICY

Members of the Hamden Police Department will be faced from time to time with decisions on towing motor vehicles from the streets of the town. In order to promote the free flow of traffic, and to protect the property of others the following procedures have been established to guide officers.

Procedures

A. Accident Scenes.

1. Under normal circumstances, the operators of the involved vehicles may request any wrecker that can respond within 20 minutes.
2. The wrecker rotation list will be utilized if the operator has no request.
3. If the wrecker requested by the operator does not respond within 20 minutes, a rotation wrecker will be called.
4. If the rotation wrecker does not respond within 20 minutes, the next rotation wrecker will be called.

B. Recovered Stolen Vehicles.

1. Where a stolen or wanted vehicle used in connection with a criminal offense is recovered, the investigating officer will:
 - a. If determined by a supervisor to be necessary and feasible, arrange for the vehicle to be processed at the scene for evidence.

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- b. If the vehicle cannot be processed at the scene or must be retained as evidence, it will be towed and stored by the Town designated towing contractor.
 1. If there is no reason for holding the vehicle and the vehicle is operable, the officer will release it to the owner at the scene provided they can respond within a reasonable time.
 - a. If the owner is unable to respond within a reasonable amount of time or the vehicles inoperable, it will be towed.
- C. Snow Removal.
 1. Vehicles may be towed under guidelines of Town Ordinance 71.00 and with a supervisor's approval, and only during a parking ban established with an emergency order issued by the Mayor.
 2. Upon towing of a vehicle in violation of Town Ordinance 71.00, the officer will contact communications with all necessary vehicle information. Communications will then note the owner information upon the appropriate form supplied.
- D. Emergency Cases.
 1. In cases of major storms resulting in downed wires, trees, etc, vehicles may be towed, with the supervisor's approval, if the owner is unavailable or circumstances dictate immediate removal.
 2. The wrecker rotation system will be used in towing the vehicle.
- E. Illegally Parked Vehicles.
 1. Whenever a vehicle is found parked in violation of Town Ordinance 70.00 (Traffic Code) such vehicle may be removed by a member of the Police Department by means of towing vehicle to a towing garage.
 2. The ultimate decision to tow an illegally parked vehicle will be the responsibility of the Supervisor.
 3. If a vehicle is removed under Town Ordinance 70.00, the officer shall in a reasonable time notify both the desk officer and communications of the removal.

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4. Communications will note on the appropriate form the vehicles information and the location where the vehicle is impounded. The owner will be notified as soon as practicable or upon owner's inquiry.
 5. No impounded vehicle shall be released until all towing and storage fees are paid.
 6. The owner shall have the right to contest impoundment by application on a form prescribed by the Chief of Police, requesting an immediate hearing under Section 70.22 of the Town Traffic Code. The request will be forwarded to the Office of the Chief of Police for forwarding to the Town Attorney's Office as soon as practicable.
- F. Red Tagged Vehicles (Abandoned Vehicles).
1. After all proper paperwork and time limits have been met these vehicles may be towed.
 2. A list of these vehicles will be turned into the Traffic Division who will make the necessary arrangements to have the vehicles towed.
- G. Record of Vehicles Towed.
1. Any time a vehicle is towed, a record of such shall be made in the officer's report.
 2. In addition, a wrecker rotation log shall be maintained at communications.
 3. The log shall be maintained in sufficient detail to quickly ascertain where vehicles are being held.
 4. State Form, (HR-114), must be completed with copies given to the tow company and vehicle owner. If owner is not present, the HR-114 form shall be delivered, or forwarded by certified mail.
- H. M/V Stops (Custodial and Non-Custodial Arrests).
1. Non-Custodial Arrest.
 - a. Under normal circumstances vehicles will not be towed after routine non-custodial arrests.
 - b. If the vehicle is legally parked and not a hazard the vehicle will not be towed.

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- c. If the vehicle is illegally parked and is a hazard, the operator will be afforded the opportunity to have someone move the vehicle. If this can't be done then the vehicle will be towed using the rotation wrecker list.

- 2. Custodial Arrest.
 - a. In cases of custodial arrests the operator may give permission to have the vehicle moved by someone else. This will be noted in the officer's report.
 - b. If no one is available to move the vehicle then it will be towed using the department wrecker rotation list.