



MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

610 – TOWING OF VEHICLES

GENERAL ORDER: 2025-61
ISSUED: December 16, 2025

EFFECTIVE: December 16, 2025

REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:
Assistant Chief Craig Sarnow
DATE: November 5, 2025

ACTION: Amends General Order 2024-46 (October 24, 2024)

WILEAG STANDARD(S): 6.2.14

610.00 PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to establish guidelines regarding to towing and storage of non-departmental vehicles.

610.05 VEHICLE SEARCH/PROPERTY INVENTORY (WILEAG 6.2.14)

- A. In order to safeguard citizens' property, protect the city from claims of theft or negligence, protect members from spurious claims, and for the safety of members, towed vehicles shall be thoroughly searched (including boats, trailers, mobile homes, etc.) for items of apparent value.

Note: Members equipped with a body worn camera shall ensure they activate their body worn camera while conducting a vehicle search in accordance with SOP 747 Body Worn Cameras.

- B. This search shall encompass the entire vehicle accessible by key, including the passenger compartment, glove box and trunk. All containers, whether locked or unlocked, shall be opened and their contents examined if accessible by key or other means without causing damage. Members shall also ensure no persons or animals are present in the vehicle as part of this search and inform the Parking Information Desk a visual inspection was completed.
- C. The inventory search should be conducted at the scene prior to the tow. Inventory searches may only be conducted with supervisory approval at the impoundment lot or some other location if circumstances dictate.
1. All property of apparent value shall be removed from the vehicle and recorded on an *Inventory Report* (form PP-32).
 2. Members shall furnish the inventory number and a description of the property inventoried to the Department of Public Works (DPW) Parking Information Desk for insertion on the tow record. Members can provide the inventory number in accordance with SOP 610.10(D) prior to the end of their tour of duty if they are not able to obtain an inventory number at the time of the tow. Members shall also document inventory number(s) in the narrative section of the *Tow Authorization Report* in the Records Management System (RMS).

- D. Members shall document in the *Tow Authorization Report* in RMS that an inventory

search was conducted and what property was recovered and inventoried.

- E. Members who fail to inventory personal items of apparent value found in an unlocked vehicle shall be directed to return to the tow scene or impoundment area to inventory said property.
- F. In the event a vehicle is locked, members shall not attempt to gain entry, but shall document in the *Tow Authorization Report* in RMS any items that are visible in plain view within the vehicle, and any equipment that may be secured or attached to the outer portion of the vehicle, such as a snowplow or ladder. Members shall also ensure no persons or animals are present in the vehicle as part of this visual inspection and inform the Parking Information Desk a visual inspection was completed. Members equipped with a body worn camera shall ensure they activate their body worn camera to record items in plain view in accordance with SOP 747 Body Worn Cameras. Such notations shall be placed in the area titled "Comments."
- G. The physical condition of the vehicle shall be properly documented in the narrative section of the *Tow Authorization Report* in RMS. Members equipped with a body worn camera shall ensure they activate their body worn camera to record the physical condition of the vehicle in accordance with SOP 747 Body Worn Cameras.
- H. Towing contractors are forbidden from entering any locked vehicle per the city of Milwaukee contract. The city of Milwaukee towing contractor is All City Towing.
(WILEAG 6.2.14.1)
- I. Mini-bikes and mopeds which have engines under 51 cubic centimeters shall be transported by department vehicle and placed on inventory as indicated in Standard Operating Procedure 560 Property.

610.10 TOWING DATA REQUIREMENTS (WILEAG 6.2.14)

- A. Any vehicle (including a vehicle towed from another jurisdiction) that is towed at the request of a department member must have a tow number that can be obtained by contacting the Parking Information Desk.

B. TOW REQUEST

To initiate a tow request, members shall contact the Parking Information Desk and furnish the following information in the order given below to conform with the information listed in the *Tow Authorization Report* in RMS.

1. Squad number.
2. PeopleSoft number (investigating member making the request).
3. Date and time.
4. Make, model and style of the vehicle.
5. Year and color of the vehicle.

6. Vehicle license plate number, state of registry, and expiration date.
7. Vehicle Identification Number (VIN).
8. Address of tow location.
9. Violation code number/reason for tow.
10. Citation number / case number if applicable.
11. Advise Parking Information Desk personnel if the vehicle is operable or non-operable.
12. Advise Parking Information Desk personnel of the number of tires on the vehicle and/or the number of flat tires on the vehicle.
13. Advise Parking Information Desk if any items were inventoried.
14. If the vehicle is being towed as evidence, the member completing the *Tow Authorization Report* in RMS must provide the Parking Information Desk with the case number and the name of the supervisor assigned to the respective Criminal Investigation Bureau division who authorized the evidence tow.
(WILEAG 6.2.14.1, 6.2.14.2)

C. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Members shall advise Parking Information Desk personnel of any additional circumstances that might necessitate special towing equipment not normally used for a conventional tow (heavy duty towing, heavy lifting, winching).

- D. If the reason for the tow or any information related to the tow needs to be updated, the member who initiated the tow shall contact a department member assigned to the city tow lot to make the change. If a department member assigned to the city tow lot is not available, a lieutenant of police or higher may request this change by contacting a city tow lot manager.

610.15 POLICE MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES (WILEAG 6.2.14)

A. GENERAL TOWING PROCEDURES

1. Furnish tow data information as indicated in SOP 610.10.
2. Complete the *Tow Authorization Report* in RMS and insert the tow number, name of the towing service, and impoundment location.
(WILEAG 6.2.14.1)
3. Perform vehicle search as indicated in SOP 610.05.
4. If personal items are recovered, advise the Parking Information Desk of the inventory report number for data entry into the tow record and document in the *Tow Authorization Report* in RMS.

B. NO TOW PROCEDURES

1. A "no tow" shall mean a situation in which the contractor has been called to tow a vehicle, but the vehicle has been removed from the scene by the owner or operator, or the vehicle can be legally left at the scene, or when the owner claims the vehicle before it is connected to a tow truck.
2. If a "no tow" situation develops before a member departs the scene of the tow, members shall notify the Parking Information Desk to cancel the tow truck.
3. Once a vehicle is connected to the tow truck, it must be towed to the tow lot and the owner of the vehicle can claim it from that location during normal business hours.
4. If the owner of the vehicle is arrested on warrants or commitments and the vehicle cannot be legally parked, the vehicle shall then be towed as "prisoner's property."
5. Members shall not permit any person without a valid operator's license and vehicle insurance to operate a vehicle or remove a vehicle from the scene. When a vehicle is recovered by the owner, it is the responsibility of the owner to ensure that a valid licensed operator remove his/her vehicle from the scene.

610.20 VEHICLE TOW CATEGORIES AND TOWING PROCEDURES (WILEAG 6.2.14)**A. RECOVERED STOLEN VEHICLE TOW**

1. Members shall notify the Stolen Vehicle Desk when they recover a stolen vehicle. The Stolen Vehicle Desk will complete the Milwaukee Police Department vehicle recovery information ARS report. The member shall then contact the vehicle owner. Recovery information must be entered into the recovery section of the stolen vehicle incident report.
2. If the stolen auto cannot be disposed of at the recovery scene by owner notification, the member shall have the car towed to the city tow lot (3811 W. Lincoln Av.) as "stolen."
(WILEAG 6.2.14.1)
3. Police members shall complete an incident report whenever a stolen auto is recovered as well as notifying the Stolen Vehicle Desk of all recovery information.
4. Police members shall complete a supplement report in the event of additional investigative information.

B. SAFEKEEPING TOW

This tow category is to be used only when:

1. The owner/driver is unable to authorize a tow.
2. Ownership is in question.

3. The vehicle appears as "possibly stolen", e.g., column damage, but not yet reported.
4. Safekeeping vehicle tows are impounded at the city of Milwaukee tow lot located at 3811 W. Lincoln Av.
5. The member shall provide a written detailed explanation for the specific reason for the safe keeping tow in the narrative section of the *Tow Authorization Report* in RMS.
(WILEAG 6.2.14.1)

C. PRISONER'S PROPERTY TOW

1. Perform the vehicle search as indicated in section 610.05.
2. Furnish tow data information as indicated in section 610.10.
3. Furnish the Parking Information Desk with the prisoner's name, address, date of birth, and offense type.
4. Advise the Parking Information Desk of the department inventory number if any property has been removed.
5. Prisoner's property vehicle tows are impounded at the city of Milwaukee tow lot located at 3811 W. Lincoln Av.
(WILEAG 6.2.14.1)

D. PRIVATE TOW

1. A private tow is a personal financial agreement between the owner/operator of the vehicle and the towing service company of his/her choice.
2. Requests for private tows using city towing contractors shall be received and dispatched by the Parking Information Desk personnel. No records of private tows will be maintained.
3. Any other requests for private tows may be handled by the district station console operator, the officers at the scene, or by the vehicle owner/operator from any available public or private telephone.

E. EVIDENCE TOW

Authorization for a vehicle to be towed as evidence shall be obtained from a supervisor assigned to the Criminal Investigation Bureau.

1. Perform the vehicle search as indicated in SOP 610.05.
2. Furnish the tow data information as indicated in SOP 610.10, and in addition, provide the Parking Information Desk with the name and PeopleSoft number of the investigating officer/detective and the name of the supervisor who authorized the evidence tow, the reason for the tow, the type of investigation (in the comment's

section), and the case number.

3. Complete a *Tow Authorization Report* in RMS.
4. The member shall follow the evidence vehicle to the [REDACTED] and have the vehicle stored in the heated Milwaukee Police Department designated garage [REDACTED] designated as the [REDACTED] building. The vehicle must be stored outside to eliminate storage hazards if any of the following are present:
 - a. Leaking gasoline or fuel;
 - b. Vehicle has damage to the battery or extensive front end damage;
 - c. Vehicle contains hazardous fluids or chemicals in the cabin, trunk, etc.;
 - d. Vehicle has been burned with or without accelerants; and/or
 - e. Electric / hybrid vehicles due to safety concerns with batteries.
(WILEAG 6.2.14.1)
5. The member who followed any evidence tow will be required to fill out the day-book that is located in the office inside the [REDACTED] building. The information that will be needed will already be denoted in the day-book, the officer will just have to fill in the blanks. This information will help the tow lot officers in the organization of these vehicles.
6. Before the end of the members' tour of duty, the member(s) who followed the evidence tow shall log onto the Criminal Investigation Bureau SharePoint site and initiate a new evidence vehicle entry. This is located on the left column menu of the Criminal Investigation Bureau SharePoint site. In addition, the chain of custody must be documented by completing a supplemental report to the original incident report.
7. If the investigating officer is seeking to permanently seize the vehicle being towed, the member shall follow the requirements set forth in SOP 765.15 Evidence Seizure.
8. If any property has been removed, provide the Parking Information Desk with the inventory report number for data entry into the tow record.
9. Vehicles towed as evidence shall be processed and made available for release to the owner in accordance with the requirements of the Evidence Vehicle Processing SOI.
10. Each respective Criminal Investigation Bureau division or district is responsible for the release of evidence tows they authorize, with the exception of homicides and other police related/critical incidents which will be handled by the Homicide Division. In order to change the status of the evidence towed vehicle to safekeeping, the following steps must be completed.
 - a. Members shall ensure that the vehicle has been entered into the evidence vehicles tab on the SharePoint site.

- b. The investigating members shall contact the vehicle's owner advising him/her of the change in status. Contact must be made with the actual owner of the vehicle and documented in an email to MPD tow lot personnel at [REDACTED]
- c. A captain, or designee, shall render a decision as to the waiver of tow fee(s). Only evidence tow fees may be waived as safekeeping tow fees cannot be waived. (WILEAG 6.2.14.2)
- d. In receiving notification, tow lot personnel shall change the vehicle's tow status and notify the tow lot of that change. DPW will be responsible for the release of the vehicle to its owner.
- e. As the result of an ongoing investigation it may be necessary to change a vehicle tow status from safekeeping to evidence. If this occurs, members shall notify their shift commander. The shift commander shall notify the MPD personnel at the tow lot via email at [REDACTED] advising them of the change of status and also provide a case number.

Note: Changing the tow status from evidence to safekeeping effectively releases that vehicle to the owner and/or authorizes the vehicle to be destroyed.

F. PROCESSING OF EVIDENCE VEHICLES

All vehicles shall be processed and released on the scene where the vehicle was located. The only exclusions would be vehicles that are evidence of homicide, fatal accidents or officer involved incidents, extreme weather conditions, or an exigent circumstance determined by a supervisor at the scene.

- 1. An evidence vehicle will be processed at the [REDACTED] building located at the [REDACTED]. When the processing of the vehicle is complete, the investigating officer/detective must determine, after being reviewed and approved by a supervisor, what type of storage the vehicle requires.
- 2. Tow lot officers will be responsible for the care, custody, and control of evidence vehicles at the [REDACTED].
- 3. Tow lot officers will maintain keys for evidence vehicles when provided. Only keys for the evidence vehicle will be accepted. House keys and all other keys, rings, and decorative key chains will not be accepted and should be inventoried.
- 4. Officers shall hang the evidence key(s) in the office which is located inside the [REDACTED] building.
- 5. Tow lot officers will conduct an ongoing audit of all evidence vehicles that will require periodic inquiries with the responsible officer. An open line of communication is required between the responsible officer(s)/detective and the tow lot officers while a vehicle remains in evidence status. For the purpose of the audit, tow lot officers may

require information including case numbers, officer/detective in charge, charges issued, ADA in charge of the case, trial and appeal dates.

G. EVIDENCE VEHICLE STORAGE AT THE

1. Evidence cars shall be taken directly to the [REDACTED] located at [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
(WILEAG 6.2.14.1)
2. An evidence vehicle must have a tow number and case number.
3. A determination must be made on what type of storage the evidence vehicle requires:
 - a. outdoor storage
 - b. indoor storage only/no heat required
 - c. indoor storage with heat (for evidence vehicles in need of drying out or for processing of a vehicle).
4. Secured/Alarmed Storage Facility [REDACTED]-Building)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

the 1990s, the number of people in the United States who are 65 years of age and older has increased by 50 percent, and the number of people 75 years of age and older has increased by 75 percent. The number of people 85 years of age and older has increased by 150 percent. The number of people 95 years of age and older has increased by 300 percent. The number of people 100 years of age and older has increased by 500 percent. The number of people 105 years of age and older has increased by 1,000 percent. The number of people 110 years of age and older has increased by 2,000 percent. The number of people 115 years of age and older has increased by 4,000 percent. The number of people 120 years of age and older has increased by 8,000 percent. The number of people 125 years of age and older has increased by 16,000 percent. The number of people 130 years of age and older has increased by 32,000 percent. The number of people 135 years of age and older has increased by 64,000 percent. The number of people 140 years of age and older has increased by 128,000 percent. The number of people 145 years of age and older has increased by 256,000 percent. The number of people 150 years of age and older has increased by 512,000 percent. The number of people 155 years of age and older has increased by 1,024,000 percent. The number of people 160 years of age and older has increased by 2,048,000 percent. The number of people 165 years of age and older has increased by 4,096,000 percent. The number of people 170 years of age and older has increased by 8,192,000 percent. The number of people 175 years of age and older has increased by 16,384,000 percent. The number of people 180 years of age and older has increased by 32,768,000 percent. The number of people 185 years of age and older has increased by 65,536,000 percent. The number of people 190 years of age and older has increased by 131,072,000 percent. The number of people 195 years of age and older has increased by 262,144,000 percent. The number of people 200 years of age and older has increased by 524,288,000 percent. The number of people 205 years of age and older has increased by 1,048,576,000 percent. The number of people 210 years of age and older has increased by 2,097,152,000 percent. The number of people 215 years of age and older has increased by 4,194,304,000 percent. The number of people 220 years of age and older has increased by 8,388,608,000 percent. The number of people 225 years of age and older has increased by 16,777,216,000 percent. The number of people 230 years of age and older has increased by 33,554,432,000 percent. The number of people 235 years of age and older has increased by 67,108,864,000 percent. The number of people 240 years of age and older has increased by 134,217,728,000 percent. The number of people 245 years of age and older has increased by 268,435,456,000 percent. The number of people 250 years of age and older has increased by 536,870,912,000 percent. The number of people 255 years of age and older has increased by 1,073,741,824,000 percent. The number of people 260 years of age and older has increased by 2,147,483,648,000 percent. The number of people 265 years of age and older has increased by 4,294,967,296,000 percent. The number of people 270 years of age and older has increased by 8,589,934,592,000 percent. The number of people 275 years of age and older has increased by 17,179,869,184,000 percent. The number of people 280 years of age and older has increased by 34,359,738,368,000 percent. The number of people 285 years of age and older has increased by 68,719,476,736,000 percent. The number of people 290 years of age and older has increased by 137,438,953,472,000 percent. The number of people 295 years of age and older has increased by 274,877,906,944,000 percent. The number of people 300 years of age and older has increased by 549,755,813,888,000 percent. The number of people 305 years of age and older has increased by 1,099,511,627,776,000 percent. The number of people 310 years of age and older has increased by 2,199,023,255,552,000 percent. The number of people 315 years of age and older has increased by 4,398,046,511,104,000 percent. The number of people 320 years of age and older has increased by 8,796,093,022,208,000 percent. The number of people 325 years of age and older has increased by 17,592,186,044,416,000 percent. The number of people 330 years of age and older has increased by 35,184,372,088,832,000 percent. The number of people 335 years of age and older has increased by 70,368,744,177,664,000 percent. The number of people 340 years of age and older has increased by 140,737,488,355,328,000 percent. The number of people 345 years of age and older has increased by 281,474,976,710,656,000 percent. The number of people 350 years of age and older has increased by 562,949,953,421,312,000 percent. The number of people 355 years of age and older has increased by 1,125,899,906,842,624,000 percent. The number of people 360 years of age and older has increased by 2,251,799,813,685,248,000 percent. The number of people 365 years of age and older has increased by 4,503,599,627,370,496,000 percent. The number of people 370 years of age and older has increased by 9,007,199,254,740,992,000 percent. The number of people 375 years of age and older has increased by 18,014,398,509,481,984,000 percent. The number of people 380 years of age and older has increased by 36,028,797,018,963,968,000 percent. The number of people 385 years of age and older has increased by 72,057,594,037,927,936,000 percent. The number of people 390 years of age and older has increased by 144,115,188,075,855,872,000 percent. The number of people 395 years of age and older has increased by 288,230,376,151,711,744,000 percent. The number of people 400 years of age and older has increased by 576,460,752,303,423,488,000 percent. The number of people 405 years of age and older has increased by 1,152,921,504,606,846,976,000 percent. The number of people 410 years of age and older has increased by 2,305,843,009,213,693,952,000 percent. The number of people 415 years of age and older has increased by 4,611,686,018,427,387,904,000 percent. The number of people 420 years of age and older has increased by 9,223,372,036,854,775,808,000 percent. The number of people 425 years of age and older has increased by 18,446,744,073,709,551,616,000 percent. The number of people 430 years of age and older has increased by 36,893,488,147,419,103,232,000 percent. The number of people 435 years of age and older has increased by 73,786,976,294,838,206,464,000 percent. The number of people 440 years of age and older has increased by 147,573,952,589,676,412,928,000 percent. The number of people 445 years of age and older has increased by 295,147,905,179,352,825,856,000 percent. The number of people 450 years of age and older has increased by 590,295,810,358,705,651,712,000 percent. The number of people 455 years of age and older has increased by 1,180,591,620,717,411,303,424,000 percent. The number of people 460 years of age and older has increased by 2,361,183,241,434,822,606,848,000 percent. The number of people 465 years of age and older has increased by 4,722,366,482,869,645,213,696,000 percent. The number of people 470 years of age and older has increased by 9,444,732,965,739,290,427,392,000 percent. The number of people 475 years of age and older has increased by 18,889,465,931,478,580,854,784,000 percent. The number of people 480 years of age and older has increased by 37,778,931,862,957,161,709,568,000 percent. The number of people 485 years of age and older has increased by 75,557,863,725,914,323,419,136,000 percent. The number of people 490 years of age and older has increased by 151,115,727,451,828,646,838,272,000 percent. The number of people 495 years of age and older has increased by 302,231,454,903,657,293,676,544,000 percent. The number of people 500 years of age and older has increased by 604,462,909,807,314,587,353,088,000 percent. The number of people 505 years of age and older has increased by 1,208,925,819,614,629,174,706,176,000 percent. The number of people 510 years of age and older has increased by 2,417,851,639,229,258,349,412,352,000 percent. The number of people 515 years of age and older has increased by 4,835,703,278,458,516,698,824,704,000 percent. The number of people 520 years of age and older has increased by 9,671,406,556,917,033,397,649,408,000 percent. The number of people 525 years of age and older has increased by 19,342,813,113,834,066,795,298,816,000 percent. The number of people 530 years of age and older has increased by 38,685,626,227,668,133,590,597,632,000 percent. The number of people 535 years of age and older has increased by 77,371,252,455,336,267,181,195,264,000 percent. The number of people 540 years of age and older has increased by 154,742,504,910,672,534,362,390,528,000 percent. The number of people 545 years of age and older has increased by 309,485,009,821,345,068,724,781,056,000 percent. The number of people 550 years of age and older has increased by 618,970,019,642,690,137,449,562,112,000 percent. The number of people 555 years of age and older has increased by 1,237,940,039,285,380,274,899,124,224,000 percent. The number of people 560 years of age and older has increased by 2,475,880,078,570,760,549,798,248,448,000 percent. The number of people 565 years of age and older has increased by 4,951,760,157,141,521,099,596,496,896,000 percent. The number of people 570 years of age and older has increased by 9,903,520,314,283,042,199,193,993,792,000 percent. The number of people 575 years of age and older has increased by 19,807,040,6

[REDACTED]

H. ABANDONED VEHICLE TOW

1. A vehicle shall be considered "abandoned" when it reasonably appears to be abandoned, it is in a state of disrepair, and lacks valid registration plates. Disrepair here means incapable of being moved without assistance. The officer shall radio the Parking Information Desk in this instance to request an immediate tow for "obvious disrepair."
2. Further, a vehicle shall be considered "abandoned" when it has been allowed to remain on a highway or public property for more than 72 hours after a police officer or parking checker placards the vehicle, and 48 hours after the mailing of a notice to the last known address of the owner.
3. In addition, any vehicle may be considered "abandoned" when there is an accumulation of ice and snow that makes it evident that the vehicle has been parked longer than the restrictions (24/48 hours) for the street.
4. Vehicles "abandoned" on private property are those that are in ordinary public view without the consent of the property owner or agent, and for longer than 72 hours after a police officer placards the vehicle.
5. Police personnel shall contact the district console operator to request a vehicle check and contact the Parking Information Desk at [REDACTED] to advise them of an abandoned vehicle prior to placarding a vehicle. Police personnel shall enter the tow number in the upper right hand corner of the placard. Police personnel shall enter all required information on the lower portion of the placard and affix it to the driver's side window of the vehicle.
6. Notification or attempted notification of the registered owner of an abandoned vehicle would require notification by the Department of Public Works (DPW).
(WILEAG 6.2.14.3)

I. RECKLESS DRIVING VEHICLE TOW

1. "Unregistered Motor Vehicle" means any motor vehicle that is located upon any alley, street, highway, public place, or thoroughfare and that is not displaying valid registration plates, a temporary operation plate, or other evidence of registration as provided under [Wis. Stat. § 341.18\(1\)](#) for the vehicle's current registration period or for a registration period for the vehicle that expired within the immediately preceding 31 days.
2. Members shall receive a tow number and complete a *Tow Authorization Report* in RMS utilizing "Unregistered" for the reason for the tow if he/she conducts a traffic stop of a vehicle or comes into contact with a vehicle involved in a crash investigation and:
 - a. Determines the vehicle is an unregistered motor vehicle; and
 - b. Issues a citation for any of the violations listed below:

1. Exceeding Zones / Posted Speed for 25 MPH or more ([Wis. Stat. § 346.57\(5\)](#))
2. Fleeing from Officer ([Wis. Stat. § 346.04\(2t\) or \(3\)](#))
3. Racing on Highway ([Wis. Stat. § 346.94\(2\)](#))

Note: The member must issue a citation for the registration violation and the violation indicated in subsection 1 – 3 above before receiving a tow number.

3. An inventory search shall be completed in accordance with 610.05.
4. Members shall obtain a copy of the DOT vehicle registration record that includes a date and time stamp on the print out, attach it to a copy of the *Tow Authorization Report*, and forward the paperwork to the Parking Information Desk.

J. IMPOUNDING VEHICLES USED IN RECKLESS DRIVING OFFENSES – [MILWAUKEE CITY ORDINANCE 101-24.9](#)

If a member encounters a vehicle and cites a driver in violation of [Wis. Stat. § 346.62](#) (Reckless Driving), the member shall:

1. First make a reasonable effort to determine if the vehicle has been reported stolen. If the member determines that the vehicle has been reported as stolen, the member shall make a reasonable attempt to contact the owner to recover the vehicle.
 - a. If the member is unable to contact the owner, they shall tow the vehicle in accordance with SOP 610.20(A) and not under [Milwaukee City Ordinance 101-24.9](#).
 - b. If the vehicle is reported as stolen, the member shall have the vehicle processed in accordance with SOP 630.15(B) Vehicle Thefts, Prior Authority Vehicle Use, and Theft by Fraud.
2. If the vehicle was not reported stolen, members shall receive a tow number and complete a *Tow Authorization Report* in RMS utilizing “Other” for the reason for the tow and write “Reckless Driving Offender” in the space next to “Other” if he/she conducts a traffic stop of a vehicle or comes into contact with a vehicle involved in a crash investigation and a violation of [Wis. Stat. § 346.62](#) (Reckless Driving) occurred.
3. An inventory search shall be completed in accordance with 610.05 (Towing of Vehicles).
4. Members shall provide the legal name of the driver to the Parking Information Desk when requesting the tow.

K. PARKED UNREGISTERED VEHICLE TOW

1. Violation

No unregistered motor vehicle may be located upon any alley, street, highway, public place, or thoroughfare within the city.

Note: This violation shall only apply to parked motor vehicles.

2. Definition

"Unregistered Motor Vehicle" means any motor vehicle that is located upon any alley, street, highway, public place, or thoroughfare and that is not displaying valid registration plates, a temporary operation plate, or other evidence of registration as provided under [Wis. Stat. § 341.18\(1\)](#) for the vehicle's current registration period or for a registration period for the vehicle that expired within the immediately preceding 31 days.

3. Upon determining that a parked vehicle is unregistered for not less than 31 days, police personnel shall issue a city of Milwaukee parking citation (form PT-22) for "Unregistered Vehicle" violating [Milwaukee City Ordinance \(MCO\) 101-24.7](#), data processing code 636. Insert the tow number in the "comments" section of the citation.
4. After issuing the citation, members shall receive a tow number and complete a *Tow Authorization Report* in RMS. An inventory search shall be completed in accordance with 610.05.
5. Upon returning to their work locations, members shall obtain a copy of the registration teletype, attach it to a copy of the *Tow Authorization Report*, and forward the paperwork to the Parking Information Desk.

L. ILLEGALLY PARKED VEHICLE

1. Police personnel are authorized to order the towing of an illegally parked vehicle meeting the following criteria:
 - a. Tow-away Zone and Snow Emergency Tow-Away Zone ([MCO 101-24-1](#))
 - b. Blocking a Driveway ([MCO 101-24.1](#))
 - c. Snow Emergency Parking ([MCO 101-26](#))
 1. A snow emergency must be publicly declared by the commissioner of the Department of Public Works.
 2. Authority from a supervisory officer to tow a vehicle based upon serious impairment to snowplow operations.
 - d. Blocking Traffic ([MCO 101-24.2](#))

e. Vehicles Illegally Parked on a Highway Having:

1. Five or more open parking citations more than sixty-five (65) days old.
2. No plates - VIN number identifies vehicle owner as having five (5) or more other open parking citations more than sixty-five (65) days old.

2. Procedure

- a. Members shall radio the district console to check for open citations over sixty-five (65) days old and any warrants or commitments open for the registered owner of the vehicle.
- b. Members shall contact the Forensics Division (extension [REDACTED]) to verify that active state felony warrants are on file and the sheriff's office to verify any misdemeanor warrants.

M. STREET CONSTRUCTION - BLOCKING TRAFFIC

Members shall ticket and tow for a violation of "Temporary No Parking Street Construction" (Code 742) after an attempt by the member is made to contact the owner to remove the vehicle.

N. SNOW EMERGENCY

1. A snow emergency shall be declared by the commissioner of the Department of Public Works. The Department of Public Works will notify the Department of Emergency Communications (DEC). DEC will notify the applicable department work locations via teletype.
2. A snow emergency will remain in effect for 72 hours or until such earlier time when snowplowing operations have been completed ([MCO 101-26](#)).
3. Enforcement may begin at 11:00 p.m. and continue until 6:00 a.m.
4. Members shall issue citations using Code 740, and complete a *Tow Authorization Report* in RMS. They shall call in the required tow information to the Parking Information Desk and receive a tow number for each vehicle to be towed. Vehicles are not to be towed before receiving the tow number.
5. Members shall use those radio channels designated for snow emergency operations to contact the Parking Information Desk. All other non-emergency tows shall be suspended while this operation is in effect.
6. Vehicles will be towed to lots designated by the Department of Public Works. (WILEAG 6.2.14.2)

O. REPOSSESSED VEHICLES

The department does not authorize the towing of repossessed vehicles. This is a civil matter between financial institutions and their customers. However, the Parking Information Desk is advised by financial companies of repossessions and upon notification, each repossession is entered into the tow record file.

610.25 TOW INQUIRIES

- A. Upon receipt of a tow inquiry by phone or in person, members shall check their computer terminal at their assigned work location using the GovTow Towing Management System website to determine if the vehicle was placarded or towed.
- B. Police district personnel shall provide owners of abandoned or illegally parked towed vehicles with a copy of a *Notice to all Owners of Towed Vehicles* (form PT-26), which outlines their options to reclaim their vehicles. Further, district supervisors shall ensure that a copy of this form is prominently displayed at the respective work locations.

1. Towed as Abandoned

If a vehicle has been towed to a storage lot as abandoned, refer the owner/claimant to the city tow lot in accordance with the city tow lot hours, which are available on the city's [website](#).

2. Towed as Illegally Parked

If the vehicle was towed to a storage lot as illegally parked, the owner/claimant must be informed of the following:

- a. Advise as to the parking violation that caused the tow.
- b. Advise that the towing and storage charge must be paid before release of the vehicle unless otherwise ordered by the city attorney's office.

610.30 PROBABLE CAUSE REVIEW BY CITY ATTORNEY (WILEAG 6.2.14)

- A. If the vehicle owner wishes a prompt review of the parking citation that caused the vehicle to be towed, the owner shall be referred to the city attorney (prosecution division) for review of the citation within one (1) business day of the request. The vehicle owner may challenge the basis for the tow and bring witnesses to support the owner's position. After this review, the city attorney may determine that there is probable cause. The citation shall then be processed into court at the next regular session of the municipal court or release the vehicle only upon payment of the towing and/or storage charges.

Note: After review by the city attorney, the owner still has the option to stipulate to the parking citation and pay the towing and storage charge without being processed into municipal court.

B. NO PROBABLE CAUSE

If the city attorney determines that there is no probable cause, the city attorney may release the citation and the vehicle may be released without payment of the towing and storage charges. The city attorney shall sign a form authorizing the release and attach same to the citation.

(WILEAG 6.2.14.2)

C. NO REQUEST FOR PROMPT REVIEW

If the vehicle owner does not wish a prompt review of the parking citation by the city attorney's office, the owner may:

1. Be processed into municipal court through the Violations Bureau (414) 344-0840; or
2. Prior to court appearance, obtain a release by paying the towing and storage charges which could then be refunded if found not guilty in court.

Note: If the vehicle owner does not challenge the citation, payment may be made and then the owner may obtain a release for the vehicle.

610.35 PROCESSING PAYMENTS AND FEES (WILEAG 6.2.14)**A. DISMISSED CITATIONS**

If the citation is dismissed by the municipal court, the city attorney's office will make arrangements for the release of the vehicle and any refund of payment for paid towing and storage fees.

(WILEAG 6.2.14.2)

B. OUTSTANDING PARKING CITATIONS

If the owner of the vehicle has any other outstanding parking citations, they will be processed in the municipal court, through the Violations Bureau, along with the towing citation.

C. REGISTRATION PLATES HELD BY STATE LAW

Prior payment of other parking citations shall not be a precondition for release of the vehicle. Registration plates required by state law to be held for non-payment will be confiscated and destroyed.

610.40 VEHICLE RELEASE PROCEDURE (WILEAG 6.2.14)

In order to release an evidence tow, members shall follow the procedure outlined in 610.20(E)(10). All other vehicle releases, including but not limited to, safekeeping tows, inventory tows and abandoned autos are the responsibility of the Parking Information Desk/DPW. Those vehicles will be released in accordance with DPW's policy and procedures. Questions from citizens regarding the release of these vehicles can be referred to the Parking Information Desk at (414) 286-8350. In addition, all pending charges related

to vehicle tows are handled by DPW unless otherwise stated in this standard operating procedure.

(WILEAG 6.2.14.2, 6.2.14.3)

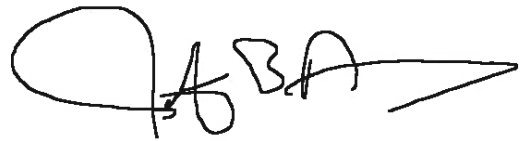
610.45 TOW LOT MEMBERS RESPONSIBILITIES

Members assigned to the city tow lot shall be responsible for the following:

- A. Ensure that any vehicle towed by the department has been checked for outstanding “wants” or stolen, and that ownership has been determined.
- B. Work directly with the Parking Information Desk regarding ownership conflicts, vehicle identification number discrepancies, verification by the use of confidential numbers, and illegible, missing, or switched identification numbers.
- C. Confirm statuses and tow lot locations for vehicles towed by the department.
- D. Cooperate with the Department of Public Works (DPW) – Parking and Towing, regarding implementation of police related procedures in accordance with city ordinances and state statutes.
- E. Ensure that any towed vehicle shall not be disposed of if:
 - 1. Ownership is in question (unless it can never be established),
 - 2. The vehicle is wanted or has been reported stolen,
 - 3. The vehicle has not been physically checked for contraband and valuables.
- F. Furnish the Parking Information Desk with ownership information on those vehicles that have questioned ownership - if ownership can be determined.
- G. Update the Parking Information Desk computer information for those vehicles still in storage after 20 days. This information, which is accessed by DPW Parking and Towing shall indicate:
 - 1. That the vehicle has been properly identified,
 - 2. That the vehicle is not wanted or stolen,
 - 3. That the vehicle has been checked for contraband and other items requiring inventory when title passes to the city,
 - 4. That the vehicle's owner or lien holder of record has been identified, whenever possible.
- H. If needed for investigative purposes:
 - 1. Members can obtain a copy of the letter sent by the DPW Parking and Towing to the owner and to any lien holder of record regarding vehicles appraised at current

contractual pricing.

2. Members can obtain a copy of the returned receipt or a copy of the letter sent via registered mail by the DPW Parking and Towing regarding vehicles to be sold which are valued at current contractual pricing.
- I. Obtain a bid listing from the DPW Parking and Towing for vehicles that were not claimed by the owner or lien holder within the allotted time, and check those vehicles for contraband and other items requiring inventory after the city takes title to the vehicles. All property shall be checked to see if it is reported stolen prior to being inventoried.
- J. Safeguard, manage and audit all evidence vehicles.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.B.N.' with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

JEFFREY B. NORMAN
CHIEF OF POLICE

JBN:mfk