

Melendez, Yadira

From: Michael Maistelman <msm@maistelmanlaw.com>
Sent: Monday, January 5, 2026 10:52 AM
To: Melendez, Yadira; Zamarripa, JoCasta; Zamarripa, JoCasta;
Oatis-McMiller, Glenda; Brower, Alex; Burgelis, Peter
Cc: Jackson, DiAndre
Subject: "Alleged" Illegal/Theft Tow's - DT'S AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR AND TRAINING CENTER LLC", Recycling, Salvaging, or Towing Premises Licenses Renewal Application for "DT2 TOWING" at 2620 W SILVER SPRING DR. (Expires 2/7/2026

Attachments: tow-truck-driver-confrontation2.jpg; Untitled attachment 00269.htm; DT2 Towing _ BBB Reviews _ Better Business Bureau.pdf; Untitled attachment 00272.htm; Untitled attachment 00275.pdf; Untitled attachment 00278.htm; Untitled attachment 00281.pdf; Untitled attachment 00284.htm

Importance: High

Good morning and Happy New Year Chairperson Zamarripa and Committee Members,

This License is set for a renewal hearing for tomorrow at 3:25pm.

If time permits, would you please include the attached **news stories**, **Better Business Bureau report**, **Instagram story** and **Fox 6 News investigation** concerning allegedly stolen vehicles involving the licensee in the above-referenced file for tomorrow's licensing hearing.

These materials are directly relevant. In fact, the conduct described occurred to **one of my clients**, and I may testify with first-hand knowledge regarding that matter at the hearing.

Thank you for your assistance.

Best regards,

Michael

PUBLIC INVESTIGATOR

Tow companies accused of taking cars illegally and overcharging outside shopping center, church



Quinn Clark

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Aug. 29, 2024 | Updated Aug. 30, 2024, 12:56 p.m. CT

For the past six months, Monte Mabra has noticed the same black tow truck circling shopping centers on Milwaukee's northwest side.

"Every time I go, a customer is running out of the store saying, 'Don't take my car, don't take my car!'" he said.

The truck only has a 1-800 phone number displayed on its side. It frequently tows cars that Mabra says are parked legally at shopping centers along N. 76th Street from Capitol Drive to Mill Road, like the Hampton Shopping Center.

Mabra started stepping in — and filming — the tow truck encounters this month. So far, he has stopped at least three cars from being towed.

The owners of the companies operating in the parking lot, DT2 Towing LLC and Kings in Trucking Express LLC, denied that their drivers tow cars illegally. They were aware of Mabra's videos on social media, but said they do not portray what's really going on.

They also criticized the videos, alleging they've wrongfully given the companies "a bad rap," leading to an increase in break-ins at the company's lot.

"We don't touch any vehicle that wasn't either in the handicap (spot), fire lane, or things of that nature," said David McElrath, Kings in Trucking owner, in an interview.

But Public Investigator found problems with how the companies are operating.

Kings in Trucking isn't licensed with the city of Milwaukee to tow cars from private property, and its LLC registration has lapsed, according to city and state records.

Because of that, the towing companies are not legally permitted to work together, city officials say.

However, DT2 Towing owner Don Thurmond told Public Investigator they both patrol the lots 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The city's license division manager, Jim Cooney, said Wednesday the two companies have been referred to the Milwaukee Police Department's License Investigation Unit after Public Investigator began asking questions.

Any reports or citations, plus any complaints from the public, will be made part of the license file and "could be grounds for discipline at the time of license renewal," Cooney said.

Two companies work together to tow cars, but only one holds the proper license, city says

When cars are towed, they're taken to DT2 Towing located at 2620 W. Silver Spring Drive.

However, the 1-800 number on tow trucks leads to Kings in Trucking Express.

Thurmond, DT2's owner, said the number is for both businesses. It can reach his personal phone, the owner of Kings in Trucking's personal phone, and the lot's phone when it's open for business hours, he said.

City regulations require towing businesses that take cars without prior consent of the owner or operator of the vehicle to obtain a city license.

In an earlier interview, Cooney, the license division manager, said Kings in Trucking Express holds a license that only allows for nonconsensual towing in the case of bank repossession or from the public right of way to the city tow lot — not from a store's parking lot.

Thurmond told Public Investigator he holds the license needed to tow cars, while he contracts Kings in Trucking to aid in towing cars.

Cooney confirmed DT2 has the license needed, but he said the way the two companies are working together is not legal.

Kings in Trucking owner McElrath told Public Investigator he's properly licensed to take cars, he "just can't store them."

However, Cooney said businesses engaged in nonconsensual towing from private properties must hold their own license and have their own premises in the city.

Kings in Trucking also isn't properly registered as an LLC.

State records show the company was registered in 2019 but was administratively dissolved in June. An administratively dissolved company can later seek reinstatement if it corrects any deficiencies and pays all fees and penalties.

After Public Investigator spoke with the property owner of Hampton Shopping Center at 4801 N. 76th St., John Lewenauer, about these discrepancies, he called back — this time, with Thurmond and McElrath.

During the call on Tuesday, McElrath said he thought he was in compliance with city regulations and that his company has done everything "by the book." The owners of the two companies pledged to make changes.

The property owner had thought he only worked with Kings in Trucking but realized how the two companies worked together after speaking with Public Investigator. In a call Wednesday, he told Public Investigator he would only work with DT2 Towing moving forward.

Shopper said she had to pay \$430 to get car back

After Unique Johnson took her baby into Save A Lot on Aug. 7, she realized she had forgotten something in her white truck.

When she returned to the parking lot, her truck was gone.

"I thought I was getting pranked," Johnson said.

Her truck had only been there for about five minutes, and she had parked correctly, she said. One of the towing companies later told her she had parked too close to accessible, or handicap, parking, which Johnson denied.

Johnson went back inside the store where employees advised her to call the number on a small sign in the parking lot: 1-800-774-5892, the number for Kings in Trucking Express.

As she waited for someone to pick up her and her daughter, Johnson panicked and cried as she wondered how she would get her truck back.

She was forced to pay nearly \$430 to get her car back that same day.

Johnson also accused the towing companies of theft. She said \$2,000 was missing from her truck when she picked it up. She showed Public Investigator a photo of broken cash bands in the truck, but said she did not report the theft to police because she did not think they would be able to help get her money back.

McElrath denied that Johnson's money was stolen and said employees never enter people's cars. McElrath and Thurmond said they did not recall any interactions with Johnson.

"You can't pay me to go in that parking lot," Johnson said, "because it's like they just sit bored, just towing people's cars for nothing."

More: What do I do if my car gets towed in Milwaukee?

More: Milwaukee's Abyss Towing loses license to operate in city after complaint about denied 'drop fee'

Companies deny they overcharge people who come to pick up their cars

State statutes outline when cars can be towed, as well as how much towing companies can charge.

State regulations allow a maximum towing fee of \$150, plus an additional \$25 to \$35 for every day the vehicle is stored.

Fees can be added under unique circumstances if special equipment is required to tow the vehicle.

Videos and witness accounts of the cars towed by Kings in Trucking and DT2 Towing show employees using a hook and chain, a normal method outlined in

state statutes.

However, Johnson and several others on social media describe being charged at least \$430 immediately after their cars are towed.

But Thurmond said trucks often use special equipment, which legally raises the price, like the tools needed to raise a car onto a flatbed.

State statutes also require signage on the property stating unauthorized parking is prohibited. The notice should be at each vehicle entrance to the parking area or property.

Mabra, who has filmed the tow trucks, showed Public Investigator one sign posted on a pole above a handicap parking spot at 6410 N. 76th St.

Public Investigator could not find any more signs.

Evolve Church says members' cars towed during worship services

Kyra Allen, a member of Evolve Church, is well-aware of Kings in Trucking Express and DT2.

The two companies frequently tow cars in the church parking lot during worship services, she said.

The problem got so bad, the church has designated people to watch the lot and make sure cars are not improperly towed, she added. The church is about two miles away from Hampton Shopping Center and less than a mile from the shopping center at 6410 N. 76th St.

Over the past month, Allen said she's increasingly noticed cars being taken from both the church's parking lot and the lot next door. An older woman's car was

towed with her house key inside, and a mother's vehicle towed with her breast pump inside, she said.

"They have no compassion for people," she said.

Thurmond said his company is only towing cars that are improperly parked in fire lanes or accessible parking spots in the church lot.

He said he often tells church goers, "I'm sorry you're at church, but our job is to patrol their lot 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

The city's license division has not received any complaints about the towing companies. Neither has the state Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

The city's licenses committee has revoked the licenses of private towing companies in the past. In 2019, the city announced plans to maintain report cards for towing companies that would include the number of tows performed and the number of complaints for every licensed private tow contractor.

However, Department of Public Works spokesperson Tiffany Shepherd said after a lawsuit ruling, the city can no longer require receipts, which were used to update report cards. Because of that, the towing report cards no longer exist.

Mabra said he posted his videos to raise awareness of the problem and prevent more cars from being towed.

Earlier this month, he shared a video of a woman whose car was nearly towed from the Times Square Shopping Center on Capitol Drive.

"They don't have a right to take your car," Mabra told her.

She was in an accessible parking spot and pointed out that her handicap permit was displayed at the front of her car.

The video later showed the men unhooking her car from the tow truck and leaving it in the parking lot.

Complaints about towing companies can be sent to the city of Milwaukee License Division at license@milwaukee.gov. Complaints about unlawful towing also can be sent through the state Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's online form.

Quinn Clark is a Public Investigator reporter. She can be emailed at QClark@gannett.com. Follow her on Twitter at @Quinn_A_Clark.

About Public Investigator

Government corruption. Corporate wrongdoing. Consumer complaints. Medical scams. Public Investigator is a new initiative of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and its sister newsrooms across Wisconsin. Our team wants to hear your tips, chase the leads and uncover the truth. We'll investigate anywhere in Wisconsin. Send your tips to watchdog@journalsentinel.com or call 414-319-9061. You can also submit tips at jsonline.com/tips.

Editor's note, Aug. 29, 2024: The story was updated to reference other shopping centers where the towing companies operate.

Editor's note, Aug. 30, 2024: The story was updated to clarify that the towing companies operate with the consent of the property owners.

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DT2 Towing

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 Dashuntaa J

Date: 12/11/2025



This tow company illegally towed my vehicle from a parking lot of a store that I was shopping at. The tow truck almost hit an off duty Lieutenant car trying to speed off with my vechile so quickly. The off Duty Lieutenant caught up to the Tow truck driver before he pulled out of the parking lot and let him know that the tow was illegal. They had words back and forth about an open investigation against the tow lot company and he attempted to speed off again with my vehicle without telling me where he was going. When he did provide the address he provided the wrong address and refused to allow me to pay a drop fee. 4 men bullied me when I went to get my car. Left me freezing outside of a gate and kept demanding cash only payments. I expressed that I didnt have \$450 in cash and that I could pay electronically. He proceeded to tell me to walk a mile to a liquor store to get cash. I got a ride to pick me and take me to get my title and cash but when I returned nobody would answer the doorbell or come to the gate at 3pm in the afternoon (less than 30 mins of me leaving). When I got in contact with someone at the tow lot, he claim they were closed for the day but the business hours on the door stated that business hours were 10am until 6pm. Around 5pm the tow truck driver called back to say that he was headed back to the shop and that I could come back and retrieve my vehicle at 6pm They were rude and unprofessional. My receipt doesn't match the total I paid. One of the men threw my paper work for my car at me and my keys. They have many different alias so its unclear how they are legally operating in the city of ██████████. The name on the building is OT Automotive. The tow truck has the name K.I.T. printed on the side. The receipt has DT2 Towing LLC and the number listed on the receipt doesn't allow u to speak with anybody on the phone. The business hours are sketchy and the way to operate and handle business affairs should be looked into

**DT2 Towing is NOT a BBB Accredited Business.**

To become accredited, a business must agree to [BBB Standards for Trust](#) and pass BBB's vetting process.

 Why choose a BBB Accredited Business?

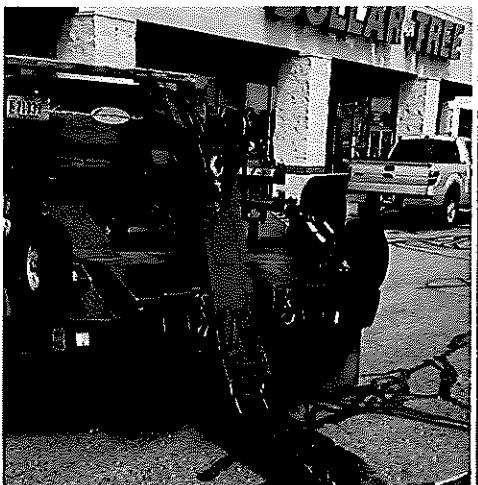
Motors

STEP TOW FAR Driver takes problem into own hands after seeing tow truck stalk mall, illegally lift cars and overcharge owners

One woman claimed a driver stole \$2,000 in cash from her truck

Kristen Brown, Motors Reporter

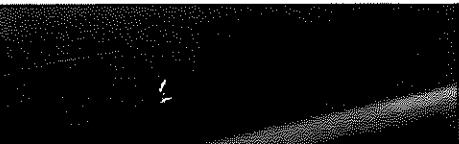
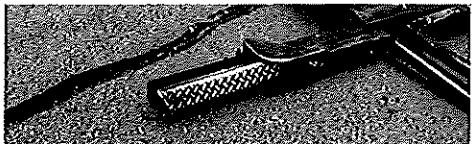
Published: 12:03, 29 Aug 2024



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A VIGILANTE filmed tow trucks taking people's cars from a store parking lot, helping investigators find they're not operating legally.

The towing company is so proactive in towing that a church leader assembled a task force to protect cars during worship.

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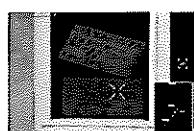
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A good samaritan began filming tow truck drivers removing cars from a shopping center to help others Credit: Facebook/Voice Ofmany



NEW YEAR NEW CLUB
Sam's Club's 4 big changes coming to every store in 2026



CLOSING TIME Say goodbye to Marshalls stores after retail giant confirms it's all over



After an investigation was prompted, it was found that the companies were working in tandem illegally Credit: Facebook/Voice Ofmany

DT2 Towing, owned by John Thurmond and David McElrath's King in Trucking in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has gained attention from the media after a good Samaritan began documenting their drivers' tows.

Monte Mabra said he noticed a black tow truck seemingly prowling a shopping center for "illegally" parked cars, he told [The Public Investigator](#).

He said that every other day, he would hear someone running out from a nearby store, begging a driver not to take their car.

That's when he decided to start filming drivers from the two companies, and the outlet's investigation into the matter began.

READ MORE ABOUT TOWING



COUGH IT UP Drivers fume as they face \$50 'extortion' and towing for parking at own homes



JUST GONE 'No warning, no boot,' cries 'violated' driver as she's towed from her own home

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McElrath and Thurmond were aware of Mabra's videos on [Facebook](#) and claimed they were beginning to harm both company's reputations.

They also claimed an increase in thefts on their company's properties.

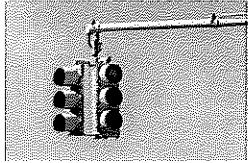
"We don't touch any vehicle that wasn't either in the handicap (spot), fire lane, or things of that nature," McElrath told the outlet.

However, a few drivers had a different story.

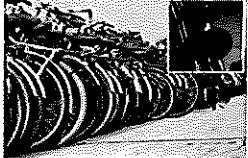
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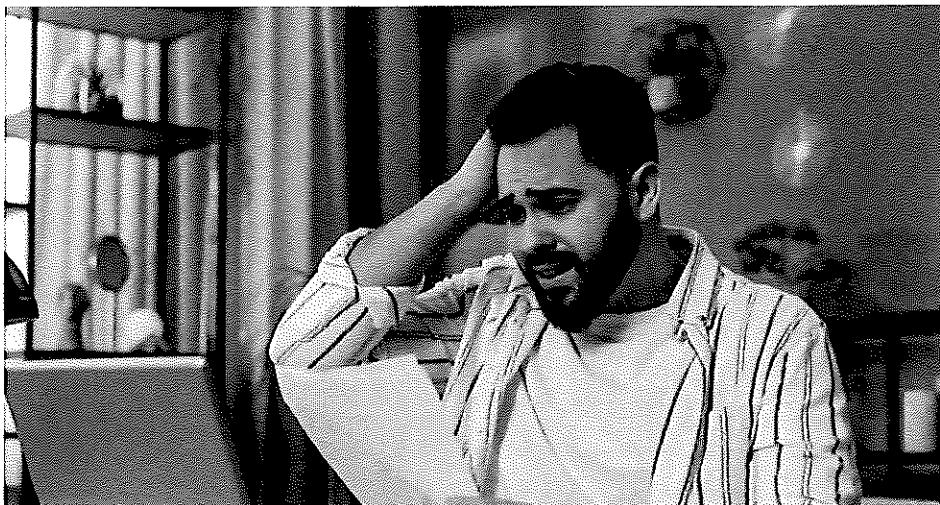
SEEING RED Americans face \$25 fines under 'red light' law as part of widespread crackdown



SENIOR MOMENT New Jan 1 'age' driving law in force & 4m people could see major changes

Unique Johnson, for instance, took her infant into a store and was only shopping briefly when she realized she'd left [something in her truck](#).

It was gone when she left the store and walked to where she left her truck.



"I thought I was getting pranked," she said.

A store employee helped her find the contact information left on a single sign in the lot, and eventually tracked down her truck.

She was told she was towed because she was parked too close to a handicapped spot, which she said was false.

She paid \$430 to get it back but realized something else was missing.

Johnson claimed a driver took \$2,000 in cash from her truck, complete with a picture of broken cash bands.

“You can’t pay me to go in that parking lot, because it’s like they just sit bored, just towing people’s cars for nothing.”

Unique Johnson

McElrath said his drivers don't enter personal vehicles so that it couldn't have been his driver.

Johnson, though, doesn't plan on shopping in any stores associated with the company.

"You can't pay me to go in that parking lot, because it's like they just sit bored, just towing people's cars for nothing," she said.

Kyra Allen is part of Evolve Church, which has a lot a few miles from the shopping center Johnson was towed from. However, the same two towing companies monitor it.

She told the outlet that the towing was so frequent that she had to appoint people to watch churchgoers' cars during worship to ensure they weren't towed.

She said an elderly woman's car was towed with her house key inside, and a newborn mother's car was taken with her breast pump.

Thurmond indicated that being at church didn't absolve drivers of the rules.

"I'm sorry you're at church, but our job is to patrol their lots 24 hours a day, seven days a week," he said.

What to do if your car is towed

Wrongfully or not, retrieving a towed vehicle can be a hassle.

If your vehicle is towed after parking in a “No Parking” zone or other legitimate reason, there are a few steps to take to get it back.

Steps to take when your car is towed:

Try to figure out why your car was towed. Did you not see a posted “No Parking” sign? Did you miss a car payment? Did you return to a lot where you have unpaid citations? Finding the reason can narrow down the phone numbers to dial.

Locate the vehicle. Most states, cities, or counties require towing companies to leave some form of contact information via a posted sign or sent by mail.

Recovery dates and times depend on the company that towed the vehicle, but those times will be posted to the website or can be recited by a representative.

Pay the fees. Be careful to be as prompt as possible, as some tow yards may charge storage fees by the day.

If you feel your vehicle was wrongfully towed, contesting the action can be done with the following steps:

Be prompt – many states have a small window of time where it's acceptable to file a complaint against a company that wrongfully towed the vehicle.

Gather supporting documents: photos, emails, receipts, police reports, and witness statements if applicable. The more evidence, the better.

Get familiar with your local laws, as laws for towing companies vary per state.

Try speaking with the towing company. Sometimes it may have been a simple oversight, and the matter can be resolved quickly. Contact the Justice of the Peace in your area, as they may have more insight or resources to help. They are often utilized for towing cases.

Talk to a lawyer. Many lawyers have free case consultations, and depending on the case, it may be worth it to utilize a lawyer.

Source: [Oregon Department of Justice](#), [National General](#), [Rak Law Firm](#)

Thurmond and McElrath work together to patrol the lots. Still, Jim Cooney, the city's license division manager, said McElrath's company's LLC

registration lapsed and isn't licensed to tow cars from private property.

Thurmond's company holds the proper city license to tow vehicles without the owner's consent, and McElrath's drivers help move cars.

However, Kings would need its own license for McElrath's company to move cars without consent.

The outlet contacted the lot's owner, who spoke with reporters and both company owners on a conference call.

Both company owners didn't realize they weren't operating within the exact parameters and said they'd apply for the proper licenses.

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The property owner said they'd only work with Thurmond's company, DT2, as he didn't realize both companies were working together.

The U.S. Sun has contacted DT2 Towing and Kings in Trucking Towing for comment and an update.

Topics

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