



University of Wisconsin–Madison Police

Policy: 61.4

SUBJECT: TRAFFIC-ANCILLARY SERVICES

EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/01/10

REVISED DATE: 12/31/11

REVIEWED DATE: 04/01/14

INDEX:

- 61.4.1 ASSISTANCE TO ROADWAY USERS
- 61.4.2 CORRECTION OF ROADWAY HAZARDS
- 61.4.3 REMOVAL AND TOWING OF VEHICLES
- 61.4.4 TRAFFIC SAFETY EDUCATION MATERIALS

POLICY:

The University of Wisconsin–Madison Police Department will provide for traffic-related ancillary services which have an effect on vehicular and pedestrian traffic within the University. These services include providing public information and directions, identifying and reporting roadway hazards, and the removal and towing of vehicles.

DEFINITIONS:

“Abandoned vehicle” refers to any motor vehicle in a state of disrepair rendering the vehicle incapable of being driven from its current location or any motor vehicle that has been left unattended in a roadway not intended for parking.

“Emergency tow” refers to the towing of a vehicle which has been disabled in the roadway and is causing a traffic hazard and the owner either cannot be reached or refuses to tow the vehicle after a reasonable period of time.

PROCEDURE:

61.4.1 ASSISTANCE TO ROADWAY USERS

The following outlines general assistance as provided by Department personnel:

- A. Personnel shall provide information and directions to citizens when asked and shall remain familiar with various services and facilities available to assist motorists. Field personnel will offer reasonable assistance at all times to motorists who appear to be in need of aid. Field personnel may transport stranded motorists to the nearest convenient location where assistance may be obtained.
- B. Officers encountering motorists experiencing mechanical or other difficulties will make a reasonable effort to obtain appropriate assistance for the motorist. Officers will not use Department vehicles to “jump start” disabled vehicles. Officers will assist in obtaining towing services when requested. The tow company requested by the motorist will be utilized provided the company can respond in a reasonable amount of time. If the motorist does not have a personal choice, an authorized towing agency will be requested.
- C. Stranded motorists should not be left unattended when they appear to be exposed to hazardous situations. Consideration shall be given to the location, time of day or night, and weather. Field personnel who assist stranded motorists will communicate this to the communications center. During adverse weather conditions, Department personnel shall make an effort to arrange for transportation for persons who are stranded.
- D. Officers will render all practical assistance to the users of the roadway who are involved in emergency situations. In medical emergencies, officers shall request emergency medical services and administer first aid, if necessary.

61.4.2 CORRECTION OF ROADWAY HAZARDS

The following shall provide regulations for the correction of roadway hazards:

- A. During normal patrol activities, Department personnel must remain alert for unsafe or hazardous conditions on the roadway. Hazardous conditions may include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Debris on roadway
 - 2. Defects on the roadway itself
 - 3. Lack of, or defects in, roadway safety features
 - 4. Lack of, improper, visually obstructed, damaged, or non-working mechanical traffic control devices or informational signs
 - 5. Lack of, or defective, roadway lighting systems

- 6. Disabled, abandoned, or parked vehicles on the roadway
- B. Upon discovering an unsafe or hazardous condition on the roadway, Department personnel shall take appropriate action which may include notifying the appropriate agency via the communications center, providing traffic control as necessary, protecting the scene as appropriate, or immediately rectifying the situation when possible.

61.4.3 REMOVAL AND TOWING OF VEHICLES

The following shall govern removal and towing of vehicles:

- A. Abandoned vehicle complaints may be dispatched for investigation. Transportation Services provides the primary response for abandoned vehicle complaints during normal business hours. Abandoned vehicles presenting a roadway hazard shall be removed to the tow operator's yard through the University contracted vehicle tow service, if available. A general inventory shall be conducted of abandoned vehicles. Officers initially assigned to the abandoned vehicle shall run the VIN to check for ownership and for wants/stolen status, before making a reasonable attempt to contact the owner to resolve the situation.
- B. Disabled vehicles may be left at the scene for later repair or removal by the owner if:
 - 1. The owner/operator makes such a request.
 - 2. The vehicle is legally parked or is placed on private property with the consent of the property owner.
 - 3. The vehicle does not otherwise present a hazard to the public or the safe movement of traffic.
- C. Vehicles seized for evidentiary purposes shall be towed by the contracted towing service, unless unavailable. Vehicles impounded for evidentiary purposes shall be taken to the Department and secured in the garage or another secure location as directed by the assigned officer or a supervisor. Other jurisdictions reporting stolen vehicles later recovered within the Department jurisdiction shall immediately be notified by teletype of the recovery with a request for vehicle disposition instructions.
- D. Transportation Services is primarily responsible for the removal of illegally parked vehicles during normal business hours. After normal business, an officer may be dispatched to illegal parked vehicle complaints. Illegally parked vehicles that are towed will be issued a parking ticket for the violation prior to towing.
- E. Departmental vehicles becoming disabled or damaged that require towing services shall be towed by the contracted towing service, if available.
- F. Officers investigating accidents, or who encounter a disabled vehicle, where towing services are required shall ask the owner/operator at the scene if they have a preference for towing services. Towing services within a reasonable distance will be summoned at the request of the owner/operator.
- G. In the event a tow is required after the operator's arrest or if the owner/ operator does not express a preference for towing services, the officer shall utilize the Transportation Services contracted tow service, if available.
 - 1. When an officer takes a vehicle operator into physical custody for any reason, the vehicle is being towed, and there were other occupants in the vehicle, the officer shall attempt to make reasonable arrangements for the other occupants to reach their destination.
 - 2. The disposition of the arrested person's vehicle subsequent to an arrest shall be documented in the officer's written report.
- H. The Communications Center shall maintain a "Vehicle Tow-Away Log" containing the following information:
 - 1. Make and model of the towed vehicle
 - 2. Registration plate number or V.I.N.
 - 3. Color of the vehicle
 - 4. Location from which the vehicle was towed, the towing service was used, and why it was towed
 - 5. Related agency case number

61.4.4 TRAFFIC SAFETY EDUCATION MATERIALS

The following outlines traffic safety education materials distributed by Department personnel:

- A. The Department distributes educational materials on traffic laws and regulations to the public. The purpose of these traffic education materials is to enhance public understanding of safety programs and to support traffic enforcement efforts.
- B. Traffic safety education materials may be distributed by personnel making public appearances, by personnel employing traffic safety efforts, both via the internet or displayed to the public in the police facility lobby.