



City of Racine Police Department
Policy and Procedure

Number: 807

Table with 3 columns: Subject (Impounding of Motor Vehicles), Date Issued (8-23-85), Effective Date (05-13-11), Revision Number (4)

POLICY:

It is the policy of this Department to maintain an effective process for impounding motor vehicles recovered by our Department for any reason. As part of this impound process, an inventory search shall be conducted on every vehicle taken into our custody. This is done to ensure the safety of our personnel, and to provide reasonable protection of citizens' property in our custody.

PROCEDURE:
MEMBER/
ABANDONED
VEHICLES
OFFICER:

- After your decision to impound the vehicle has been made:
1. Complete a Property Receipt (RPD122).
a. Ensure that complete vehicle information is listed on the form.
b. Provide the yellow copy of it to the driver or owner of the vehicle (if that person is at the scene with the vehicle).
2. Make arrangements to have the vehicle towed to the impound lot.
3. Verify the registration on the motor vehicle checking that the vehicle identification number (VIN) on the vehicle matches the registration and the vehicle description itself.
a. If the VIN does not match the registration information, run the VIN separately to determine the particulars on the vehicle being impounded.
b. If the registration plates on the vehicle do not match the vehicle, list the registration number in the "Comments" section, not in the "License" section.
c. If there are no registration plates on the vehicle, leave the "License" section blank.
4. Complete Impound Lot Inventory Control Form (RPD105).
a. Complete the "Hold"-related fields, if there is a reason to not release the vehicle.
b. Completely fill out the form by checking any applicable boxes. (This form will be the official inventory record for the vehicle.)
c. Record the complaint number on the form.
5. When the vehicle is being towed, as soon as practical, meet the tow truck at the Impound Lot.
6. If the vehicle is of evidentiary value, an officer must follow the tow truck directly to the Impound Lot.
7. Upon arrival at the Impound Lot, direct the towing agency driver where to place the vehicle.
a. Request supervisor approval to place a vehicle in the heated processing bay at the impound lot.
b. Notify the Court Sergeant and Abandoned Vehicle Officer when a vehicle has been placed in the heated processing bay.
8. Once the vehicle is towed, review the tow bill for accuracy before signing it.
9. Retain one copy of the tow bill to turn in with the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form.
10. Do an Inventory Search of the contents of the vehicle:
a. To determine whether there is any personal property in the vehicle in need of protection from loss or damage while the vehicle is impounded.
b. To protect the Department against claims that property was lost, stolen or damaged.
c. To protect Department personnel and the public against injury or damage due to toxic, explosive, flammable, or otherwise hazardous substances that may be contained in the vehicle.

- d. The vehicle inventory process will include the inspection of the passenger compartment, glove compartment, trunk, and any closed containers within these areas.
11. Any contraband, paper money, perishable items, or extremely valuable items will be taken to the Racine Police Department and inventoried into the BEAST system per standard procedure.
12. Issue any applicable parking citations.
13. Complete any Uniform Traffic Citations (UTCs) including the narrative (minus the court date/time and date of service) that need to be issued to the owner upon claiming the vehicle (i.e. Non-Registration, Display of Unauthorized Registration, etc...).
 - a. Have the completed UTCs approved by your supervisor and attach them to the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form.
 - b. Note the ticket service requirement on the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form (in the "Comments" section).
14. If possible, lock the vehicle.
15. Place any vehicle keys into a key envelope and turn it in with other paperwork.
16. If there are any unusual circumstances surrounding the impounding of the vehicle (damage done during the towing process, unusual items recovered, etc...), complete a Supplementary Incident Report (PP95A).
17. Forward all completed paperwork to your supervisor.

NOTES:

- Once a vehicle has been entered into the property system (Impound Lot Inventory Control Form), the vehicle may only be released only through the Public Service Counter.
- Unit Commanders for investigators that have vehicles stored in the heated processing bay at the impound lot are responsible for ensuring that they are processed and moved as soon as practical.
- The Abandoned Vehicles Officer can complete most tasks involved in the impounding process that are not (by statute) only to be performed by sworn personnel. The Abandoned Vehicles Officer shall not be utilized for the recovery of stolen vehicles.

**EVIDENCE
TECHNICIAN:**

1. Prior to processing a vehicle, ensure that appropriate permission (consent, search warrant, etc...) has been obtained.
2. Inventory all items retrieved from the vehicle and ensure that they are documented properly in the BEAST system.
3. Upon completion of processing the vehicle, notify assigned supervisor or investigator and arrange for moving the vehicle (from the heated processing bay) to inside or outside storage depending upon circumstances.
4. Complete a Supplementary Incident Report (PP95A).
5. Forward all reports and completed BEAST records to your supervisor for review.

**SUPERVISOR/
SHIFT
COMMANDER:**

1. Approve or deny requests to place a vehicle in the heated storage bay at the impound lot.
2. Review all paperwork related to the incident for accuracy and completeness per Procedure #200.
3. Forward any citations and Impound Lot Inventory Control Forms, along with the tow bills and related documents, to the Public Service Counter.

**PUBLIC SERVICE
COUNTER
PERSONNEL:**

1. Upon receiving a completed Impound Lot Inventory Control Form:
 - a. Examine the accompanying tow bill and verify that its' information has been noted on the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form accurately.
 - b. Place the tow bill amount plus any surcharge on the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form.
 - c. Forward the tow bill to the Administrative Clerk.

- d. Retain a copy of the tow bill and place it in the vehicle file by "Make".
- e. When Courts returns the three remaining copies of the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form, attach those to the tow bill copy and refile them into the appropriate drawer.
2. If there were keys turned in with the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form, place them into a "key envelope" and file them by Complaint Number.
3. As necessary, assist Courts with the initial data entry portion of the impound process.
 - a. Enter the vehicle information into the Property module of Phoenix.
 - b. Place the unique control number that Phoenix provides onto the upper right corner of the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form in red ink only.
 - c. If the vehicle is being held for any reason mark "hold" in Phoenix and place an "H" on the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form.
 - d. Forward the pink copy of the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form to Courts for filing.
 - e. Retain and file the remaining three parts of the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form and file them by "Make" in the correct drawer.

COURTS:

1. Upon receipt of the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form from the Public Service Counter:
 - a. Enter the vehicle information into the Property module of Phoenix.
 - b. Place the unique control number that Phoenix provides onto the upper right corner of the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form in red ink only.
 - c. File the pink copy of the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form in the appropriate drawer by date of impoundment.
 - d. Forward the remaining three parts of the Impound Lot Inventory Control Form to the Public Service Counter for filing.
2. Maintain and monitor the vehicles taken in by the Racine Police Department Impound Lot.
3. Work with Health Department to tow cars on private property.
4. Maintain complete records on the history of each vehicle taken in by the Racine Police Department.

COMMUNICATIONS UNIT:

1. Upon request, contact the next available towing agency per the call-up list.
2. Complete any teletype requests for those members needing them as part of the vehicle impounding process.
3. If the vehicle being impounded is a stolen vehicle, ensure that Communications stolen vehicle protocols are followed.

RELATED PROCEDURES:

- [809 – Release or Disposal of Impounded Vehicles](#)
- [1201 – Property Inventory Excluding Vehicles](#)
- [1924 – Recovery of Motor Vehicles](#)
- [1925 – Snow Emergency Vehicle Removal](#)
- [1926 – Snowbound Vehicle Removal](#)
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