

HARRISONBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICIES AND EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR TOW COMPANIES

Qualifications:

A business can only have one tow company on the tow list for the Harrisonburg Police Department. That tow company must have a secure lot physically located within the city limits of Harrisonburg, VA, although large vehicles requiring use of a Class A Heavy Wrecker do not need to be stored within the city. Upon the sale/transfer of the business, the new owner shall have to make new application to be on the tow list. A City Business License is required.

There will be two classifications of equipment: Class B (Light Wreckers) and Class A (Heavy Wreckers). A list will be kept for each classification.

Tow companies must be available daily on a twenty-four (24) hour basis to tow and release vehicles. Five or more refusals to tow during the hours of 7:00PM to 7:00AM within 12 months will be treated as a violation of the towing policy. (Sec. 5-1-43.) [(1) Deliberate failure of a tow operator to respond to calls.] After three, the tow company will be contacted to see why tows/calls are being refused. Exception: Tow company is on another law enforcement requested tow at the time. Tows may contact the Traffic Supervisor of the Harrisonburg Police Department to provide notice of any extended absences from the city. The Traffic Supervisor will remove the tow company from the rotation for the date span provided.

Companies must have trained drivers, capable of handling all normal towing situations. Drivers must meet the requirements of Section 46.2-116 of the Code of Virginia.

A list of all drivers and a copy of their current Registration Document from DCJS shall be provided to HPD. Tow companies will update the Department when a driver is hired or ends employment from their company within 5 days of the effective date.

Tow truck drivers are required to have their tow truck driver registration document in their possession when driving a tow truck.

Companies must have a minimum of \$1,000,000 liability insurance coverage and also name the City of Harrisonburg as additional insured(s). Companies must also have a minimum of \$75,000 "garage keepers" insurance to cover damage to and larceny from towed vehicles.

All companies and Drivers shall be in compliance with Sections 46.2-116, 46.2-117, 46.2-118, and 46.2-324 of the Code of Virginia, as may be amended from time to time. Failure to maintain compliance will result in the removal of the company from the tow list.

Towing companies are required to comply with all Federal, State and local laws concerning licensing and operating of their equipment.

All equipment used by towing companies must be in good working order. HPD will inspect tow equipment when a company requests to be placed on the tow list, and companies on the list will be subject to inspections at any time thereafter. Inspections will be conducted by HPD Officers.

Call Procedure:

The Harrisonburg Police Department will maintain a tow company list through ECC. When a request is made, companies will be called in-turn. If your company is not available when called, the request will continue down the list until filled. (Sec. 5-1-41. - Rotation system)

Under normal conditions, tow vehicle response time anywhere in the city from the time of call should be preferably within 25 minutes, but no longer than 30 minutes. However, tow companies should make every effort to respond sooner to "in the roadway" crashes. When called, if a company does not think it can respond within these constraints, it should pass the responsibility to the next company on the list.

If a call is accepted by the tow company or an answering service on behalf of the tow company and the tow company fails to respond or cancels, it will be treated as a violation of the towing policy. (Sec. 5-1-43.) [(1) Deliberate failure of a tow operator to respond to calls.]

Occasionally, police will call for a tow and then have to cancel. If the tow is cancelled by HPD (through ECC), that tow company will remain "next" on the list. No fee shall be charged or collected by the tow company.

If more than one wrecker or a combination of different types of wreckers is needed for a situation, the tow company called can supply as many units as are requested by police for that request. If the tow company cannot handle the whole request, the next tow company on the list will be called to assist.

Companies are required to respond to the scene of an accident with the necessary equipment to remove litter and debris from the highway. Section 18.2-324 of the Code of Virginia requires the cleaning of the roadway by the wrecker company. This shall routinely be done at no additional cost. If circumstances warrant additional charges, they will be thoroughly documented and itemized.

Storage:

Companies must have a fenced in lot (at least 6 feet high) or garage area to store vehicles, located within the city limits. No lots outside of the City will be Grandfathered. (Sec. 5-1-37. - Storage and security of vehicles by authorized tow operators) Class A Heavy wrecker companies are exempt when it applies to a heavy towed vehicle.

Companies must be available 24 hours a day to return vehicles. Companies must have business hours, Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm, to allow for the inspection of records, equipment and location by HPD. ***(Companies that are on the City law enforcement tow list, involved in non-consensual towing operations shall be available to release the towed vehicle within two hours of being called, to the owner or owner's designee upon their request).***

Companies are reasonably responsible for any personal property and/or cargo left in towed and stored vehicles, as may otherwise be determined by law. Companies also accept reasonable responsibility for a towed vehicle from the time hookup starts, until such vehicle reaches the intended destination.

Fees:

Tow companies shall not exceed towing fees approved by the Tow Board and the Harrisonburg City Council.

Companies must provide a detailed copy of the tow bill to the owner/operator of the towed vehicle, which outlines all expenses incurred by the company. The company shall maintain a copy of all Police tow bills/receipts for two years for review by the Police Department at any time. Or for a time specified by the Laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Police Department will not be responsible for tow bills or storage fees from unclaimed abandoned vehicles. In these cases, the tow company has financial recourse through the Division of Motor Vehicles and the Mechanic's and Storage Lien detailed in the Code of Virginia.

Equipment/Facility Inspections:

A specified Harrisonburg Police Department Officer or other representative may, from time to time, cause to be made, random field inspection of any tow vehicle and equipment, and the business facility and storage lot of any towing service on the list for the City of Harrisonburg Police Department, to ensure compliance with the requirements of these guidelines. All firms must agree to this inspection to remain on the rotation list.

CLASS A (HEAVY WRECKERS): used for towing large trucks, road tractors and trailers, etc. (towing vehicles of an unlimited gross vehicle weight)

- a. One hundred (100) feet or more of 1/2 inch or larger cable on each drum.
- b. Air brakes so constructed as to lock wheels automatically upon failure.
- c. Towing and removal capacity of 10,000 to 80,000 pounds.
- d. The standards listed in (e-1) under Class B (Light Wreckers) below.

CLASS B (LIGHT WRECKERS): used for towing passenger cars, motorcycles, pickup trucks, small trailers, etc. (towing vehicles of gross vehicle weight of 26,000 pounds or less)

- a. Each company must have a rollback and a crane recovery wrecker. Car transporter type wreckers are permissible only if tow companies have both previously mentioned wreckers.
- b. The tow truck chassis shall have a minimum manufacturer's capacity of at least 10,000 GVWR.
- c. A boom capacity and individual power winch pulling capacity not less than the manufacturer's specifications.
- d. One hundred (100) feet or more of 3/8 inch or larger cable. (Rollbacks exempt from length requirement)
- e. Dual rear wheels
- f. Dollies, scotch blocks, and snatch block. (Dollies excluded for Heavy Trucks)
- g. A wheelbase sufficient to safely handle towed vehicles.

- h. At least one (1) five (5) pound dioxide (DO) fire extinguisher. The fire extinguisher must be designed and constructed and maintained to permit visual determination of its charged status (gauge).
- i. Installed Amber colored light- bar, or other approved emergency lighting equipment, mounted on the highest part of the vehicle.
- j. One (1) heavy- duty street broom and one (1) shovel
- k. Gas and oil absorbent at least 10 pounds on the truck.
- l. Each vehicle shall be equipped with its own mobile telephone or two-way radio that is capable of communications with the tow company's base station.
- m. Skates for rollbacks or liquid substance made for sliding the tire of the towed car. This is to prevent damage to the drive trail when keys are not available for the towed vehicle.

Each of the wreckers listed above shall be standard vehicles originally designed and built as tow trucks and shall not be pick-up trucks with towing slings in the body. An exception to the above allows a vehicle suitable to retrieve a vehicle from "off road" such as rugged terrain, woods, etc., to be utilized for this purpose. This exception only applies in recovery of the vehicle and moving to a location where it can be safely towed by one of the approved tow trucks.

TOW FEES

Basic law enforcement tow (accident and cleanup), including but not limited to sweeping up and removing glass and vehicle and its parts from roadway.	\$275.00 (day)
Basic law enforcement tow (non-accident). Requires vehicle to be towed to tower's storage site.	\$200.00 (day) / \$225.00 (after hours)
Law enforcement required second tow (additional fee if vehicle must be towed to law enforcement agency, then towed to tower's storage site once released).	\$75.00
Disabled vehicles.	\$150.00 (day) / \$175.00 (after hours)
Additional cleanup, including cleanup requiring more than five (5) gallons of absorbent, removal of trees, or removal of other excessively large items.	\$25.00 per extra five (5) gallons of absorbent / Variable rates for other work
After hours release/gate fee.	\$45.00
Third/subsequent visit to vehicle (first two (2) free) between 8:00AM and 5:00PM, Monday-Friday.	\$20.00 per visit
Second tow truck required. Exception: Second tow truck is for a second vehicle requiring an additional DMV form.	\$100.00 (day) / \$200.00 (after hours)
Daily vehicle storage fee, calculated per 24-hour period. No charge if picked up within twenty-four (24) hours of arrival at storage site. Exception: Charges begin immediately for 3 or 30 day statutory holds.	\$50.00 per unit
Cutting off locks (boats/trailers).	\$25.00
Tarp fee (if tarp required by City Code).	\$35.00
Administrative fees – after third business day with proof of work.	\$150.00
Winching/recovery fees.	\$85.00 (20-74 feet) / \$150.00 (75 feet or +)
Overtured vehicles/cutting of trees.	\$125.00 per hour or portion of hour after 1 st hour
Unlock fee/no keys with shift override.	\$75.00
Standby fee (after first hour).	\$75.00 per hour (up to \$300.00)
Off-road recovery fee (wrecker must be off of roadway, i.e., gravel/concrete/blacktop).	\$150.00 per hour
Disabled vehicle towed outside the City at owner's request.	\$4.50 per mile
Cleanup of tow equipment from automotive fluid leaks coming from the towed vehicle.	\$70.00