

TITLE 8 - MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC

Chapter 2 - Abandoned Vehicles

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8.2.1 Abandonment of Vehicles Prohibited.

No person shall leave unattended any motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer or mobile home on any public street or highway or private or public property in the Town of Grafton for such time and under such circumstances as to cause the vehicle to reasonably appear to have been abandoned. Whenever any such vehicle has been left unattended on any street or highway in the Town of Grafton or upon private or public property without the permission of the property owner or other person charged with the lawful jurisdiction thereof for more than 72 hours, the vehicle shall be deemed abandoned and constitutes a public nuisance.

8.2.2 Definitions.

For purposes of this chapter, the following definitions shall be applicable:

- (A) Street.
Any public highway or alley and shall mean the entire width between the boundary lines of any public way where any part thereof is open to the public for purposes of vehicular traffic.
- (B) Unattended.
Unmoved from its location with no obvious sign of continuous human use.
- (C) Vehicle.
A motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer or mobile home, whether or not such vehicle is registered under Wisconsin law.

8.2.3 Presumptions.

For purposes of this chapter, the following irrebuttable presumptions shall apply:

- (A) A vehicle shall be presumed unattended if it is found in the same position 72 hours after issuance of a notice, traffic ticket or citation and if such notice, traffic ticket or citation remains placed upon the windshield during said 72 hours.
- (B) Any vehicle left unattended for more than 72 hours on any public street or public ground or left unattended for more than 72 hours on private property without the consent of the property owner is deemed abandoned and constitutes a nuisance, provided that the vehicle shall not be deemed abandoned under this subsection if left unattended on private property outside of public view and enclosed within a building.

8.2.4 Exceptions.

This chapter shall not apply to a vehicle in an enclosed building or a vehicle stored on a premises licensed for storage of junk or junked vehicles and fully in compliance with Town zoning regulations, or to a vehicle parked in a paid parking lot or space where the required fee has been paid.

8.2.5 Removal and Impoundment of Vehicles.

Any vehicle in violation of this chapter shall be removed and impounded until lawfully claimed or disposed of under the provisions of Sec. 8.2.6.

8.2.6 Procedure For Removal, Storage and Reclaiming of Vehicles.

8.2.6.01 Applicability

The provisions of this chapter shall apply to the removal, storage, notice, reclaiming or disposal of abandoned vehicles as defined in this chapter.

8.2.6.02 Removal

- (A) Any Town Supervisor who discovers any motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer or mobile home on any public street or highway or private or public property in the Town of Grafton which has been abandoned shall cause the vehicle to be removed to a suitable place of impoundment.
- (B) Upon removal of the vehicle, the Supervisor shall notify the Town Chairperson or his designee of the abandonment and of the location of the impounded vehicle.

8.2.6.03 Storage and Reclaiming

Any abandoned vehicle which is determined by the Town Chairperson or his designee to be abandoned shall be retained in storage for a period of 14 days after certified mail notice, as hereinafter provided, has been sent to the Wisconsin titled owner and/or secured party of record with the Wisconsin Division of Motor Vehicles, except that if the Town Chairperson or his designee determines an abandoned vehicle to have a value of less than \$100, or that the cost of towing and storage charges for impoundment will exceed the value of the vehicle, it may be junked or sold by direct sale to a licensed salvage dealer after having been retained in storage for a period of 10 days and after certified mail notice, as hereinafter provided, has been sent to the Wisconsin titled owner or secured party of record with the Wisconsin Division of Motor Vehicles, provided that it is first determined that the vehicle is not reported stolen or wanted for evidence or other reason. All substantially complete vehicles in excess of 19 model years of age shall be deemed as a having value in excess of \$100. Any such vehicle which may be lawfully reclaimed may be released upon the payment of all accrued charges, including towing, storage and notice charges, and upon presentation of the vehicle title or other satisfactory evidence to the Town Chairperson or his designee to prove an ownership or secured party interest in said vehicle.

State Law Reference: Sec. 175.25, Wis. Stats.

8.2.6.04 Notice to Owner or Secured Party

- (A) Certified mail notice, as referred to herein, shall notify the Wisconsin titled owner of the abandoned vehicle, if any, and/or the secured party of record with the Wisconsin Division of Motor Vehicles, if any, of the following:
 - (1) That the vehicle has been deemed abandoned and impounded by the Town of Grafton;
 - (2) The determined value of the abandoned vehicle;
 - (3) If the cost of towing and storage costs will exceed the determined value of the vehicle;
 - (4) That if the vehicle is not wanted for evidence or other reason, the vehicle may be reclaimed upon the payment of all accrued charges, including towing, storage and notice charges, within 14 days of the

date of notice, unless the vehicle has been determined to have a value less than \$100 or that the cost of towing and storage charges for impoundment will exceed the value of the vehicle, in which case the vehicle may be reclaimed within 10 days upon the payment of the aforesaid charges; and

- (5) That the owner or aforesaid secured party may, upon request, be granted a hearing relating to the determinations made with respect to said vehicle within the period that such vehicle may be reclaimed.

8.2.7 Sale of Vehicles.

Any abandoned vehicle impounded by the Town which has not been reclaimed or junked or sold by direct sale to a licensed salvage dealer pursuant to the provisions of this chapter may be sold by public auction sale or public sale calling for the receipt of sealed bids. A Class 1 notice including the description of the vehicles, the name(s) and address(es) of the Wisconsin titled owner and secured party of record, if known, and the time of sale shall be published before the sale.

8.2.8 Report of Sale or Disposal.

Within five days after the direct sale or disposal of a vehicle as provided for herein, the Town Constable or his designee shall advise the State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Division of Motor Vehicles, of such sale or disposal on a form supplied by said Division. A copy of the form shall be given to the purchaser of the vehicle enabling the purchaser to obtain a regular certificate of title for the vehicle. The purchaser shall have 10 days to remove the vehicle from the storage area but shall pay a reasonable storage fee established by the Town for each day the vehicle remains in storage after the second business day subsequent to the sale date. Ten days after the sale the purchaser shall forfeit all interest in the vehicle and the vehicle shall be deemed to be abandoned and may be sold again. Any listing of vehicles to be sold by the Town shall be made available to any interested person or organization who or which makes a written request for such list to the Town Chairperson. The Town Chairperson may charge a reasonable fee for the list.

8.2.9 Owner Responsible for Abandonment and Costs.

8.2.9.01 Owner Responsible

The owner of any abandoned vehicle, except a stolen vehicle, is responsible for the abandonment and all costs of impounding and disposing of the vehicle. Costs not covered from the sale of the vehicle may be recovered in a civil action by the Town against the owner.

8.2.9.02 Law Enforcement Exception

Payment of removal and impoundment costs is not required when the vehicle has been impounded for purposes of a law enforcement investigation.

8.2.10 Issuance of Citations.

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8.2.10.01

The Town Chairperson, and any such other person as the Town Board may authorize, may issue a citation to the owner of any vehicle which violates this Chapter.

8.2.11 Penalties.

Any violation of this Chapter may be punishable by forfeiture of not less than \$100.00 nor more than \$500.00, plus costs of prosecution, including reasonable attorneys' fees.

8.2.12 Conflicts With Other Provisions.

In the event of any conflict between this chapter and any other provisions of this Code, this chapter shall control.

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