
Oregon State Board of Towing



Compliance Report

To: Oregon State Board of Towing Board Members

From: Torey McCullough, Board Administrator

Date: September 9, 2025

Trends:

1. Operating without a tow business certificate:

Board investigations are finding a significant number of tow vehicles registered to one tow company but operated by a second tow company. Not all of the second tow companies are registered with the Oregon Secretary of State, Corporation Division.

Some, but not all, of the scenarios are two different companies owned by the same individual.

2. Failure to provide required information to the vehicle owner:

There is an increase number of complaints alleging towers are failing to provide the signed authorization, pre-tow photos, or financial statements to the vehicle owner upon request or in a timely manner or prior to intervention by the Board.

In one scenario, the tow company is telling vehicle owners that the request may take up to 72 hours; a common excuse is that the "manager" is not available to respond to the request. There are several complaints that will be reviewed by the Board when the delay resulted in a Board complaint.

3. Failure to provide exact change complaints.

Towers are refusing or failing to provide exact change as required, and there is an increase in complaints of towers not providing itemized receipts.

4. PPI and signed authorization

Substantiated PPI and signed authorization complaints have drastically reduced from several complaints a day, to a couple of complaints a week since July.

5. Conversion of tows without authorization

- There is an increase in “roadside assistance” requests being converted to a private party tow, without permission of the vehicle owner.
- While some of these towing events may not meet the “roadside assistance” criteria of the service provider, the perception and possible reality is that a tower is converting the dispatched service to a “private tow”, without authorization from the vehicle owner, with the vehicle owner responsible for the towing fee without consent.
- Under investigation are several complaints that some of these towers are being paid for the roadside assistance service and for the private tow services.

6. Rates and fee complaints

The rate and fees complaints are in one of two categories:

- a. OSP or ODOT or other agency authorized tows for hazards and abandoneds.
- b. Conversion tows – when roadside assistance was requested, and the dispatch converted to a “private tow” without the consent of the vehicle owner, or when the vehicle owner was not given the option to request a preferred tower.

Complaints and Investigations:

A significant number of complaints continue to demonstrate violation of Oregon’s laws by the vehicle owner, or the complainant’s misunderstanding of Oregon’s laws. For these reasons, the Board’s investigation reports and complaints are not available to the public unless required by law.

To minimize the expense of investigations, Board staff initially contacts towers via email with a request for documents demonstrating compliance with Oregon’s laws, which may include:

1. Signed Authorization
2. Pre-Tow photos
3. Invoices and Cost sheet
4. Insurance Rider
5. Tow Agreement for a property location

Most of the complaint issues can be resolved based on the documentation.

However, trends are beginning to develop which the Board should discuss:

1. Failure to respond in a timely manner;
2. Failure of a tower to provide all requested information.

Direction of the Board:

1. Appropriate escalation of investigations:
 - a. Email Request
 - b. Formal Letter
 - c. Possible option: Subpoena Duces Tecum
2. Failure to respond to a formal request is a response.
Should failure to respond, or to fully respond, be considered a "no-contest" response for the purposes of the investigation?
3. Disciplinary action for failure to cooperate or fully comply with investigation requests