

FIRST REGULAR SESSION
[TRULY AGREED TO AND FINALLY PASSED]

SENATE BILL NO. 314

92ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2003

1190S.01T

AN ACT

To repeal section 304.157 as enacted by senate bill no. 17, ninetieth general assembly, first regular session, relating to abandoned property.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 304.157 as enacted by senate bill no. 17, ninetieth general assembly, first regular session, is repealed, to read as follows:

[304.157. 1. If a person abandons property, as defined in section 304.001, on any real property owned by another without the consent of the owner or person in possession of the property, at the request of the person in possession of the real property, any member of the state highway patrol, state water patrol, sheriff, or other law enforcement officer within his jurisdiction may authorize a towing company to remove such abandoned property from the property in the following circumstances:

(1) The abandoned property is left unattended for more than forty-eight hours;
or

(2) In the judgment of a law enforcement officer, the abandoned property constitutes a safety hazard or unreasonably interferes with the use of the real property by the person in possession.

2. The owner of real property or lessee or property or security manager in lawful possession of the real property may authorize a towing company to remove abandoned property or property parked in a restricted or assigned area without authorization by a law enforcement officer only when the owner, lessee or property or security manager of the real property is present. A property or security manager must be a full-time employee of a business entity. An authorization to tow under this subsection may be made only under any of the following circumstances:

(1) There is displayed, in plain view at all entrances to the property, a sign not less than seventeen by twenty-two inches in size, with lettering not less than one inch in height, prohibiting public parking and indicating that unauthorized abandoned property or property improperly parked in a restricted or assigned area will be removed

at the owner's expense, disclosing the maximum fee for all charges related to towing and storage, and containing the telephone number of the local traffic law enforcement agency where information can be obtained; or a twenty-four-hour staffed emergency information telephone number, other than the number of a towing company, by which the owner of the abandoned property or improperly parked property may call to receive information regarding the location of such owner's property; or

(2) The abandoned property is on private property and lacks an engine, transmission, wheels, tires, doors, windshield or any other major part or equipment necessary to operate safely on the highways, the owner or lessee of the private property has notified the city police or county sheriff, as appropriate, and ninety-six hours have elapsed since that notification; or

(3) The abandoned property is left unattended on private property, and the owner, lessee or agent of the real property in lawful possession of real property has notified the appropriate law enforcement agency, and ten days have elapsed since that notification.

3. Pursuant to this section, any owner or lessee in lawful possession of real property that requests a towing company to tow abandoned property without authorization from a law enforcement officer shall within one hour of the tow file an abandoned property report with the appropriate law enforcement agency where the property is located. The report shall contain the following:

(1) The year, model, make and abandoned property identification number of the property and the owner and any lienholders, if known;

(2) A description of any damage to the abandoned property noted by owner, lessee or property or security manager in possession of the real property;

(3) The license plate or registration number and the state of issuance, if available;

(4) The physical location of the property and the reason for requesting the property to be towed;

(5) The date the report is completed;

(6) The signature and printed name, address and phone number of the owner, lessee or property or security manager in possession of the real property;

(7) The towing company's name and address;

(8) The signature of the towing operator;

(9) The name of the law enforcement agency notified of the abandoned property.

The department of revenue may design and make available to police agencies throughout the state a uniform "Authorization to Tow" form. The form shall contain lines for time, date, location, descriptive information of the vehicle, reason for towing, the tow operator and company and signature of authorizing officer. The cost of the forms shall be

determined by the department of revenue. The completed form shall be issued by the authorizing officer to the tow operator for that company's records as proof of authorization to tow a particular vehicle.

4. The law enforcement agency receiving such abandoned property report must record the date the abandoned property report is filed with such agency and within five days of such filing make an inquiry into the national crime information center and any statewide Missouri law enforcement computer system to determine if the abandoned property has been reported as stolen. The law enforcement agency shall enter the information pertaining to the towed property into the statewide enforcement computer system. The department of revenue may design and sell to towing companies informational brochures outlining owner or lessee of real property obligations pursuant to this section.

5. Neither the law enforcement officer nor anyone having custody of abandoned property under his direction shall be liable for any damage to such abandoned property occasioned by a removal authorized by this section other than damages occasioned by negligence or by willful or wanton acts or omissions.

6. Any towing company which tows abandoned property without authorization from a law enforcement officer pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection 2 of this section shall within one hour of the tow report the event and the circumstances to the local law enforcement agency where the abandoned property report was filed.

7. The law enforcement agency receiving notification that abandoned property has been towed by a towing company shall record the date the property was towed and shall forward a copy of the abandoned property report to the director of revenue.

8. If any owner or lessee of real property authorizes the removal of abandoned property pursuant to subsection 2 of this section and such property is so removed and no sign is displayed prior to such removal as required pursuant to subsection 2 of this section, then the owner or lessee shall be deemed guilty of a class C misdemeanor.]