



PLACER COUNTY GRAND JURY

Roseville Police Code Enforcement

Improperly Parked or Abandoned Vehicles

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Summary

The Placer County Grand Jury undertook an investigation into the Roseville Police Department's (RPD) response to citizen complaints regarding improperly parked or abandoned vehicles on Roseville city streets.

The RPD Abandoned Vehicle Program does not typically involve sworn peace officers. This function is carried out primarily by Community Service Officers (CSO) and police cadets. As the result of the interviews and examination of documentation, the Grand Jury determined the RPD was able to record, process and resolve abandoned vehicle complaints in a timely manner. Over 90% of calls were settled without a vehicle being cited or towed.

The Grand Jury concluded that the Roseville Municipal Code pertaining to abandoned vehicles is being administered by the RPD in a competent and professional manner.

Background

The Grand Jury reviewed the RPD's reporting, processing and resolution of complaints regarding improperly parked or abandoned vehicles.

California Vehicle Code (CVC) and local ordinances govern parking on residential streets. Vehicles cannot obstruct rights-of-way or be inoperable. The Roseville Municipal Code explicitly requires that vehicles parked on residential streets be moved every 72 hours.

RPD's Abandoned Vehicle Program is designed to deal with these complaints. Residents may report complaints to the Abandoned Vehicle Hotline or the City of Roseville's website. Complaints may also be made to Code Enforcement which forwards the reports to RPD for resolution.

Under the supervision of a patrol sergeant, cadets perform a variety of routine and progressively more difficult non-sworn duties. The Police Cadet Program is a paid, part-time apprenticeship to prepare college students for a law enforcement career. The CSO is a specialized, professional, full-time career position and performs a wide variety of technical support duties in the police department.

Citizen complaints are checked daily and the information is entered into the 72-Hour Tow Database. Vehicle license numbers received over the phone or internet are always checked against the Stolen Vehicle System. If the vehicle in question was reported stolen, it is immediately reported to Dispatch so that it can be quickly checked, processed and recovered.

RPD CSOs or cadets first check and mark the vehicle. They return at least three days later to see if the vehicle has been moved. If it has not been moved, they will post a citation on the vehicle.

The citation is also mailed to the registered owner, giving 10 days to move the vehicle. If the vehicle has not been moved by the end of the 10-day period, it will be towed and stored.

The process for having an abandoned vehicle removed may require a few weeks.

Methodology

The Grand Jury

- interviewed RPD staff;
- reviewed Roseville Municipal Code;
- examined the RPD Community Services Officer's Training Manual, Chapter 14, 72-Hour Tow/Inoperable Vehicles;
- reviewed the abandoned vehicle reporting procedures available on the RPD section of the City of Roseville's website;
- examined the RPD computer generated Abandoned Vehicle Log, June-October 2015 and June-October 2016.

Facts

- The RPD CSO Training Manual, Chapter 14, provides detailed procedures for reporting, processing, documenting and resolving issues regarding abandoned vehicles in Roseville.

- Grand Jury analysis of the Abandoned Vehicle Logs revealed the following:

Category	6/3/2015 – 10/31/2015				6/3/2016 – 10/31/2016			
	<u># of Complaints</u>	<u>Range of Days to Resolve</u>	<u>Average # of Days</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u># of Complaints</u>	<u>Range of Days to Resolve</u>	<u>Average # of Days</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Complaints Logged *	988				1323			
The numbers below represent service calls with duplicate complaints removed:								
Gone on Arrival	377	0 – 36	7.6	57%	370	0- 34	9.6	43%
Moved	231	0 – 44	9.1	35%	382	2-47	12.3	44%
Cited	20	0 – 22	8.9	3%	25	3-26	10.2	3%
Towed	20	1 – 23	8.6	3%	21	3-21	9.8	3%
In Compliance	16			2%	61			7%
Total Vehicles Involved	664				859			

* This number includes duplicate complaint calls

- During the sample period in 2016, the RPD logged 1,323 complaints relating to 859 improperly parked or abandoned vehicles. For the sample period in 2015, RPD received 988 complaints involving 664 vehicles. Based on the annualized 2016 data, RPD could receive over 3,000 complaints that must be processed and resolved each year.
- On the page of the RPD website detailing instructions for reporting an abandoned vehicle, the following statement is made: “The process for having an abandoned vehicle removed may require a few weeks.” Analyzed data indicates on average this process takes less than two weeks.
- The RPD resolves the vast majority of complaints without resorting to citations or towing the vehicles. Well under 10% of complaints result in these sanctions.
- The logging, processing and resolving of abandoned vehicle complaints is mainly carried out by non-sworn CSOs and police cadets. Sworn police officers are seldom involved in the process unless a CSO requests their support.
- If a name and phone number are included in the complaint, RPD will provide the resolution to the complainant.

- The RPD does not generate management reviews or inspection reports regarding the RPD Abandoned Vehicle Program. The computer software that generates the Abandoned Vehicle Log does not contain algorithms that can produce summaries, performance data or management information.

Findings

The Grand Jury found:

- F1. During the five-month period reviewed in 2016, the RPD resolved complaints on an average of 10 days, which is under the “few weeks” noted on the RPD website. This figure is an average; the actual time required varied from one day to several weeks.
- F2. The 72-Hour Tow Database software is not capable of providing basic information for managers, such as the number of incidents, workload, contacts made, status of ongoing complaints, time and personnel involved and the cost of each operation.

Conclusion

The RPD Abandoned Vehicle Program must yield precedence to solving crimes and the many other activities performed by RPD personnel contributing to public safety. However, it is clear from the number of complaints that improperly parked vehicles are a common nuisance plaguing the public and consume considerable department resources. The availability of improved management reports would permit more personnel and budget resources to be devoted to higher priority issues.

The RPD’s database allows the program to function but is seriously deficient as a record of activities and as a management tool. Even if careful efforts could overcome the problem of unreliable data, the logging system lacks the important capability to generate management reports. While the data can be analyzed, it is an arduous and difficult process which would be a poor use of managers’ time and efforts.

These are not trivial deficiencies. Accurate information is the fundamental prerequisite for sound management decision-making involving budgeting, personnel and performance evaluation. Without this capacity it is not possible to determine the cost of the activities or the performance of the program; nor can managers make informed efforts at reform.

Only a thorough review reveals potential issues which call for explicit solutions. As noted in the chart, more than 40% of the complaints concluded by a visit revealing the offending vehicle had already been moved. This constitutes a significant expenditure of resources. Data analysis also reveals that many street names showed up in numerous complaints. Even in the short periods

reviewed by the Grand Jury, some locations appeared in numerous complaints, suggesting that certain locations may justify posting parking regulations rather than conducting repeated visits.

In spite of their technical shortcomings, the Grand Jury's investigation determined the City of Roseville's Municipal Code pertaining to abandoned vehicles is being administered by the Roseville Police Department in a competent and professional manner.

Recommendations

The Grand Jury makes the following recommendation:

- R1.** Update or replace the database program to provide for a better management tool.

Request for Responses:

	<u>Recommendations Requiring Response</u>	<u>Response Due Date</u>
Chief Daniel Hahn Chief of Police, Roseville Police Department 1051 Junction Blvd. Roseville, CA 95678	R1	August 31, 2017

Copies Sent to:

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