



New abandoned vehicle ordinance: Wood River Police Chief Wells provides information to public

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
August 21 2018 5:06 PM

WOOD RIVER - Wood River Police Chief Brad Wells provided information to the media Tuesday afternoon about an Aug. 6, 2018, ordinance change approved by the Wood River Mayor and City Council in regard to abandoned vehicles.

Chief Wells said with the new ordinance the Wood River Police Department will start taking enforcement action on the abandoned vehicles within city limits. The purpose of this press release is an attempt to gain voluntary compliance on the updated ordinance, he said.

This is a summary of the new Wood River ordinance:

An abandoned vehicle is defined in the updated ordinance as follows: **ABANDONED VEHICLE.** Any vehicle in a state of disrepair, rendering the vehicle incapable of being driven in its condition or any other vehicle that has not been moved or used for seven (7) consecutive days or more and is apparently deserted and/or any vehicle without current license plate or which is not operable.

As part of the ordinance, no person shall park, store, leave, or permit the parking, storing, or leaving of any motor vehicle or any vehicle of any kind which is in an abandoned, wrecked, unlicensed, inoperative, rusted, junked, dismantled, or partially dismantled condition whether attended or not, upon any street, roadway or public or private property within the City for a period of time in excess of seven (7) days. The presence of an abandoned, wrecked, dismantled, inoperative, rusted, junked or partially dismantled vehicle or parts thereof, upon any street, roadway or private or public

property is hereby declared a public nuisance which may be abated as such in accordance with the provisions of this chapter. This section shall not apply to any vehicle enclosed within a building on private property.

On August 17, 2018, the police department will start tagging abandoned vehicles within the city limits. The vehicles have already been identified by the Building & Zoning Department.

Any vehicle still left abandoned after the 7-day period will be towed from its location and will be stored, until the vehicle is redeemed by the owner. A cost for storage will be added to the tow for redemption.

Abandoned vehicles cause a larger set of problems and are often unregistered and may have defaced identification numbers. Abandoned vehicles attract vandals, may be used for drug drops, accumulate refuse, and may be used as shelters by the homeless. Some motor vehicle parts contain hazardous substances, in addition to gasoline and other fluids, that must be properly disposed of. Old vans and truck trailers may be filled with trash or hazardous waste, then left on roadsides. Individual cars dumped on city streets may contain car parts or other junk.

Related problems with abandoned vehicles include the following drug dealing illegal auto repair and sales, insurance fraud, junk vehicles intentionally kept on private property, nuisance parking, scrap metal theft, unlicensed vehicles, unregistered vehicles, and vehicle theft.

"As previously stated, the tagging of vehicles is in hopes for voluntary compliance within the city limits," Chief Wells said. "If the vehicle remains abandoned, the vehicle will be towed. This action is to enhance the quality of life for those who live, work, or visit the City of Wood River."