

**321.90 Disposal of abandoned motor vehicles.**

1. *Garagekeepers and abandoned motor vehicles.* Any motor vehicle left in a garage operated for commercial purposes after the period for which the vehicle was to remain on the premises shall, after notice by certified mail to the last known registered owner of the vehicle addressed to the owner's last known address of record to reclaim the vehicle within ten days of the date of the notice, be deemed an abandoned motor vehicle unless reclaimed by the owner within such ten-day period or the owner notifies the garagekeeper in writing within such period of time that such vehicle is not an abandoned motor vehicle and shall be reported by the garagekeeper to the police authority. If the identity or address of the last registered owner of the motor vehicle cannot be determined, the vehicle shall be deemed an abandoned motor vehicle on the eleventh day after the period for which the vehicle was to remain on the premises unless reclaimed by the owner within the ten-day period or the owner notifies the garagekeeper in writing within such period of time that such vehicle is not an abandoned motor vehicle and shall be reported by the garagekeeper to the police authority. All abandoned motor vehicles left in garages may be taken into custody by a police authority upon the request of the garagekeeper and sold in accordance with the procedures set forth in [section 321.89, subsection 5](#), unless the motor vehicle is reclaimed. The proceeds of the sale shall be first applied to the garagekeeper's charges for towing and storage, and any surplus proceeds shall be distributed in accordance with [section 321.89, subsection 5](#). Nothing in [this section](#) shall be construed to impair any lien of a garagekeeper under the laws of this state, or the right of a garagekeeper to foreclose the garagekeeper's lien, provided that a garagekeeper shall be deemed to have abandoned the garagekeeper's artisan lien when such vehicle is taken into custody by the police authority. For the purposes of [this section](#) "garagekeeper" means any operator of a parking place or establishment, motor vehicle storage facility, or establishment for the servicing, repair, or maintenance of motor vehicles.

2. *Disposal to demolisher.*

a. Any person, firm, corporation, or unit of government upon whose property or in whose possession is found any abandoned motor vehicle, or any person being the owner of a motor vehicle whose title certificate is faulty, lost, or destroyed and is thereby unable to transfer title to the motor vehicle, may apply to the police authority of the jurisdiction in which the motor vehicle is situated for authority to sell, give away, or otherwise dispose of the motor vehicle to a demolisher.

b. The application shall set out the name and address of the applicant, and the year, make, model, and vehicle identification number of the motor vehicle, if ascertainable, together with any other identifying features, and shall contain a concise statement of the facts surrounding the abandonment, or a statement that the title of the motor vehicle is lost or destroyed, or the reasons for the defect of title in the owner. The applicant shall execute an affidavit stating that the facts alleged are true and that no material fact has been withheld. An order for disposal obtained pursuant to [section 555B.8, subsection 3](#), satisfies the application requirements of this paragraph.

c. If the police authority finds that the application is executed in proper form, and shows that the motor vehicle has been abandoned upon the property of the applicant, or if it shows that the motor vehicle is not abandoned but that the applicant appears to be the rightful owner, the police authority shall follow appropriate notification procedures as set forth in [section 321.89, subsection 3](#), except that in the case of an order for disposal obtained pursuant to [section 555B.8, subsection 3](#), no notification is required.

d. If the abandoned motor vehicle is not reclaimed in accordance with [section 321.89, subsection 3](#), or no lienholder objects to the disposal in the case of an owner-applicant, the police authority shall give the applicant a certificate of authority allowing the applicant to obtain a junking certificate for the motor vehicle. The applicant shall make application for a junking certificate to the county treasurer within thirty days of receipt of the certificate of authority and surrender the certificate of authority in lieu of the certificate of title. The demolisher shall accept the junking certificate in lieu of the certificate of title to the motor vehicle.

e. Notwithstanding any other provisions of [this section](#) and [sections 321.89](#) and [321.91](#),

any person, firm, corporation, or unit of government upon whose property or in whose possession is found any abandoned motor vehicle, or any person being the owner of a motor vehicle whose title certificate is faulty, lost, or destroyed, may dispose of such motor vehicle to a demolisher for junk without a title and without the notification procedures of [section 321.89, subsection 3](#), if the motor vehicle lacks an engine or two or more wheels or other structural part which renders the vehicle totally inoperable. The police authority shall give the applicant a certificate of authority. The owner shall apply to the county treasurer for a junking certificate within thirty days of receipt of the certificate of authority and shall surrender the certificate of authority in lieu of the certificate of title.

*f.* The owner of an abandoned motor vehicle and all lienholders shall no longer have any right, title, claim, or interest in or to the motor vehicle; and no court in any case in law or equity shall recognize any right, title, claim, or interest of any owner or lienholders after the disposal of the motor vehicle to a demolisher.

*g.* Any proceeds from the sale of an abandoned motor vehicle to a demolisher under [this section](#), by one other than the owner of the vehicle, except the sale of a vehicle pursuant to an order for disposal obtained pursuant to [section 555B.8, subsection 3](#), shall first be applied to that person's expenses in effecting the sale, including storage, towing, and disposal charges, and any surplus shall be distributed in accordance with [section 321.89, subsection 5](#). The proceeds from the sale of a vehicle disposed of pursuant to [section 555B.8, subsection 3](#), shall be distributed in accordance with [section 555B.9](#).

*3. Duties of demolishers.*

*a.* Any demolisher who purchases or otherwise acquires an abandoned motor vehicle for junk under the provisions of [this section](#) shall junk, scrap, wreck, dismantle, or demolish such motor vehicle. A demolisher shall not junk, scrap, wreck, dismantle, or demolish a vehicle until the demolisher has obtained the junking certificate issued for the vehicle.

*b.* A demolisher shall keep an accurate and complete record of all motor vehicles purchased or received by the demolisher in the course of the demolisher's business. These records shall contain the name and address of the person from whom each motor vehicle was purchased or received and the date when the purchases or receipts occurred. The records shall be open for inspection by any police authority at any time during normal business hours. Any record required by [this section](#) shall be kept by the demolisher for at least one year after the transaction to which it applies.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §321.90]

[88 Acts, ch 1138, §12 – 14; 95 Acts, ch 118, §14, 15; 2005 Acts, ch 179, §128; 2008 Acts, ch 1018, §19](#)

Referred to in [§8A.323, 321.89, 321.91, 555B.9](#)

Section not amended; internal reference changes applied