

321.52 Out-of-state sales — junked, dismantled, wrecked, or salvage vehicles.

1. When a vehicle is sold outside the state for purposes other than for junk, the owner, dealer or otherwise, shall detach the registration plates and registration card and shall indicate on the registration card the name and address of the foreign purchaser or transferee over the person's signature. Unless the registration plates are legally attached to another vehicle, the owner shall surrender the registration plates and registration card to the county treasurer, who shall cancel the records, destroy the registration plates, and forward the registration card to the department. The department shall make a notation on the records of the out-of-state sale and, after a reasonable period, may destroy the files for that particular vehicle. The department is not authorized to make a refund of annual registration fees on a vehicle sold out of state unless it receives the registration card completed as provided in [this section](#).

2. *a.* The purchaser or transferee of a motor vehicle subject to registration for which a certificate of title is issued which is sold for scrap or junk shall surrender the certificate of title, properly endorsed and signed by the previous owner, to any county treasurer, and shall apply for a junking certificate from the county treasurer, within thirty days after assignment of the certificate of title, except when the vehicle is disposed of pursuant to paragraph "b". The county treasurer shall issue to such person without fee a junking certificate. A junking certificate shall authorize the holder to possess, transport, or transfer by endorsement the ownership of the junked vehicle. A certificate of title shall not again be issued for the vehicle subsequent to the issuance of a junking certificate except as provided in [subsection 3](#). The county treasurer shall cancel the record of the vehicle. The junking certificate shall be printed on the registration receipt form and shall be imprinted with the words "junking certificate", as prescribed by the department. A space for transfer by endorsement shall be on the junking certificate. A separate form for the notation of the transfer of component parts shall be attached to the junking certificate when the certificate is issued.

b. The owner of a motor vehicle subject to registration that does not have a certificate of title or a junking certificate may dispose of the vehicle to a vehicle recycler licensed under [chapter 321H](#) for scrap or junk if the vehicle is twelve model years old or older and is acquired by the vehicle recycler for reasonable consideration equaling less than one thousand dollars.

3. *a.* When a vehicle for which a certificate of title is issued is junked or dismantled by the owner, the owner shall detach the registration plates and surrender the plates to the county treasurer, unless the plates are properly assigned to another vehicle. The owner shall also surrender the certificate of title to the county treasurer, except when the vehicle is disposed of pursuant to [subsection 2](#), paragraph "b".

b. Upon the surrender of the certificate of title and application for junking certificate, the county treasurer shall issue to the person, without fee, a junking certificate, which shall authorize the holder to possess, transport, or transfer ownership of the junked vehicle by endorsement of the junking certificate. The county treasurer shall hold the surrendered certificate of title, registration receipt, application for junking certificate, and, if applicable, the registration plates for a period of fourteen days following the issuance of a junking certificate under [this subsection](#).

c. Within the fourteen-day period, the person who was issued the junking certificate and to whom the vehicle was titled or assigned may surrender to the county treasurer the junking certificate, and upon the person's payment of appropriate fees and taxes and payment of any credit for annual registration fees received by the person for the vehicle under [section 321.46](#), [subsection 3](#), the county treasurer shall issue to the person a certificate of title for the vehicle. After the expiration of the fourteen-day period, a county treasurer shall not issue a certificate of title for a junked vehicle for which a junking certificate is issued. The county treasurer shall cancel the record of the vehicle and forward the certificate of title to the department.

d. However, upon application and a showing of good cause, the department may issue a certificate of title to a person after the fourteen-day period for a junked vehicle for which a junking certificate has been issued. For purposes of [this subsection](#), "good cause" means that the junking certificate was obtained by mistake or inadvertence. If a person's application to the department is denied, the person may make application for a certificate of title under

the procedure as provided in [section 321.24, subsection 11](#), if the vehicle qualifies as an antique vehicle under [section 321.115, subsection 1](#), or the person may seek judicial review as provided under [sections 17A.19 and 17A.20](#).

4. *a.* Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, an insurer may apply for and be issued a salvage certificate of title for a motor vehicle without surrendering the certificate of title or manufacturer's or importer's statement of origin properly assigned if ownership of the vehicle was transferred, or will transfer, to the insurer pursuant to a settlement with the previous owner of the vehicle arising from circumstances involving damage to the vehicle, and at least thirty days have expired since the effective date of such settlement. To obtain a salvage certificate of title pursuant to this paragraph "a", the insurer shall submit an application for a salvage certificate of title to any county treasurer. The application shall be accompanied by an affidavit from the insurer in which the insurer certifies it has made at least two written attempts to obtain a properly assigned certificate of title or manufacturer's or importer's statement of origin for the vehicle by contacting the previous owner of the vehicle and all lienholders of record by certified mail or a similar service that provides proof of service using a return receipt, and has been unable to obtain the title or statement of origin. The failure of a previous owner or lienholder to provide a properly assigned certificate of title or manufacturer's or importer's statement of origin shall be deemed to be a waiver by the previous owner or lienholder of all rights, title, claim, and interest in the vehicle. The application shall also be accompanied by the application fee required under paragraph "b", and proof of payment of the total amount of the settlement by the insurer to the previous owner of the vehicle. Upon receiving an application that complies with this paragraph "a", the county treasurer shall issue a salvage certificate of title to the insurer which shall be free and clear of all liens and claims of ownership and shall bear the word "SALVAGE" stamped or printed on the face of the title in a manner prescribed by the department.

b. A vehicle rebuilder or a person engaged in the business of buying, selling, or exchanging vehicles of a type required to be registered in this state, upon acquisition of a wrecked or salvage vehicle, shall surrender the certificate of title or manufacturer's or importer's statement of origin properly assigned, together with an application for a salvage certificate of title, to any county treasurer within thirty days after the date of assignment of the certificate of title for the wrecked or salvage motor vehicle. [This subsection](#) applies only to vehicles with a fair market value of five hundred dollars or more, based on the value before the vehicle became wrecked or salvage. Upon payment of a fee of twenty dollars, the county treasurer shall issue a salvage certificate of title which shall bear the word "SALVAGE" stamped or printed on the face of the title in a manner prescribed by the department. A salvage certificate of title may be assigned to an educational institution, a new motor vehicle dealer licensed under [chapter 322](#), a person engaged in the business of purchasing bodies, parts of bodies, frames or component parts of vehicles for sale as scrap metal, a salvage pool, or an authorized vehicle recycler licensed under [chapter 321H](#). An authorized vehicle recycler licensed under [chapter 321H](#) or a new motor vehicle dealer licensed under [chapter 322](#) may assign or reassign an Iowa salvage certificate of title or a salvage certificate of title from another state to any person, and the provisions of [section 321.24, subsection 5](#), requiring issuance of an Iowa salvage certificate of title shall not apply. A vehicle on which ownership has transferred to an insurer of the vehicle as a result of a settlement with the owner of the vehicle arising out of damage to, or unrecovered theft of, the vehicle shall be deemed to be a wrecked or salvage vehicle and the insurer shall comply with [this subsection](#) to obtain a salvage certificate of title within thirty days after the date of assignment of the certificate of title of the vehicle.

c. When a wrecked or salvage vehicle has been repaired, the owner may apply for a regular certificate of title by paying the appropriate fees and surrendering the salvage certificate of title and a properly executed salvage theft examination certificate. A motor vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of thirty thousand pounds or more is not subject to the salvage theft examination otherwise required under paragraph "d", and the owner of such vehicle is not required to submit a salvage theft examination certificate. The county treasurer shall issue a regular certificate of title which shall bear a designation printed on the face of the

title and printed on the registration receipt indicating that the vehicle was previously titled on a salvage certificate of title in a form approved by the department. This designation shall be included on every Iowa certificate of title and registration receipt issued thereafter for the vehicle. However, if ownership of a stolen vehicle has been transferred to an insurer organized under the laws of this state or admitted to do business in this state, or if the transfer was the result of a settlement with the owner of the vehicle arising from damage to or the unrecovered theft of the vehicle, and if the insurer certifies to the county treasurer on a form approved by the department that the insurance company has received one or more written estimates which state that the retail cost of repairs including labor, parts, and other materials of all damage to the vehicle is less than three thousand dollars, the county treasurer shall issue to the insurance company the regular certificate of title and registration receipt without this designation.

d. A salvage theft examination shall be made by a peace officer who has been specially certified and recertified when required by the Iowa law enforcement academy to do salvage theft examinations. The Iowa law enforcement academy shall determine standards for training and certification, conduct training, and may approve alternative training programs which satisfy the academy's standards for training and certification. The owner of the salvage vehicle shall make the vehicle available for examination at a time and location designated by the peace officer doing the examination. The owner may obtain a permit to drive the vehicle to and from the examination location by submitting a repair affidavit to the agency performing the examination stating that the vehicle is reasonably safe for operation and listing the repairs which have been made to the vehicle. The owner must be present for the examination and have available for inspection the salvage title, bills of sale for all essential parts changed, if applicable, and the repair affidavit. The examination shall be for the purposes of determining whether the vehicle or repair components have been stolen. The examination is not a safety inspection and a signed salvage theft examination certificate shall not be construed by any court of law to be a certification that the vehicle is safe to be operated. There shall be no cause of action against the peace officer or the agency conducting the examination or the county treasurer for failure to discover or note safety defects. If the vehicle passes the theft examination, the peace officer shall indicate that the vehicle passed examination on the salvage theft examination certificate. The permit and salvage theft examination certificate shall be on controlled forms prescribed and furnished by the department. The owner shall pay a fee of fifty dollars at the time the examination is scheduled. The agency performing the examinations shall retain forty dollars of the fee and shall pay five dollars of the fee to the department and five dollars of the fee to the treasurer of state for deposit in the general fund of the state. Moneys deposited to the general fund under this paragraph shall be used by the Iowa law enforcement academy to provide for the special training, certification, and recertification of officers as required by [this subsection](#).

e. For purposes of [this subsection](#), “wrecked or salvage vehicle” means a damaged motor vehicle subject to registration for which the cost of repair exceeds seventy percent of the fair market value of the vehicle, as determined in accordance with rules adopted by the department, before the vehicle became damaged.

5. The department shall adopt rules in accordance with [chapter 17A](#) to carry out [this section](#).

[C24, 27, 31, 35, §4887; C39, §5002.08; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §321.52; 81 Acts, ch 102, §3]

84 Acts, ch 1169, §2; 84 Acts, ch 1305, §56; 85 Acts, ch 67, §36; 85 Acts, ch 209, §3; 88 Acts, ch 1089, §4 – 6; 88 Acts, ch 1215, §8 – 10; 89 Acts, ch 185, §3; 89 Acts, ch 296, §28; 91 Acts, ch 142, §2, 3; 91 Acts, ch 260, §1225, 1226; 92 Acts, ch 1104, §3; 93 Acts, ch 131, §12; 94 Acts, ch 1107, §51; 95 Acts, ch 45, §2, 3; 97 Acts, ch 108, §7; 97 Acts, ch 121, §2; 2000 Acts, ch 1016, §8, 9; 2005 Acts, ch 8, §11; 2006 Acts, ch 1068, §14; 2006 Acts, ch 1070, §7; 2006 Acts, ch 1120, §12; 2007 Acts, ch 143, §10; 2008 Acts, ch 1018, §17, 18; 2008 Acts, ch 1032, §47, 48; 2008 Acts, ch 1113, §19, 21, 82; 2009 Acts, ch 41, §114; 2015 Acts, ch 52, §3, 4, 14; 2016 Acts, ch

1098, §32; 2017 Acts, ch 31, §2; 2021 Acts, ch 30, §1; 2024 Acts, ch 1036, §2; 2024 Acts, ch 1145, §18, 19, 26; 2024 Acts, ch 1185, §165

Referred to in §312.2, 321.1, 321.24, 321.45, 321.46, 321.47, 321.49, 321.52A, 321.67, 321.69, 321.100, 321.104, 321.126, 322C.6, 331.557, 805.8A(2)(m)

Surcharge imposed; §321.52A

For applicable scheduled fine, see §805.8A, subsection 2

2024 amendments to section by 2024 Acts, ch 1145; 2024 Acts, ch 1145, effective January 1, 2025; 2024 Acts, ch 1145, §26

Subsection 2, paragraph a amended

Subsection 3, paragraph d amended

Subsection 4, paragraphs a, b, and d amended