



Abandoned Vehicles Project

*4th Annual Statewide
Conference on Illegal Dumping*

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[Illegal Dumping Resources](#) | [Listserv](#) | [Report Illegal Dumping Map](#)



IDTAC Abandoned Vehicles Project – Focused Topic

- Start March 2023
- Scope Project, Problem



Stages

- Information Gathering
- Addressing the Issue

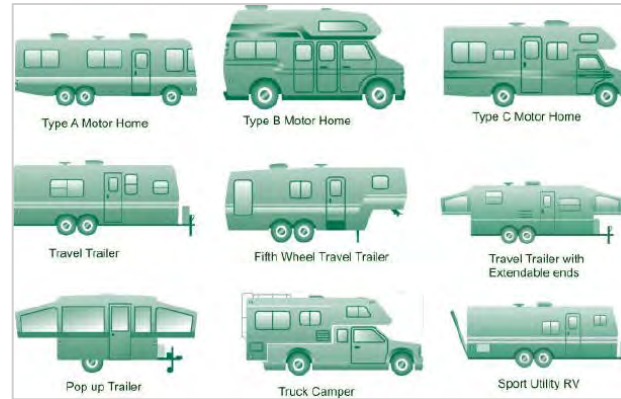


There Are Many Types of Vehicles



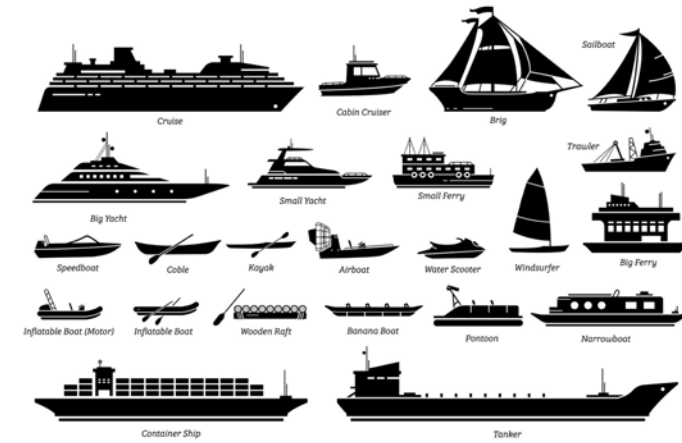
Abandoned “Vehicles”

For some, the word “vehicle” has become synonymous with the term “automobile” even though the term can refer to a variety of items like trucks (heavy/light duty), vans, RVs, motorhomes, motorcycles, and watercraft. Photo courtesy of [Market Business News](#).



Recreational Vehicle (RV)

Term RV encompasses motorhomes, trailers, and campers—all of which continue to be [reported](#) as dumped/abandoned in a variety of [locations](#). RV definition available in [HSC Sec 18010 \[DMV 6.055\]](#). A specific [RV Issues](#) section is available given the significant statewide problems around this type of dumped/abandoned vehicle. Photo courtesy of [Association of Cross County Adventures Central Ohio](#).



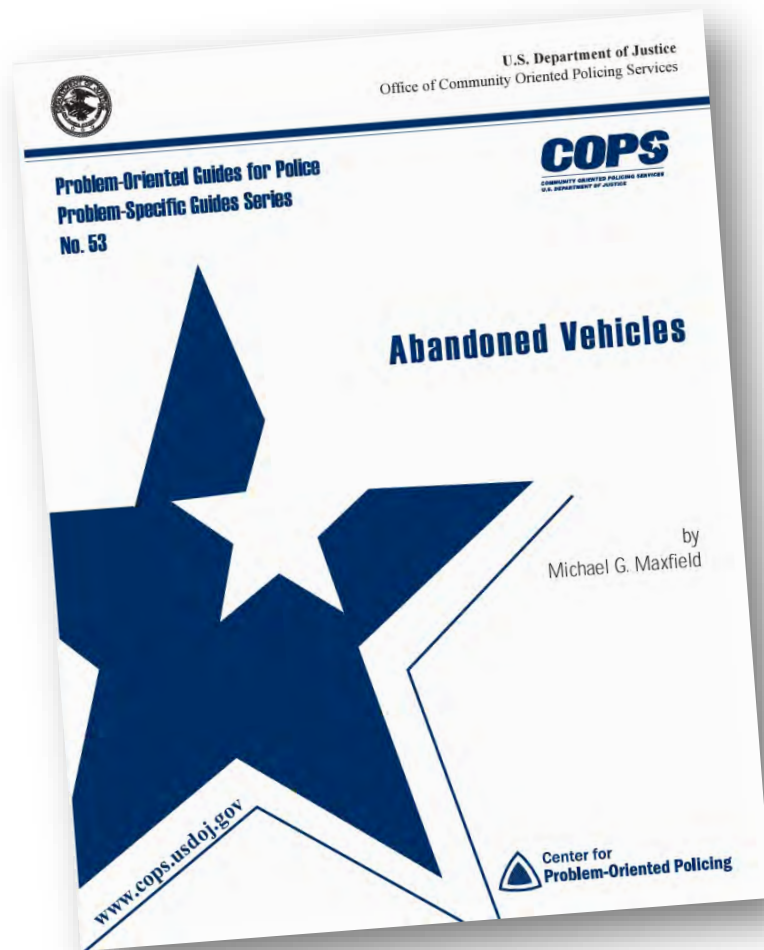
Vessel Distinction (Watercraft)

Boats are commonly referred to as “vessels” by law. Definitions and many laws for vessels start at [VEH Sec 9840](#) and commence with [VEH Sec 10554](#). In some instances vessels are treated similar to other vehicles when stolen or recovered since vessel registration is required for use on California waterways.



Information Gathering

- Abandoned Vehicles Guide – US DOJ 2008
 - Framework
- Additional Documents
- Inquires (targeted)
- Community Examples
- Presentations
- Research
- Subcommittees
- Surveys



Abandoned Vehicles Project

Circumstances

[Abandoned Vehicles Guide \(US DOJ\)](#)¹ divides factors that contribute to abandonment:

Cost of Operating and Disposing of Vehicles

- Value of scrap metal
- Cost and convenience of legitimate disposal
- Cost of repair and insurance
- Cost of safety and emissions compliance
- Low-quality and "orphaned" vehicles
- Natural disasters

Vehicle Regulation and Licensing Procedures

- Auto theft and insurance fraud
- Auctions of low-value vehicles
- Registration and licensing procedures
- Long-term or unlimited parking in public facilities

Other Circumstances

- Residents unaware of options
- Used as shelter
- Location/Process
 - Property (private/public – easements, fed/state lands)
- Ease of removal (ditches & waterways)
 - Equipment availability
- Community Transportation
- Community Caretaking



“Cleaning up” ...

Personal Property

[serialized property]

Since vehicles are personal property [[CIV Div. 2](#)] certain rights apply, as well as [lien stipulations](#).



Upon discovery, (abandoned) vehicles are “usually tagged, and efforts are launched to identify the owner.”¹ Some time must elapse between when a vehicle is tagged and when it can be removed.¹ Then, the vehicle is often stored for some time before its ultimate disposition, while efforts to identify a registered owner continue.¹



Abandoned Vehicles Project

Classifications

Abandoned Vehicle

“A vehicle is considered to be ‘abandoned’ if it is left on a highway, public property, or private property in such inoperable or neglected condition that the owner’s intent to relinquish all further rights or interests in it may be reasonably concluded. In reaching a reasonable conclusion, one must consider the amount of time the vehicle has not been moved, its condition, statements from the owner and witnesses, etc.”

[California Highway Patrol Handbook Chapter 4](#)

Public Nuisance Vehicle

“Any vehicle that is abandoned, wrecked, dismantled, or any inoperable part thereof that is on public or private property, not including highways, and that creates a condition tending to reduce the value of private property, promotes blight and deterioration, invites plundering, creates fire hazards, constitutes an attractive nuisance endangering the health and safety of minors, harbors rodents and insects, or jeopardizes, health, safety, and general welfare is a public nuisance.”

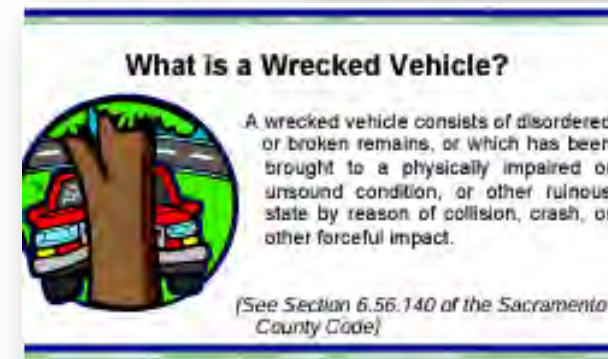
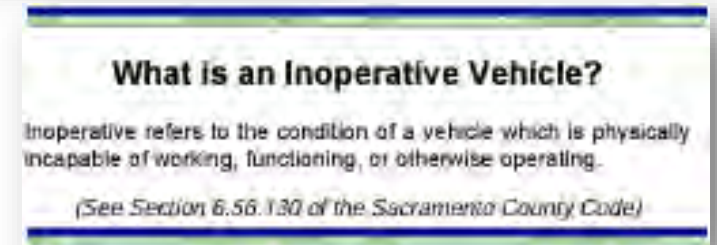
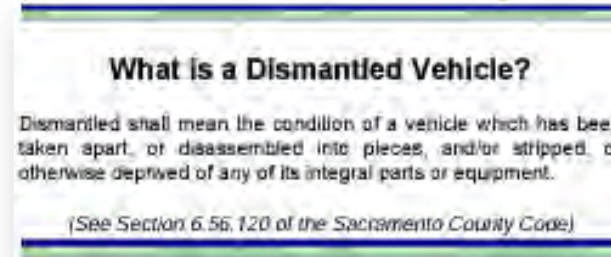
[California Highway Patrol Handbook Chapter 4](#)

Junk Vehicle

“A junk vehicle is one which has been dismantled because it was wrecked, abandoned, or inoperable.” [\[DMV 19.015\]](#)

Abated Vehicle

A vehicle determined to be a public nuisance because it was abandoned, wrecked, dismantled, or inoperable and was removed by ordinance of a city or county [\[VEH Sec 22660\]](#).



Notice/Intention to Abate, Violations

Removal of Parked and Abandoned Vehicles

Authority to Remove Vehicles [[VEH 22650 - 22711](#)]

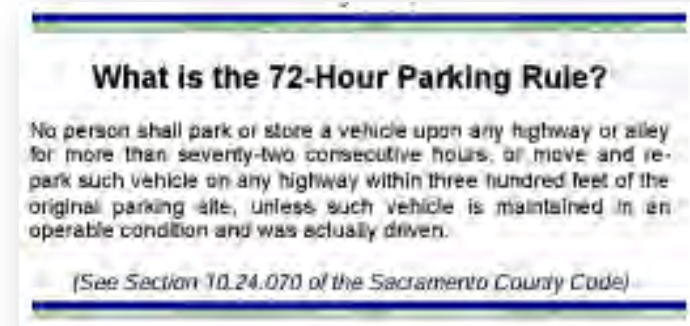
Examples

- Parked or left standing on a highway, blocking or a hazard
- Parked blocking driveway
- Parked blocking fire hydrant
- Parked or left standing on highway for more than 4 hours
- Driver arrested
- Illegally parked, no license plates or registration
- Parked in violation of local ordinances/road repair/construction
- Parked over 72 hours
- Parking prohibited by local ordinances or resolution
- Vehicle registration expired over 6 months
- Removal from private property
- “Abandoned”, “wrecked”, and/or “dismantled” condition.
- Within 7 1/2 ft of rail

Safety & Environmental Impact

In establishing procedures for the abatement and removal of abandoned vehicles, the department shall give priority to the removal of abandoned vehicles from corridors of the **state highway system, from public lands and parks, and from river and wildlife areas.**

Parking



Location

- Public/Private Property
- Public Nuisance

Notice Exemption

If the owner authorizes the removal, the vehicle is inoperable and/or incapable of tow, and the value is less than \$200 and a public nuisance there is no need for the **10-day notice.** [[VEH Sec 22661](#)]



Project Distinction - *Low Value* and *Lower Tier Value*

- *Low value vehicles* are classified as \$500 or less [[VEH Sec 22670](#)] for the purposes of lien sales.

Lien Stipulations (Vehicle Value), Holding Periods

- \$500 or less
- \$4,000 or less - *Short Lien (days)*
- \$4,001+ - *Long Lien (+30 days)*

Lack of Identifiers

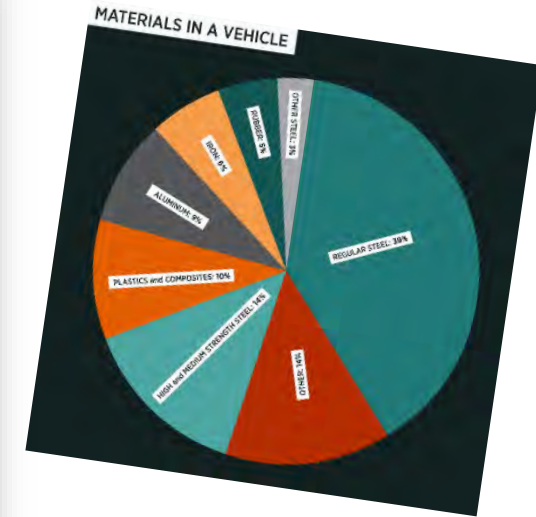
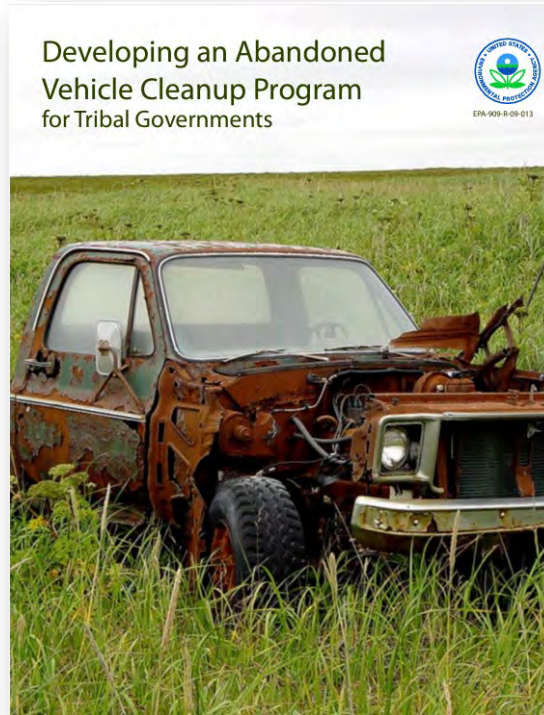
Cost Recovery



Removal, Disposal, Dismantling

Cost recovery, proper processing, material/substance types, recycling.

- Crushing (rural areas)



RV Circumstances, Dismantling



Tow Company Breakdown and Assessment:
Assessment of Law Enforcement Towing and Recreational Vehicle Disposal

Request for Approval - Agreement Between the City of Los Angeles and SA Recycling for LAPD Vehicle Recycling Program



RVs

More significant problem

- Removal
- Storage space (& longer lien times)
- Lack/no disposal/dismantling options (**no cost recovery**)
- Larger Community Impact
 - Blight, Nuisance
 - Leaking, Hazards
 - Other sanitation concerns



City of Los Angeles – Removal/Storage

[Press 4/11/24](#)

“Mayor Bass is locking arms with partners in all levels of government to address RV encampments. She expanded Executive Directive 3 to address RV encampments by **increasing the City’s capacity to tow, store, and dismantle** surrendered vehicles. **She is also sponsoring state legislation that streamlines the City’s ability to lease property from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) at a reduced rate to store RVs while their former inhabitants receive services to transition into housing.**”

*‘Starting to see towers hands tied—can’t take them’ [IDTAC](#)
[Nov 2023 Notes](#)*



RVs

City of Los Angeles – Dismantling

RV Pilot Program ...conducted a pilot program with the Los Angeles Department of Sanitation (LASAN) and a local recycler to experiment another way to dismantler RVs:

"The program provided four dumpsters, weekly to SA Recycling in Sun Valley to assist in the recycling of abandoned and dilapidated RVs. The program had some success in the dismantling of qualified RVs, but the current situation has expanded far beyond the capabilities initially envisioned within that pilot program. The program lacked citywide implementation and was only available to a limited group of OPGs. Logistically, LASAN had difficulty delivering and retrieving dumpsters from an operational scrap yard and the dumpsters could not be filled to their total volume capacity due to damage to the dumpsters and transportation (overflow) complications. Currently, the funds earmarked for the program have been exhausted."⁶

☞ Upon RFP the city had difficulty finding “any qualified vendor capable of handling the properly regulated and environmentally responsible dismantling of RVs.” Thus:

Vehicle Recycling Program ...“direct discussions” ensued with “a proven industry leader” that will help make-up the proposed program. Contractor can “can salvage at least 15 RVs per day.”⁶



Addressing the Issue

“In most cases, an effective strategy will involve implementing **several different responses**. Law enforcement responses alone are seldom effective in reducing or solving the problem.”

“Most strategies for dealing with abandoned vehicles will require **coordination** with agencies and other organizations beyond police. **Because so many different stakeholders are involved in the problem, it is usually necessary to work with different individuals and organizations.**”

[Abandoned Vehicles Guide \(US DOJ\)](#)¹



Addressing the Issue

Stakeholders

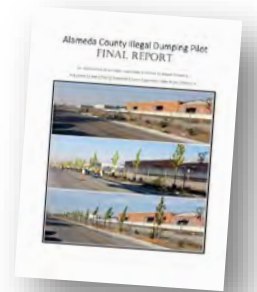
- Local Government Agencies
- State-Level Agencies
- Federal Agencies
- Community Leaders (Elected Officials)
- Regional Collaboration Groups/Task Forces
- Neighborhood Residents
- Landowners, landlords (Vacant Property, Brownfields)
- Tribes
- Hazardous Waste Abatement Services
- Waste Management Services
- Trade Associations
- Material Stewardship Organizations
- Dismantlers
- Collection/Donations Services
- Repair Shops
- Towing and Storage Operators
- Auction Services/Facilities
- Yards
 - Salvage Yards (Junkyards)
 - Wrecking Yards/Dismantlers
 - Metal Yards/Recyclers (Scrap Yards)
- Metal Shredders/Processors
- Crushing-and Baling-Equipment Manufacturers and Dealers
- Unlawful Actors
- Wholesalers
- (Used) Dealerships
- Lenders
- Insurance Companies



Addressing the Issue, Illegal Dumping

- Use the PACE(O) or 3E Strategy locally, also can be applied to statewide approach.
- Tackle a specific Circumstance and Response Option
- Contribute additional types of Strategies...

Prevent
Abatement
Cleanup
Enforcement
(Outreach/[E]ducation)

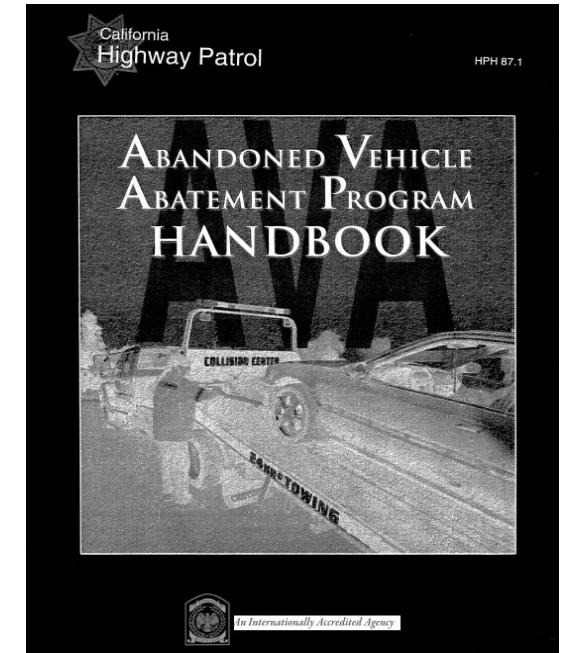


CHP AVA Program

Available! Site lists 37 participants

\$1 associated w/ vehicle registration within the service authority/community it serves.

- Do you have one?
- Generally, well received
 - Room for improvement
 - ~RVs, not vessels
- Strategies Subcommittee
 - Specific Survey



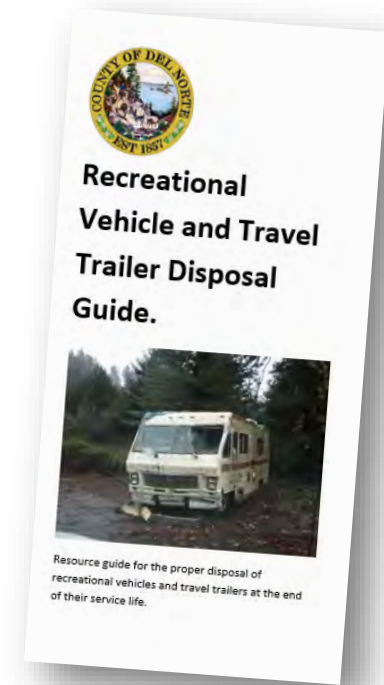
“Research and Planning Section will assist any county that has or wishes to initiate an AVA Program. The Department's role is limited to providing guidelines, assistance and advice to the counties' AVA Authorities, and assisting them with interpretation of codes and policies.”



Programs



- [CalRecycle Funding Opportunities](#)
Resources can assist with abandoned vehicles but in conjunction with other illegal dumping/disposal efforts.
- [Freeway Service Patrol \(ca.gov\)](#)
- [Surrendered Vessel Program](#), [Surrendered and Abandoned Vessel Exchange \(SAVE\)](#)



- [Bureau of Automotive Repair \(BAR\) Consumer Assistance Program \(CAP\)](#)
Offers eligible consumers repair assistance and vehicle retirement options (to help improve California's air quality).

• Cars for Schools Program--Some vehicles retired through CAP are temporarily loaned to automotive repair training centers operated by public high schools, colleges, or regional occupational programs



Response Options (Strategies) – Best Practices

[Abandoned Vehicles Guide](#)¹

Prevention

- Making legitimate disposal cheaper and easier
- Using amnesty campaigns
- Promoting private junk-car collection services
- Use publicity to promote legitimate disposal
- Increasing the threshold value for scrapping vehicles
- Increasing minimum bids at car auctions
- Working with low-end used-car dealers
- Adjusting rules for parking and street-cleaning
- Securing dump sites
- Assisting property owners at sites where people dump cars
- Assessing cost-of-disposal fees
- Anticipating seasonal abandonment

Cleanup/Reduction

- Identifying and reporting abandoned vehicles
- Coordinating with other agencies
- Removing derelict vehicles as quickly as possible
- Establishing routines for long-term parking facilities
- Cleanup in abandoned vehicle "sweeps"
- Use community volunteers
- Publicizing the problem



Strategies (Brainstorm)

“Responsibility Ticket”

In the City of Oakland and San Joaquin County laws were passed to crackdown on the most recent user of a vehicle (prior to its abandonment) as opposed to charging the registered owner. Currently cameras systems have proven difficult when attempting to identify individuals.

“Partner w/ Collection/Donations Services”

Non-profits and other stakeholders hold events raise/money for large cleanups, which can also create awareness around the issue.

“Revisit DMV process for residents”

Ensuring those who seek Collection/Donations services are not turned away – what this looks like.

“Inactive military facilities for temporary RVs storage”

Reregistration of salvageable and abandoned vehicles removed by a local abatement procedure may be permitted when donated to a correctional institution for restoration and rebuilding. [\[DMV 5.120\]](#)

“Dismantling used for training”

Private company owner shares his openness to have his company ‘positioned to help dismantle or **refurbished** if possible.’

Reuse

“Market for RV shells”

Used as creative housing.

Dismantling

Components of RV like mattress, etc. parsed to alleviate disposal costs.

Working w/ CUPAs/programs

🔗 *limited effectiveness* [Abandoned Vehicles Guide \(US DOJ\)](#)¹

- increasing fines for vehicle abandonment
- increasing fees for collecting unwanted vehicles



Legislative efforts

- [AB 748](#), Villapudua. CA Abandoned and Derelict Commercial Vessel Program.
- [AB 333](#), as introduced, Stephanie Nguyen. Vehicles: abatement of abandoned vehicles.
- [AB 294](#), as introduced, Santiago. Vehicle Tow and Storage Act.
- CHP AVA
 - Work with Trade Associations
 - Work being followed

Product Stewardship, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

The [Directive on end-of-life vehicles](#) (ELV Directive) sets clear targets for ELVs and their components. It also prohibits the use of hazardous substances when manufacturing new vehicles (especially lead, mercury, cadmium and hexavalent chromium) except in defined exemptions when there are no adequate alternatives. The exemptions are listed in annex II of the Directive.

Since this Directive was introduced, several amendments have been made (for more information, see amendments below). The EU has also introduced several related rules such as the [Directive on the type-approval of motor vehicles regarding their reusability, recyclability and recoverability](#).

A review of the ELV Directive was launched in 2021, resulting in a proposal for a new regulation in 2023.

[European Union/Commission, End of Life Vehicles](#)



Dismantling

Variety of stakeholders may be dismantling. What constitutes a dismantler is not straightforward.

- [DMV Dismantlers Handbook of Registration Procedures](#)

If dismantling, licensing among other protocols required though certain expectations may apply.

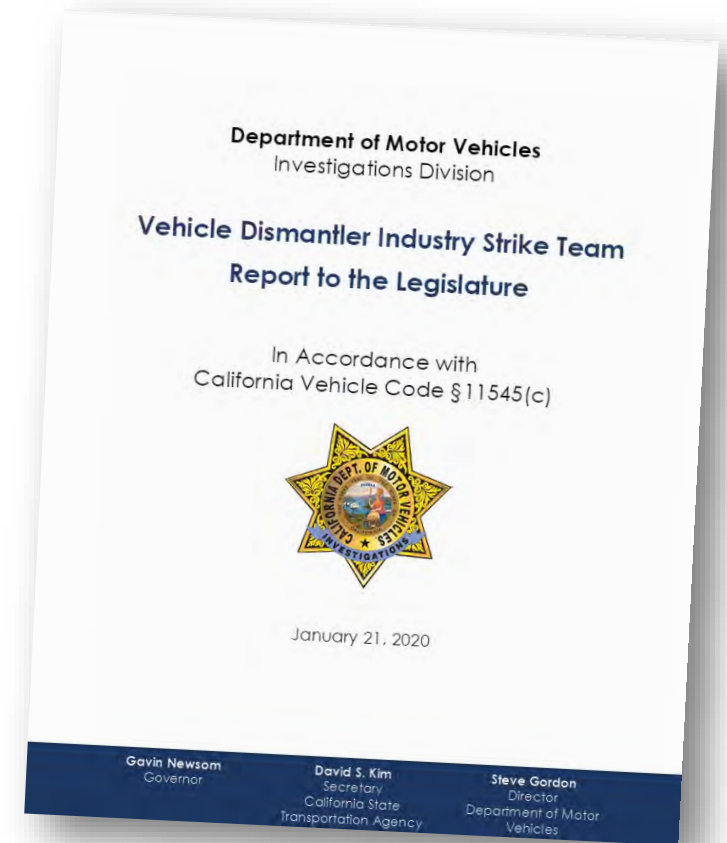
Vehicle Dismantlers Industry Strike Team (VDIST)

“Pursuant to California Vehicle Code §11545, the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Investigations Division (INV) created a multiagency collaboration to coordinate enforcement and compliance activity related to unlicensed and unregulated automobile dismantling, including tax evasion, environmental impacts, and public health impacts.”

[SB 366](#), Umberg. Automobile dismantling: task force. is slotted until January 25, 2025 unless extended.



DTSC regulates/follows the “waste/hazardous” not necessarily a certain type of stakeholder.



Local/Regional Situation

[Abandoned Vehicles Guide \(US DOJ\)](#)¹ provides analyzation strategies and measurements when responding locally.

Asking the Right Questions

- Locations/Times
- Incidents
- Environmental Hazards
- Community Perceptions and Resources
- Current Practice: Reporting
- Current Practice: Towing and Disposition

Measures to Determine Effectiveness

- 13 examples



IDTAC Plan

- Abandoned Vehicles Project
 - Webpage
 - Publication
 - Survey Results



Notes, Survey Data Available



Webpage

- Awareness
- Guidance Removal & Disposal (residents)
- Urges Reporting, “Illegal” reminder
- Introduces Project
- Publication, Survey
- Documents, Resources/Programs
- “Get Involved”



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Addressing the Issue, Next Steps

- Working Group / Google Groups Forum
- Subscribe to the [Illegal Dumping Listserv](#)
- Visit IDTAC Booth for Sign-up Sheet
- Email IllegalDumping@CalRecycle.ca.gov

How you can help!



Questions?



Abandoned Vehicles Project