

Parking Ordinance

FAQ

South Snohomish County has been experiencing recreational vehicles parking for extended periods of time, many parked in neighborhoods or near businesses without any association to the home or business owners. In some cases, these cause a traffic safety concern as they impede the flow of traffic, limit sight distance, block driveways, and obstruct walkways.

Currently the Snohomish County Office of Neighborhoods (OoN) is the primary group tasked with contacting these vehicles. This is a group of Deputies and Social Workers that have teamed up to find vulnerable populations, establish relationships, and offer services that can help set individuals on a new path. On many occasions, OoN has discovered these recreational vehicles are being used as drug dens or for other crime activity. Additionally, most have out of date registration and/or are not able to move under their own power.

The proposed Ordinance would provide law enforcement with the ability to remove recreational vehicles from County roads when they have been there for an extended period of time. In practice if this tool is approved it would be used by the OoN team as they are equipped with the skills and personnel to obtain the best possible outcome.

What does this Ordinance do?

This ordinance would prohibit a recreational vehicle from parking in one location for more than 72 hours, or 3 days. If found in violation, the recreational vehicle may be tagged for the violation and if not moved within 72 hours, or 3 days, the citing law enforcement officer may have the vehicle impounded.

Does this apply to all roads?

No. This ordinance is applicable only to Snohomish County roads (unincorporated public roads). This would not be applicable in cities or on private roads in unincorporated Snohomish County.

Who will enforce this ordinance?

OoN will be the primary unit enforcing this ordinance, specifically when it involves recreational vehicles that are abandoned on county roads. Patrol deputies will be encouraged to report these matters to OoN. Prior to the decision to impound a recreational vehicle, OoN will make every effort to connect with the occupant or vehicle owner to address the issue through other means. Impound and storage of a recreational vehicle can be costly, so alternative methods to move the vehicle are preferred.

Outside of initial contact, notice of violation, and calling for impoundment, will the OoN make any additional attempts to get into contact with the individual in the recreational vehicle and continue to offer services?

Yes. OoN team contacts them several times before going down the path of tagging an impoundment. Each and every time a OoN deputy or social worker contacts them, they are offered services and phone numbers to helpful resources.

Will the recreational vehicle be impounded if it being used as a primary residence?

Our goal is outreach. OoN, along with Social Workers, will provide information and direct them to available resources. Impound is a useful tool when considering a vehicle that is unable to move under its own power or it is creating a traffic or environmental hazard. In no way is OoN seeking to displace anyone.

Most of the people living in a recreational vehicle see it as a vital part of their life. OoN has learned the recreational vehicle may be holding the individual back from seeking or receiving help. A similar barrier is an unhoused individual who can't bring their pet into a facility, so they choose to remain on the street. When OON contacts individuals, their plan and hope is that the individual is ready and willing to receive help. If the RV is not properly maintained, licensed, or illegally parked it may be impounded. This is not done to punish them; it is done to maintain the safety of those that live around the area where the RV is parked. The loss of the RV may be just what it takes for the individuals to accept help from the OON team.

What happens once the recreational vehicle is impounded?

During their investigation, OoN will provide a resource guide to the owner or occupant. The tow company and storage location information will also be provided. The resource guide will provide information on how to contact the tow company and the appropriate steps to take to request an impound appeal hearing.

Are people able to get their personal belongings out of the recreational vehicle after it's been impounded?

This would depend on if they are the registered owner of the RV or if during the impound process they are associated with the RV. Our hope would be that the individual would work with one of our social workers, who would then work with the Tow Company to try and get personal belongings out of the RV. However, that is ultimately up to the Tow Company on who they allow into the RV when they (the Tow company) are in legal possession of it.

What are the parking restrictions in Snohomish County Cities?

Of the cities and towns in Snohomish County:

- Ten (10) have a 72-hour parking limit (applicable to all vehicles);
- Five (5) have a 24-hour parking limit (three are applicable to all vehicles, two applicable to recreational vehicles only);
- One (1) allows for the immediate removal of recreational vehicles; and
- Three (3) have various time limits based on time of day, location, and signage.