



## *Louisiana Public Service Commission*

POST OFFICE BOX 91154  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70821-9154

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Telephone: (225) 342-4439  
(800) 342-5717

April 17, 2014

EVE KAHAO GONZALEZ  
Executive Secretary

BRANDON FREY  
Executive Counsel

JOHNNY E. SNELLGROVE, JR  
Deputy Undersecretary

To: All Certificated Towing & Recovery Companies

Ref: General Order dated April 17, 2014.

The Louisiana Public Service Commission (the "Commission") initiated a Rulemaking docket to consider amending General Order dated May 03, 2012 amended November 19, 2012 to address the Consumer Price Index (CPI) biennial rate review as provided for in General Order March 26, 2010.

The Commission considered the matter at the April 02, 2014, Business and Executive Session, and voted to amend General Order dated May 03, 2012 amended November 19, 2012. ***Effective April 17, 2014*** the General Order issued in R-33105 increases all rates excluding the fuel surcharge by 1.5% rounded to the nearest fifty cents.

A copy of the amended "Schedule of Prescribed Rates and Requirements for Towing & Recovery" reflecting the new rates is attached to this notice. A copy of the complete General Order dated April 17, 2014 may be found on our website [www.lpsc.louisiana.gov](http://www.lpsc.louisiana.gov) or by contacting the Louisiana Public Service Commission, Transportation Division at 1-888-342-5717.

Please read these carefully, and make sure your staff is aware of the changes as well.

**ATTACHMENT “A”**  
**SCHEDULE OF PRESCRIBED RATES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR TOWING & RECOVERY**

Effective April 17, 2014

**I DEFINITIONS**

- A. Light Duty - is defined as the towing, transport, and recovery of motor vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less.
- B. Medium Duty - is defined as the towing, transport, and recovery of motor vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,001 pounds to 26,000 pounds.
- C. Heavy Duty - is defined as the towing, transport and recovery of motor vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,001 pounds and greater.
- D. Motor Vehicle - is defined as every self-propelled vehicle (except traction engines; road rollers, farm tractors, tractor cranes, power shovels and well drillers) and every vehicle which is propelled by electric power obtained from overhead wires but not operated upon rails as per La. R.S. 32: 851 (4).
- E. Tow Only - is defined as a routine/standard tow that does NOT require special techniques or special equipment as defined in Recovery. Tow Only equipment is considered normal use of a tow sling, wheel lift, or winch cable to winch a vehicle onto a tilt bed tow truck. Tow Only rates as met in this definition shall apply whether the vehicle is either mobile or immobile and is in contact of the roadway surface.
- F. Recovery - is defined as the use of one or more of the following techniques under the following scenario: The use of air bags, winching, hoisting, up-righting, removing, or otherwise relocating a vehicle when the vehicle is found in such a location, state or position in which it could not remove itself from the location, state or position under the use of its own power, even if it were in complete operating condition.
- G. Simple Water Recovery -is defined as the recovery of a vehicle when it is partially submerged in water and where the amount of water impedes recovery, but does not exceed 12 inches in depth.
- H. Complicated or Difficult Recovery
  - 1. Rollover recovery - when additional operator required or needed.
  - 2. Removal of unsecured load or debris from accident scene.
  - 3. Unloading and reloading box trailers, box trucks, and flatbed trailers.
  - 4. Water recovery – when an additional operator is required or needed other than those water recoveries defined as “Simple Water Recovery” above.
- I. Non-consensual towing - is defined as the movement or transportation of a vehicle by a tow truck without the prior consent or authorization of the owner or operator of the vehicle. This includes private property tows conducted in accordance with the provisions of R.S. 32:1736 and tows by law enforcement or other public agencies. Whenever an owner or operator of a vehicle requests a law enforcement officer or other public agency to initiate a tow, such tow shall be considered non-consensual and subject to Louisiana Public Service Commission tow rates.
- J. Stand-by- is defined as any hour or half of an hour during which a towing or recovery unit is not actively engaged in the towing or recovery of a vehicle. Travel time from dispatch to arrival on the scene shall not be considered Stand-By.
- K. Outside Storage- is defined as a vehicle being placed outside and exposed to the elements.
- L. Covered Storage- is defined as continuous covering which adequately protects a vehicle and its contents, where said vehicle and/or its contents have some intrinsic value. Covered storage includes, but is not limited to, the use of a tarpaulin or similar covering, such as “Crash Wrap,” which protects the vehicle and its interior from rain, dew, moisture and other elements.
- M. Oversized Vehicle Storage- is defined as the storage of a vehicle which has greater than 4 wheels on the ground.
- N. Unsecured Loads, Debris and Trailers - are defined by the weight of the items according to definitions A, B and C above.
- O. Private Property Tow - a tow from a location as provided for in accordance with La R.S. 32:1736.

## II TOWING, RECOVERY & EQUIPMENT CHARGES

<b>Light Duty Towing &amp; Recovery</b>			
Towing Charges	Standard Recovery Charges	Simple Water Recovery Charges	Stand-by
<b>\$ 107.50 per hour *</b>	<b>\$147.00 per hour ^</b>	<b>\$168.50 per hour ^</b>	<b>\$ 54.00 per hour ^</b>
*There is a 1 ½ hour minimum charge. After the 1 ½ hour minimum, charges will be computed in ½ hour increments. Computed in ½ hour increments.			^ Computed in ½ hour increments.

<b>Medium Duty Towing &amp; Recovery</b>			
Towing Charges	Standard Recovery Charges	Simple Water Recovery Charges	Stand-by
<b>\$ 236.00 per hour*</b>	<b>\$ 303.50 per hour ^</b>	<b>\$324.50 per hour ^</b>	<b>\$ 117.50 per hour ^</b>
*There is a 1 hour minimum charge. After the 1 hour minimum, charges will be computed in ½ hour increments. Computed in ½ hour increments.			^ Computed in ½ hour increments.

<b>Heavy Duty Towing &amp; Recovery</b>			
Towing Charges	Standard Recovery Charges	Simple Water Recovery Charges	Stand-by
<b>\$ 303.50 per hour*</b>	<b>\$ 370.50 per hour ^</b>	<b>\$392.00 per hour ^</b>	<b>\$ 151.50 per hour ^</b>
*There is a 1 hour minimum charge. After the 1 hour minimum, charges will be computed in ½ hour increments. Computed in ½ hour increments.			^ Computed in ½ hour increments.

<b>Other Towing, Equipment and Manpower Charges</b>	
Private Property Tow	<b>\$ 107.50 flat rate - Light Duty</b> <b>\$ 236.00 flat rate - Medium Duty</b> <b>\$303.50 flat rate - Heavy Duty</b>
Private Property Tow when specialized equipment such as Go-Jacks or Slide Outs are used or if additional manpower is needed (equipment and/or additional manpower must be documented)	<b>\$131.50 flat rate</b>
Mechanical Breakdown Tow	<b>\$ 107.50 per hour*</b>
Extra Truck & Trailer For Removal of Load	<b>\$ 135.00 per hour*</b>
Laborer	<b>\$ 40.00 per hour*</b>
Supervisor (see section III item # 6)	<b>\$ 67.50 per hour*</b>
*There is a 1 hour minimum charge. After the 1 hour minimum, charges will be computed in ½ hour increments	
Complete Air Bag Unit	<b>\$ 2,156.50 flat rate</b> (includes all equipment and personnel associated with the air bag recovery)
Rotator (when used according to the Provision in Section III # 5)	<b>\$210.50 per hour **</b>
**There is a 2 hour minimum charge. After the 2 hour minimum, charges will be computed in ½ hour increments	

<b>Storage Fees</b>		
Outside Storage Rate <b>\$19.00 per day</b>	Covered Storage Rate <b>\$23.50 per day</b>	Oversize Storage Rate <b>\$38.00 per day</b>

<b>Fuel Surcharge</b>	
The following surcharges shall apply on a per gallon basis to the total amount of the hourly rate charged and shall be applicable only to towing & recovery professionals performing non-consensual towing.	
<u>Fuel Price (per gallon)</u>	<u>Fuel Surcharge</u>
\$0.00 to \$0.90	3% reduction
\$0.91 to \$1.24	No reduction/surcharge
\$1.25 to \$1.99	3% surcharge
\$2.00 to \$2.99	9% surcharge
\$3.00 to \$3.99	12% surcharge
\$4.00 to \$4.99	14% surcharge
\$5.00 and greater	16% surcharge
There shall be no change in the top portion of the brackets. If fuel ever returns to the \$1.24 level and below, a surcharge shall not be charged. The surcharge will be based on the average price of self-service diesel fuel as determined based upon the price reported by the U. S. Department of Energy (DOE) for the Petroleum Administration for Defense District 3 (Gulf Coast).	

### **III MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

1. Charges will not be allowed for any services or equipment not listed or addressed in the approved “**SCHEDULE OF PRESCRIBED RATES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR TOWING & RECOVERY**”
2. Rates are charged from time of dispatch at terminal until unhooked from towed vehicle.
3. All charges for all towing & recovery services are for truck and driver.
4. If the Towing & Recovery Professional must rent or subcontract equipment or labor not used in the normal course of a towing procedure (i.e. professional diver, bulldozers, front end loaders, dump trucks, forklifts, etc.), a maximum 10% surcharge may be added to the actual amount of the rental or subcontractors invoice. If said equipment is owned by the Towing & Recovery Professional or said labor is provided by the employee of the Towing & Recovery Professional it shall be invoiced at current market value, plus a 10% surcharge may be added thereto. Charges will not be allowed for the use of equipment, tools or supplies owned and/or provided by the Towing & Recovery Professional including but not limited to, oil-absorbing materials, brooms, shovels, flashlights, electric lanterns, fire extinguishers, emergency warning devices, steering wheel clamps, tow slings or tow plates, cables, blocks, chains, hooks, or any other truck components or hand tools mandated by the Louisiana State Police.
5. A rotator may be used only if ordered by the law enforcement agency in charge of the accident or incident scene and the rotator is necessary to safely and efficiently restore the flow of traffic to travel lanes. The use of a rotator is not justified to ensure that the recovered and towed vehicle will not suffer any additional damage, beyond what is reasonable and customary. A rotator is a specialized piece of equipment and shall be invoiced as such, in that the hourly charge fixed herein in Section II shall be billed in addition to the charges for the tow and recovery at the appropriate rate (light, medium or heavy). If a rotator is used, but is not authorized by the provisions of this paragraph, the rotator use cannot be invoiced and the tow and recovery shall be invoiced at the appropriate rate as previously stated.
6. A Supervisor may be dispatched when two or more units and/or laborers are required or needed during complicated or difficult recovery according to “H” in Section I of DEFINITIONS. Also, additional manpower may be dispatched on as need basis during complicated or difficult recovery according to “H” in Section I of DEFINITIONS.
7. Recovery of hazardous materials cargo, as defined by LDEQ or State Police Hazmat Unit may be billed at 50% above the rate allowed on towing & recovery charges.
8. All bills for non-consensual towing & recovery shall be itemized on a line item basis, including all LPSC prescribed and non-prescribed charges (i.e. gate fees, administrative fees.) For all charges other than storage fees, surcharges and the hourly rates for towing, recovery and stand-by, the towing company shall attach an invoice for the service rendered (including, but not limited to extra labor, extra equipment, administrative fees, etc. as provided for in item #4 above)
9. All bills for non-consensual towing and/or recovery shall specifically state the time of dispatch and the time Towing & Recovery Professional unhooked from towed vehicle. All recovery rates shall be invoiced as a line item for only the time actually spent in recovery. The invoice shall reflect the tow charge, the recovery charge and standby charge (if applicable) separately.
10. In addition to any fines authorized by LSA- R.S. Title 45, Section 163 et. seq., the Louisiana Public Service Commission may order a refund of up to 200% of any overcharges found to have occurred.
11. All bills for non-consensual towing and/or recovery shall include the following language printed on the bill: Complaints may be addressed to the Louisiana Public Service Commission- Attention Transportation Division, P.O. Box 91154, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821 or by contacting a district Commissioner. (In the event a complaint is made in writing to the Transportation Division of the LPSC or made to a district Commissioner, storage fees shall not accrue beyond the date of said complaint and shall not be charged to the vehicle owner if the charges are ultimately found to be excessive in a hearing before the Administrative Law Division or if the carrier pleads guilty to charging excessive rates.)
12. It shall not be necessary for a complainant to pay a towing invoice to obtain standing to a towing complaint to the Commission and/or a District Commissioner.

13. When a Towing & Recovery Professional performs a non-consensual tow, the Towing & Recovery Professional shall provide the following written notice to the vehicle owner or driver at the scene or at first contact: **IMPORTANT NOTICE**: This regulated non-consensual towing & recovery by [insert tow company name here] has been designated as a non-consensual tow. [insert tow company name here] is required to charge rates set by Louisiana Public Service Commission orders. These rates may be found on the internet by accessing [www.lpsc.org](http://www.lpsc.org) or by contacting the Louisiana Public Service Commission, Transportation Division at 1-888-342-5717. If you have a complaint against this towing company regarding the amount charged for this non-consensual tow, complaints should be made in writing and addressed to P.O. Box 91154, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821 or by contacting a District Commissioner.
14. All complaints made under the Order and these Provisions shall be subject to the mediation orders and rules of the Commission.
15. All towing and recovery professionals are encouraged to accept other forms of payment besides cash. However, if a towing and recovery professional accepts only cash in payment of the invoice, they must either provide change at the time of payment or must state on the invoice the total amount of the invoice, the amount of cash received and the amount of change due to the consumer. The change due to the consumer SHALL be paid within 10 days of the payment of the invoice, by mailing a check to the consumer. It shall be the responsibility of the towing and recovery professional to retain evidence of said payment in the form of a cancelled check or certified mail receipt (green card). The towing and recovery professional must also post a clearly visible sign in its place of business advising consumers that if change is due, it will be mailed to the consumer within 10 days.
16. All rates set by this schedule shall be increased or decreased by an amount equal to the annual percentage rate as determined by the U.S. Department of Labor, Consumer Price Index (CPI) *for the South Region, Urban Population Parameter, "Transportation Commodities Less Motor Fuel Parameter."* The first adjustment shall be made on January 1, 2012 and every two years thereafter.