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Aurora police impound 1,500 cars under '3 strike' rule

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Aurora has impounded more than 1,500 vehicles from owners who violated the “three strikes” rule — failure to provide valid license, registration and insurance — since the law passed last November, according police data.

The law, which went into effect in November 2024, allows police to immediately seize cars from owners who can’t provide those three documents during a traffic stop.

Owners of seized and impounded cars have 30 days to provide valid documents to impound staff in order to get their cars back. If they don’t, the city puts the cars up for auction.

Year-to-date, Aurora police have impounded 1,061 cars for violating the “three strikes” law. In the two months of 2024 that the law was in place, police impounded 392 cars.

Since January, police have issued 4,989 summons for registration violations. March saw the highest number of registration violation summonses at 699. Police issued 494 in September, according to city data.

The “three strikes” law was put in place after police and city officials heard complaints from Aurora residents about the number of uninsured and unlicensed drivers and unregistered vehicles on the road, according to police spokesperson Joe Moylan.

“We’ve heard loud and clear from law-abiding residents who are fed up with vehicles on our roads with excessively expired plates or no registration at all,” Moylan said in a statement on Thursday. “It’s unfair to those who follow the law, and it creates an unnecessary burden for anyone involved in a crash with an unlicensed, unregistered and uninsured driver.”

The law also helps police fight crime, he said, because criminal offenders “often use fake, stolen or no plates to hide other crimes.”

Earlier this year, police stopped a driver without a license, insurance or registration and found him in possession of a kilo of fentanyl, Moylan said.

“This program works,” he said. “City data shows about 85% of impounded vehicles are retrieved within 30 days after drivers get valid licenses, insurance and registration, all required by state law.”

The city uses a third-party vendor, called Roller Auction, to auction off impounded vehicles. They are sold as-is.

“The city of Aurora Police Department nor Roller Auctions has any knowledge as to the condition, safety, keys or mileages on units in this auction,” a disclaimer on the Roller Auction website says, adding that no refunds would be given for any reason.

The most recent auction ended Wednesday, with the lowest bid winner at \$50 for a Coleman Pioneer Chesapeake Popup Camper, listed as abandoned, and the highest bid winner at \$14,000 for a 2007 Chevrolet Trailblazer. A search of cars listed in the most recent auction showed 179 results.

The city has a search function for impounded vehicles on its website.