

# Drivers face tougher impound laws

**By Alexis Huicochea**  
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Starting Friday, law-enforcement agencies statewide will enforce a recently revised law that mandates impounding a vehicle when three particular violations occur simultaneously.

A vehicle will be impounded for 30 days if:

- The person's driving privilege is canceled, suspended or revoked, or the person has never had a license from Arizona or any state.
- The vehicle is not insured as required by law.
- The person is driving a vehicle that is involved in an accident that results in either property damage or injury or death of another person, regardless of who is at fault in the accident.

When the law was originally enacted in 2001, it was worded in a way that made impounding a vehicle under the same circumstances optional, said Sgt. Ramon Batista, of the Tucson Police Department traffic unit.

However, no agencies chose to enforce it, prompting the revision, he said.

"A lot of times when we pull a person over because they are driving horribly, we find that they have no license, no registration, no insurance," Batista said. "You'd think those people would be more cautious because they don't have a license, but that is not usually the case.

"The intent is to try and get those drivers back to a licensed state and make sure everything is valid or get them off of the road."

Owners of impounded vehicles will either have to wait out the 30-day period or take corrective action, like having their driving privileges restored, according to Tucson police.

In addition, owners must also pay an administrative fee that can be as much as \$150 and towing and storage fees. They also will have to show that their license and registration are valid, a police news release said.

Owners can challenge the impounding in an administrative hearing, the release said.

On Nov. 1, the impounding criteria will expand to include other violations separate from the three already mentioned. Those are as follows:

A person's driving privilege is revoked for any reason, suspended because of a DUI conviction, suspended because they've been arrested before for driving on a suspended license, suspended for having too many violation points, or if the person is arrested for either extreme or aggravated DUI or being a minor under the influence of alcohol.

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