Recovered and Impounded Vehicle Procedures

DATE: January 6, 2006

FROM: RALPH J. WEBB, CAPTAIN
NORWALK STATION

TO: ALL PERSONNEL
NORWALK STATION

SUBJECT: STATION ORDER 06-01- RECOVERED AND IMPOUNDED VEHCILES

PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish policies and procedures for the handling of recovered and impounded vehicles at Norwalk Station.

When vehicles are impounded for evidence or ordered held for prints, the station incurs the towing fees and storage costs. This directive does not apply to vehicles impounded for 14601 CVC, which is mandated by state law for a thirty day impound pursuant to 14602.6 CVC.

Failure to properly notify victims of the recovery of stolen vehicles or notifying the registered and/or legal owner of impounded or stored vehicles places the County in a position of financial liability. MPP Section 5-01/070.00 and 22852 CVC mandates the notification within 48 hours. The following procedures shall apply to the person taking or processing this kind of report on all recovered and impounded vehicles:

Patrol Personnel's Responsibilities

- When taking stolen vehicle reports, personnel shall ensure that the addresses and telephone numbers of the reporting person and registered owner are correct. Whenever possible, the victim's email address shall be obtained and noted as an additional contact source on the CHP 180 report.
- When handling Recovered Stolen Vehicles, personnel shall do the following:

    1. Obtain the home telephone number of the reporting person/registered owner from station files or the reporting agency.
    2. Telephone the registered owner on a recorded lined and make notification of the recovery.
    3. Note the name of the person contacted, and the date, time, and phone number on the CHP 180 as the last comment in the "remarks" section. **(This is absolutely imperative)**.

- Recovered/stolen vehicles **are not to be impounded** for the purpose of obtaining fingerprints if the only crime is grand theft auto (MPP Section 5-01/060.20). They are to be stored only. Stolen/recovered vehicles are not to be routinely held for prints. There must be extenuating circumstances for holding the vehicle such as stripped of major identifiable parts, a serious crime other than grand theft auto, SVS entry "Hold For Prints," or another agency requested it. The Watch Commander must approve these extenuating circumstances. The deputy shall make every effort to have a fingerprint qualified PSO respond to the location of recovery, and print the vehicle prior to it being released in the field or towed to the storage yard.
- Impounded vehicles must have an investigative and/or evidentiary value to cause the impound (MPP

Sections 5-01/100.00 & 5-01/060.10). When there is any doubt as to an investigative and/or evidentiary value, a Norwalk Station Detective or a handling Detective in any case shall be conferred with.

- When a deputy intends to impound a vehicle for evidence or put a hold on it for prints, he or she must get prior approval from the Watch Commander. The deputy shall have the Watch Commander place their name and initials at the top of the CHP 180 report prior to taking it to the secretaries for entry in the computer system . The deputy shall explain to the Watch Commander the justification for holding the vehicle as an impound.
- All CHP 180 reports must include a written narrative. Pre-printed check off forms shall be discontinued to avoid any oversights for notifications and justifications.
- All CHP 180 reports must be completed, turned in, and approved before patrol personnel end their shift. For satellite work assignments, including the La Mirada Substation, all CHP 180 reports must be brought to Norwalk Station and processed within eight hours of the report being taken.

Watch Sergeant's Responsibilities

- The Watch Sergeant **shall not approve** any CHP 180 impound report or report with a hold, that has not been initialed by the Watch Commander.
- The Watch Sergeant **shall not approve** any CHP 180 report without a notation in the remarks section of a person contacted (date, time, and phone number), **or the failure** to contact the registered/legal owner of the recovered/impounded vehicle.
- The Watch Sergeant **shall make certain** that in the event the patrol personnel is unable to make notification to the registered/legal owner, the patrol personnel shall make a copy of the CHP 180 report. The copy shall be given to the on duty Detectives or in their absence to the Watch Deputy. The name of the Detective or Watch Deputy shall be noted in the remarks section.
- The Watch Sergeant **shall not accept** CHP 180 reports with a pre-printed check off form. The CHP 180 report must include a written narrative to avoid any oversights for notifications and justifications.
- The Watch Sergeant **shall not reject** any CHP 180 report without making the corrections and ensuring it is processed.
- The La Mirada Sergeant, and in his/hers absence, the Watch Sergeant **shall ensure** that all CHP 180 report left in the Annex are turned into Norwalk Station for processing.

Watch Commander's Responsibilities

- When the Watch Commander is presented with a CHP 180 report where the vehicle is either impounded or held for prints, he/she shall carefully evaluate the need for holding the vehicle, taking into consideration that the Sheriff's Department will be held responsible for the costs involved. If the hold or impound is warranted, the Watch Commander's name shall be printed at the top of the CHP 180 report along with their initials.
- The Watch Commander shall immediately complete a "Tow Memo" from the Captain to the Chief, justifying the cost to impound or hold the vehicle for prints. The memo will then be placed in the Admin. folder in the H-drive.
- The Watch Commander will make a copy of the memo and place it in the "Tow Memo Binder" kept in the Watch Commander's office. The entry shall include the Watch Commander's name, the file number, license number of the vehicle and a brief explanation for the reason of the hold. An exemplar is attached to this Management Directive and also working copies will be found in shared files under "Tow Memos."â€‹â€‹â€‹â€‹â€‹â€‹â€‹

Detectives' Responsibilities

- When Norwalk Station receives notification that a vehicle for which it filed a stolen vehicle report has been recovered and/or impounded, the investigating detective shall be responsible for providing verbal notification to the registered and/or legal owner. If the investigating detective is not immediately available, the Watch Deputy shall make the notification and the detective will confirmed the notification (MPP Section 5-01/070.05).
- When a detective is assigned a case where a vehicle involved has been impounded or held for prints, a high priority will be given to determining whether or not a hold shall be continued. If it is determined that the vehicle does not need to be held any longer, the detective shall be responsible for immediately having the vehicle status changed from impounded to stored. The detective shall complete a Release of Vehicle Hold form (SH-CR-94) and forward a copy to the towing service holding the vehicle. A copy of the release is to be included with the case file. The detective will then notify the registered owner that the vehicle is no longer being held by the Sheriff's Department, and that notification shall be documented in the case log and/or in a supplemental report.
- If the vehicle has been stored and held for prints, the detective shall determine if prints have been completed. If prints have not been completed, the detective will contact the front desk and have a qualified print person respond as soon as possible to have the vehicle printed. After the vehicle has been printed, the detective shall notify the registered owner of the vehicle that the vehicle is available to be picked up. That notification shall be documented in the case log and/or in a supplemental report.â€‹â€‹â€‹â€‹â€‹â€‹â€‹

Secretariat's Responsibilities

1. When a vehicle is recovered by Norwalk Station personnel, the on duty patrol secretary shall ensure that all possible owners (registered and legal) of the vehicle are included on the CHP 180 report and a notice of stored vehicle (CHP 126) is sent to each owner via certified/receipt mail. This includes all owners listed on the original stolen report, and the recovered report. The certified/receipt mail shall be prepared **no later than sixteen hours** from the time of recovery.
2. The prepared certified/receipt mail shall be given to the Watch Deputy before the expiration of the sixteen hours for the outgoing mail.
3. At the beginning of each shift, patrol secretaries shall identify all CHP 180 reports left over from the previous shift that will exceed the sixteen-hour mandate. This deficiency shall be immediately brought to the attention of the Watch Commander.
4. "Notices of Locate" (teletypes) in all recovered stolen vehicles shall be processed within 16 hours of receipt and given to the Watch Deputy for verbal owner notification.
5. Regardless of which agency recovered the vehicle, all recovered vehicles shall be processed within 48 hours excluding weekends and holidays (MPP Section 5-01/080.00 & 22852 CVC).â€‹â€‹â€‹â€‹â€‹â€‹â€‹

Watch Deputies' Responsibilities

1. The Watch Deputy, upon receipt of the "Notices of Locate" (teletypes) supplied by the secretariat on vehicles recovered by outside agencies, shall reconfirm that the registered owner has been contacted and advised of the recovery.
2. Watch Deputies shall make certain the name of the person contacted, the date and time, and the initials of the person telephoning the registered owner are on the "Notice of Locate" teletype supplied by the

secretariat.

3. Watch Deputies shall also ensure that the recovery notice is then placed in the secretariat “IN” tray.
4. Watch Deputies shall ensure that the prepared certified/receipt mail goes out with the outgoing mail

Norwalk and La Mirada Public Safety Officer Responsibilities

The above directive shall apply to all vehicles recovered, stored, or impounded by Norwalk and La Mirada Public Safety Officer Responsibilities. All CHP 180 reports shall be turned in and processed within the above time limits irregardless of assignment.