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## **Get to know your new Ontario consumer rights for towing and vehicle storage**

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**Thornhill, ON** – Effective January 1, 2017, new rules aimed at protecting consumers while regulating the towing industry in Ontario provide stronger standards for towing and vehicle storage. [CAA South Central Ontario](#) (CAA SCO) encourages Ontario motorists to become familiar with the new requirements, which include ensuring service providers disclose rates, notify drivers of where their vehicle is stored and provide an itemized invoice, among other new rules.

Through the *Fighting Fraud and Reducing Automobile Insurance Rates Act*, the Government of Ontario introduced progressive changes to provide consistent regulation of the industry throughout the province, to help improve tow and storage services and to tackle insurance fraud.

“Consumers now have new tools and rights in place to support their interactions with tow truck operators and vehicle storage providers during what can often be a stressful time for motorists after a collision or vehicle break down,” said Elliott Silverstein, Manager of Government Relations, CAA SCO. “CAA is proud to support these new regulations designed to improve towing and vehicle storage service delivery, provide long sought-after rights for consumers and help enhance overall trust and confidence in the industry.”

### **New Ontario Consumer Rights**

Through the *Fighting Fraud and Reducing Automobile Insurance Rates Act*, new enhancements to Ontario’s Consumer Protection Act now require tow and storage service providers to:

- Have permission from the consumer or someone acting on their behalf before towing or storing a vehicle
- Disclose rates and other information, such as the provider's name and telephone number, on tow trucks and in places of business
- Accept credit card payments from consumers
- Notify consumers where their vehicle will be towed
- Allow consumers to access their towed vehicle to remove personal property on business days from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at no charge
- Provide consumers with an itemized invoice listing the services provided and costs before receiving payment
- Disclose if they are receiving a financial incentive for towing a vehicle to a particular vehicle storage facility or repair shop

The new regulations establish minimum insurance coverage requirements and prohibits tow and storage providers from charging a higher rate for insurance companies or other third parties.

Exemptions around authorization and invoices will apply if services are provided through a membership association like CAA, where consumers are not charged for the specific service provided.

### **Certification for Truck Operators and Storage Service Providers**

Under the new legislation, effective January 1, 2017, all tow truck operators in Ontario are required to have a valid Commercial Vehicle Operator's Registration (CVOR) certificate. The CVOR system monitors commercial carrier safety to improve road safety for all road users and ensure compliance with the new legislation.

By including tow trucks under elements of the CVOR system, some of the benefits include ensuring that tow truck operators are accountable for proper safety maintenance of the vehicles and safe vehicle driving behaviours of the commercial driver.

CAA SCO has been an active stakeholder in the development of towing regulation in Ontario as an advocate for its Members, Ontario motorists and an industry player working directly with the towing industry's operators and companies. CAA is proud of its work, alongside government and industry related stakeholders across Ontario, toward modernizing the industry and service delivery.

***As a leader and advocate for road safety and mobility, [CAA South Central Ontario](#) is a not-for-profit auto club which represents the interests of 2 million Members. For over a century, CAA has collaborated with communities, police services and governments to help keep drivers and their families safe while travelling on our roads.***

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