



**For Immediate Release**

## CAA calls for provincial regulation of towing industry amid continued consumer complaints, reminds motorists of rights

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*New research shows that just half of consumers feel educated about their rights when it comes to towing and are most concerned with unexpected costs*

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**Thornhill, ON, October 18, 2017** – With continued instances of harrowing stories from motorists involving unscrupulous tow truck drivers on Ontario roads, [CAA South Central Ontario](#) (CAA SCO) is reminding motorists of their consumer rights and is calling on the Ontario government to make provincial regulation a priority.

While changes to the Consumer Protection Act took effect on January 1, 2017, problems persist with consumers being charged excess amounts and/or tow truck drivers not adhering to the new laws. Over the course of 2017, there have been several media reports sharing stories of consumers experiencing issues with tow truck drivers, such as being unable to pay by credit card, not being taken to their destination of choice, and other issues.

“There currently isn’t a centralized forum for consumers to file complaints if they have been overcharged or subject to other problems with service,” said Elliott Silverstein, manager of government relations, CAA SCO. “As a result, motorists are reaching out to police, municipalities and other outlets leading to an inconsistent process across Ontario. Provincial regulation would ensure much needed consistency and clarity for consumers.”

In August 2017, CAA engaged Ipsos to conduct a survey of Ontario drivers around their knowledge of their rights and the rules and regulations for the towing industry. The research indicated that motorists are largely unfamiliar with their rights and do not feel overly protected. Drivers surveyed support the provincial government establishing rules and regulations that would be consistent in every municipality.

### **Results from the survey include:**

- Only 51 per cent said they felt educated about their rights if they required assistance today
- 53 per cent of respondents were not aware that costs and requirements for towing differ across Ontario
- Only one in 10 were aware that tow trucks are regulated at the municipal level

### **When asked about their concerns using a towing service:**

- 76 per cent of respondents said “being charged an unreasonably high fee”
- 75 per cent of those surveyed said “having to wait a long time”
- 64 per cent cited “being misled and told by drivers that insurance will cover costs when it does not”



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- 61 per cent were concerned about “being towed to a different location than the one specified”

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In addition, 86 per cent of those surveyed supported the establishment of consistent rules and regulations at the provincial level (including training and licensing) in every municipality. That figure rises to 93 per cent among respondents who had previously used towing services for a collision.

CAA representatives are actively meeting with government and opposition party MPPs at Queen’s Park today to address these important consumer safety issues and the need for provincial regulation of the towing industry.

### About CAA South Central Ontario

For over a hundred years, CAA has been helping Canadians stay mobile, safe and protected. CAA South Central Ontario is one of nine auto clubs across Canada providing roadside assistance, travel, insurance services and Member savings for our over 2 million Members.

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