

Did You Know...? **Tow Truck Drivers Can't Automatically Stop For You**

It's probably happened to all of us at one time or another. The car or motorcycle breaks down & you need a tow. Aggravating but manageable. You call a service & they come get you. Right? Well, hopefully.

A friend of ours found herself in this situation. Her truck died and she got to the side of the road. BUT... here in AriZona we are all too aware of cell phone 'dead zones'. She was in one of these 'zones' and she couldn't make a call. A tow truck happened to come along and she waved it down. On the trip into town the driver commented that she was lucky she waved. After she shared her story with us, I called Michele of [Arizona Motorcycle Towing](#) and had a VERY informative conversation with her on this topic.

There you are ... on the side of the road needing help... in the heat... in the desert... and you can't get a call out. Some drivers are hesitant to stop. Hopefully they'll get into town & pass the word along that there's a stranded motorist out on the highway.

Now to add insult to injury... you see a tow truck rolling up the road. Woo Hoo!! Salvation! The driver can see you clearly. The truck has no load already on it. But he or she drives right on by. So now your thinking... WTF!!!!!!?

Did You Know that it is illegal for a towing company to stop for a disabled motorist? It is called 'soliciting business'. If the driver pulls over, they and/or the company can be ticketed. If you find yourself in this situation **YOU MUST WAVE THE DRIVER DOWN!** Then they can stop & render assistance.

While speaking with Michele she shared some other information that can be very helpful for people caught on the side of the road to know.

- ◆ Even if you can't get a phone call out, you MAY still be able to send a text. Get a text off to a friend who can get the 'rescue operation' underway.
- ◆ Call 911. Even if you can't get a phone call out in a 'dead zone', 911 reception usually works.
- ◆ If you are traveling in the HOV lane when you break down and have to pull off to the inside median, a tow truck cannot come in and pick you up. You have to be on the right-hand shoulder. NEVER try to cross the road on your own. Call 911 and explain that you are stuck in the median. DPS will come do a 'traffic break' to make way so you can safely push your vehicle to the right & off the road.

Here are some additional suggestions Michele offered:

- ▶ For couples who each have their own cell phone, use two different carriers. Sometimes one will work while the other won't.
- ▶ If DPS / LEOs stop to assist, you can tell them you want to call a certain provider, rather than who is next in their 'rotation'. You may need to be insistent, but they can do it. This is especially important when it is your motorcycle needing a tow. {Specialty cars... classics, customs, rear-wheel drive, etc. also have specific needs that a standard hook-style tow truck may be unable to handle.} So always keep the number of your favorite service with you.
- ▶ When you call your Roadside Service provider, you can tell them you want to call a certain provider, rather than who is next in their 'rotation'. Again, you may need to be insistent, but they can do it.
- ▶ You can call your favorite motorcycle or auto towing service from where you are stuck. Once the tow

is complete you can submit the paperwork to your Roadside Service provider for reimbursement.

If you do not have a Roadside Service you can call anyone to do the tow and pay them directly for it. If you leave the vehicle or do not have the money to pay someone to transport it, your vehicle will be towed to an impound yard where you'll need to pay the tow plus the associated impound fees. Then you still need to get it towed home or to a shop. That entails another round of fees. It can all add up fast. So it may be worth your while to look into Roadside Service providers.

While this didn't start out to be a commercial or a promotion, after what we learned it seems to be drifting that way. Some organizations, like AMA and AARP, offer coverage for both your motorcycles & autos, which is helpful in our community. Others carriers cover autos but charge extra for motorcycles. Michele added that Geico has a motorcycle-specific roadside coverage as does a company called Motorcycle Towing Services. Our AMA [American Motorcyclist Assn] membership includes Roadside. It's a pretty cool benefit, built in. It's something to research, to make the best choice for your needs. When considering coverage cost, keep in mind how many miles of travel are included per tow {you'll have to pay for any excess miles to your destination} and ask about what may be listed as "uncovered services".

None of us ever want to be in this type of situation, but if you are it's all good stuff to know.

Thank you Michele at [Arizona Motorcycle Towing](#) for your help with this article!

Betsy