

MINNESOTA

Professional Towing Association



Another September to Remember



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**If you would like to make a
contribution to help with the legislative
efforts, please send your donations to:**

**MPTA
2886 Middle Street
Little Canada, MN 55117**

Message From MPTA President, Ron Gardas Jr.

What a great fall training season. MPTA hosted its annual Advanced Light Duty class later in September as students learned about snatch blocks, parts of line, angles, and levers. Students recovered rolled over vehicles down embankments and a rolled over school bus up righted with a Ford F-600 with a ten series carrier matched with a side puller.

In mid-October MPTA hosted an Introduction to Heavy Duty class. Students learned how to pull driveshafts, air systems, while hooking up and towing heavy duty vehicles from points A to B.



After the heavy-duty class, the MPTA held a fundraiser for Representative Dave Baker and Senator John Jasinski. Was nice the two of them visited a towing facility and could see crashed cars in the impound lot not getting picked up and how day to day operations work from the towing side while sharing our issues with insurance companies. The two of them held a Q&A hearing our concerns. We hope that they can help with any efforts going forward.

Congratulations to Dean Wordelman, Mark Bonstrom and Tom Lyle as 2024 inductees into the MPTA Hall of Fame! Very well deserved! Let's get ready for some snow!

In Memoriam Thomas Eaton April 5, 1945 – September 26, 2024

Long time MPTA Member and Hall of Fame inductee Tom Eaton passed away on September 26th peacefully at home surrounded by his loving family. Tom dedicated most of his time to the family business of Eaton's Towing in Brooklyn Park. Tom enjoyed car racing, watching NASCAR every Sunday and spending time with his family at the Lake. Tom's celebration of life was held on October 12th



In 1966 when Tom was only 20 years old, together with his father Bud, built a foundation not only of their lives but the lives of their family owning and operating Eaton's Full-Service Texaco. Pumping gas, fixing cars, so towing came naturally. Tom found a 1947 Chevrolet with a Holmes 515 wrecker on the back which became the workhorse

In 1970 Texaco left the Minnesota market. At that time lease dealers had no rights- no first right of refusal when the oil companies sold property or closed the site. All the hard work and energy Tom, Bud and the Eaton family put into building their business and brand was stripped away when Texaco pulled out of the Minnesota market. Tom and his family closed the Burnsville and Lakeville stations moving the Brooklyn Park operation into Bud and Shirley's house.

With the repair part of the business closing, Tom and the family changed gears, focusing on dealership towing, and police towing. Picking up local contracts, the City of Brooklyn Park, Osseo, Maple Grove, Corcoran, Rogers, State Patrol, and Hennepin County Sheriff. In addition, The Eaton's teamed up with Iten Chevrolet leaving the tow trucks in their lot using Osseo Auto Body for an impound lot.

It was this willingness to help other companies and the ability to work together as a team that made Tom the perfect person to talk about the idea of a towing association. Tom remembered Dick Pellow, Morrie Golden, and Bruce Kohler coming to him talking about this idea. He was on board right away. Tom was one of the first ones to donate \$2,500 to get the association off the ground.

Because of that check and his vision of working together, hundreds of companies have benefited from his contributions. Thousands of towers have been trained and given guidance because of Tom's vision. Without Tom's contributions, the Minnesota Towing community wouldn't be what it is today!

MPTA Hosts Annual Meeting and Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony



On Tuesday September 24th, the MPTA hosted their Annual Meeting and annual Hall of Fame Inductee Ceremony at The DoubleTree by Hilton in Roseville recognizing three individuals with substantial contributions to the towing and recovery industry. As always, the Annual Meeting is a great opportunity for towing members to share thoughts about the upcoming year. Items discussed were legal and legislative issues, education and continuing how to assist our towing industry be the best it can be.

This year was the ninth year MPTA members cast their votes by mailing in their votes. There were four very respective towing members/ operators on the ballot. The three board of Directors voted on the board of directors are Jay Thompson of Lake City Towing, Noah Kreitinger of Dean's Towing, and Ron Gardas Jr. of Twin Cities Transport & Recovery. I encourage every MPTA member in the future to attend our Annual Meeting, as this is your meeting.

MPTA realizing it is time to display the roots of our membership and profession, each year three nominees making a difference in our industry and the MPTA are enshrined into the MPTA Hall of Fame. Each August/September a new class is inducted into the MPTA Hall of Fame.

Congratulations to the class of 2024! Thomas Lyle; Lyle Bros. Towing & Auto Parts, Dean Wordelman; Dean's Westside Towing and Mark Bonstrom; Mark's Towing.

What a great evening topped by a great group of attendees making a very special occasion even better! Hope to see you at next year's Annual meeting/HOF Induction ceremony!



Ron Gardas Jr. & Dean Wordelman



Ron Gardas Jr. & Mark Bonstrom



Ron Gardas Jr. & Rick Lyle (accepting for Thomas Lyle)



Thomas Lyle

Thomas Joseph Lyle was born to Sam and Florance Lyle on Saturday August 5th, 1933. Tom, the eldest of two younger brothers (Jim and Bob) everyone knew, Tom and his brothers were born and raised in the family business in Duluth. Later in life people commonly thought Lyle Bros. Towing & Auto Parts was Tom and his brothers. But Lyle Bros. had a deeper history than that. Lyle Bros. was founded just a few weeks before Tom was born in 1933 by Tom's uncles Bill and John Lyle.

In the 1930's and 1940's, Duluth experienced a massive population boom due to many jobs in the railroad and shipping industries with increase work on the docks. Prohibition repealed in 1933 paving the way for Duluth Brewery and Malting- one of two breweries in the United States boasting a malting plant. The other was Hamm's Brewery in St Paul. With the population boom and new industry in Duluth, there was a need for towing and auto parts.

Lyle Bros nestled in a large three-story building formally a carriage manufacturing building in the Canal Park area of Duluth, was located by the water. The windows in the large building were big, you could see the tow trucks and the largest parts department north of the Twin Cities. New and used auto parts, Heavy duty parts, Towing, Salvage, even cutting their own auto glass with forms of all different makes and models of cars so they could cut the glass accurately.

As a young kid, Tom loved hanging around the family business! Washing his uncle's cars- getting his hands on some pocket change, a huge deal for a young kid. Tom also enjoyed opportunities the city of Duluth had to offer. Going down to the pier watching the large ships in the harbor, fishing in the Cloquet river and ski jumping at Chester bowl in the winter months.

Graduating from Duluth Central High school in 1951, Tom followed in his father's footsteps serving his country in the US Army's 25th infantry division as a Gunnery Sergeant. Trained in chemical, biological, and radiological warfare in Korea was no picnic. Constantly under the threat of attack and very cold at night. On his way to Korea from San Fransico, Tom's unit was caught in a major storm, a typhoon. On July 27th, 1953, Tom was on the front lines when they signed the Korean Armistice Agreement.



By 1955 the Korean war ended, Tom was coming home. When Tom started working full-time at Lyle Bros. Tom worked six days a week for his uncle's company. Even though Tom's last name was "Lyle" Tom felt he needed to make a name for himself eventually finding his niche in towing at Lyle Bros. Towing & Auto Parts.

In a rare down moment, Tom in his new bright yellow sports car was out cruising Canal Park that moment time stopped for Tom. Right there in line at the hamburger stand, Tom met a girl. Gloria Dell Fossmo! Tom and Gloria dated for a few years before getting married on November 8th, 1958. Tom and Gloria settled down in a new family home on Park Point. The family home that Gloria still lives in to this date. Tom and Gloria would welcome three Children- Deb, Barb, and Rick.

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In the next coming decades Lyle Bros. experienced immense growth. Tom helped shape Lyle Bros. into the premier towing company not only in Duluth but anywhere in the north country. Lyle Bros. covered a large area for towing while having more trucks and the biggest trucks of anyone in Duluth. With Tom's big 850 Holmes wrecker, Tom found a way to move boats in and out of the harbor in Lake Superior. Even manufacturing a custom-made lifting beam for boats.



The stories are legendary of Lyle Bros. employees getting out for a job on the side of the road with white coveralls and a chauffeur's hat and many times wearing bow ties.

Auto parts/heavy truck parts were indeed a successful business for Lyle Bros. Tom saw an opportunity to store auto parts in the tow truck so when they are out on a call they can drop the parts at local repair shops. Lyle Bros. charged for delivery while creating business relationships with repair shops. Lyle Bros. started buying repair shops and renting bays to other business owners, creating another opportunity selling parts to the tenants while extending towing support.

Tom found he loved spending time at home-coming home every day for lunch. After dinner Tom would go back to work around 9pm every night and start closing things up, Lyle Bros. closed at 10pm. Tom would come home to his favorite part of the day, having the fresh warm peanut bread Gloria cooked right before bedtime.

Tom was all about his community! Donating a tremendous amount of time to many organizations such as The Scottish rite, the Mason Lodge, the American Legion, the Elks Club, and he was a charter member of the Minnesota professional Towing Association.

As Alzheimer's disease took a harder grip on Tom, he liked to drive around Duluth and reminisce; even stopping by Lake City Towing sharing fond towing memories from the past.

On a day when Duluth experienced a historic winter storm, Tom lost his battle with Alzheimer's disease on the first of December of 2019. Visibility was non-existent and a snow total of twenty-two inches fell on Duluth. Only fitting because Tom must have known that it was time to go to work.





Dean Wordelman

Dean Carlyle Wordelman was born to Carl and Lillian Wordelman in Sioux falls south Dakota on March 13th, 1947.

Dean at the age of ten, the oldest of three children, his mother and father packed up the family moving to Owatonna Minnesota. Dean's parents renting a farm at the time, had the opportunity buying 250 acres of land in Owatonna. Carl Wordelman felt this was his chance to be in control of his own fate, and a more secure future. The family farm raised cattle, hogs, and chickens.

Growing up on a farm was fun, hard work and challenging while fulfilling life lessons Dean never forgot. Lessons of hard work, getting the job done no matter what, and using what you have. Dean's mother, Lillian, was a teacher at the local schoolhouse in Owatonna instilling the importance of education into her children.

Before graduating from Owatonna High School in 1965, during his high school years, and shortly after graduating, Dean worked at the local Conoco station fueling station. As a car lover, Dean fell in love with the 1964 Plymouth Pursuit. It was the Police Interceptor of the day, a souped-up Plymouth Fury. Dean remembers driving to North Minneapolis to pick it up. But what we do know is Dean got excited when he saw the Bruno family truckster pull up.

Yes, Dean enjoyed seeing Richard Bruno. The local Owatonna sheriff. A man Dean respected and admired, but it was his daughter Mary Bruno Dean really enjoyed seeing. Mary and Dean started dating in the summer of 1966 as Mary still remembers their first date. Driving to Bloomington to the old Met Stadium catching a Twins game.

In 1966 Dean enrolled in the business administration program at Mankato State University. Unfortunately, college and life were placed on hold. In 1967 Dean was drafted by the United States Army, stationed in Vietnam assigned to running a typewriter as the war ended, ending his time as a Battalion Headquarters S1 Clerk. Dean came home, once again attending Mankato State. Dean fell one class shy of graduating from Mankato state, hating Greek mythology. Dean did come home with his pilot's license. Except... he never once flew.

Not knowing what he wanted to do for an occupation, Dean took a job at the local concrete company making drainage tile, and later managing.

On September 1st, 1972 Dean and Mary got married, which happens to also be Mary's birthday. In 1978, Matt, the first of two sons was born and later in 1983, Kyle was born.

In 1983, Dean hit with his purpose in life working overnights at Ambest truck stop in Owatonna. At that same location there was a towing company, Dean acquired the poorly run towing company while making a deal to buy Westside Towing and Interstate Towing Service- known today as Interstate Towing Service DBA Deans Westside Towing.



Dean blessed with three old worn out heavy wreckers, a few light duty wreckers, an employee or two, and a set of air cushions which were a rarity at that time. Two old Holmes 600's and the flagship was a broken-down Holmes 750.

Deans first day in business was April 1st,1983. Not knowing what to expect, finding out the towing industry and emergency services waits for no one. Deans first call was a rolled over tractor trailer with a set of doubles (two trailers). Keep in mind, Dean had no experience using his basic mechanical knowledge, his farming just get-it done attitude, and a not giving up work ethic. The first roll-over was a success.



In the following years, Dean added trucks and whatever he could not afford, he built. Whether it was a heavy wrecker, or winch box, Dean was able to picture what he wanted to build in his head and make it come to life.

Dean just understood things an average person did not. Understanding mechanical advantage and leverage gaining trust and respect with not only the state patrol but customers too. Dean with his understanding of mechanical advantage and Leverage, used his head whether recovering farm equipment or large jobs/roll-overs. Many organizations and customers in trouble would always say, "I need Dean!"

In 2016, Dean sold Dean's Westside Towing and Interstate Service, however that did not mean Dean slowed down. Still building winch boxes with his brother Kent, golfing, and cruising around in his Liberator speed boat.

After selling Dean's, Dean found his true calling in not his work life but his personal life-making other people happy. Dean has two therapy dogs – Ollie and Ottis. Every Sunday and Tuesday, Dean takes his therapy dogs to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester and to the hospital in Owatonna every Friday. Dean will share "life isn't all about work and business, how much money can you stuff into your casket, it's the other things in life that have brought him joy." The therapy dogs, not missing Matt and Kyle's football or baseball games. Dean is immensely proud of the fact his two boys went to school and finished their degrees.





Mark Bonstrom

Mark Danial Bonstrom was born on November 21st, 1961, to John and Charlotte Bonstrom in the sprawl city of Richfield. Mark's parents were working class people knowing the importance of hard work as his family owned and operated gas stations in and around Bloomington and Richfield. John and Charlotte instilled the importance of hard work, drive, determination, resilience, and integrity in their three kids, John, Ruth Ann, and Mark.

Mark began working in the family business when he was in fourth grade sweeping/mopping floors, driving customers cars on the hoists, taking tires off the rims, remove studs from the tires, place them back on the rims and then back on the car. Mark was paid fifty cents per tire and to this day still has the calluses on his hands.

Graduating from Richfield High School in 1980, Mark wanted to do something else rather than staying in the gas station business. With an old friend, Mike Firth and Mark created a partnership. Mark knew Mike as Mike towed broken-down cars to Mark's Father's Texaco Station on the corner of 81st & Nicollet. Around that time, the city of Minneapolis made large changes to their towing procedures. Minneapolis decided to split the city into four quadrants instead of two and have the impounded vehicles brought back to a city run impound lot rather than a private lot- this policy is still in effect to this day.

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Mark's friend Mike saw an opening- The two of them were going after one of the new zones. Mark borrowed money and bought a used Chevrolet with a Holmes 440 Hi Power with a sling. Then, just like that Mike and Mark were partners. Mark and Mike ended up getting zone four, the southwest corner of the city. It went from downtown, down 35W, then to the crosstown and up to 394.

In May of 1982, Mark met the love of his life, a true-life partner, Michelle Lalim. She was getting ready to leave when Mark walked in. Well, she did not want to leave, and Mark did not want her to leave. Mark and Shelly married Saturday April 7th, 1984, welcoming three children to their family- Sara, Jordan, and Kyle.

In 1985 things were really changing for Mark's new business. Mark and Mike's partnership ended, Mark attracting new customers staying ahead of his competition bought a new Ford one ton wrecker with a new challenger hydraulic under reach. It was a beautiful red color with some silver on it. It was because of this truck; red became Mark's Towing signature color.

On January 25th, 1986, Mark and Shelly went from being a family of two to now a family of three welcoming their first child, Sara. A towing business is hard to manage in January and Mark felt the pressure now their family grew and more to support. Between having a new baby and the stress of owning a towing business, Mark and Shelly were able to manage these moments together.



Later in 1986, Mark's towing picked up the Metropolitan Airport Commission. For over 30 years, day after day jump starting cars and moving things on site. Mark's father worked for Mark after he sold his gas station businesses and he and his dad would work side by side for hours jump starting cars in the lots.

In 1988 Mark and Shelly relocated their towing business, and their home to Eagan. The decision proved to be the right decision as Eagan's Population boomed the next two decades and Mark's Towing answered the call and growing right along with the city of Eagan.

Before Mark and Shelly were able to move into their new house in Eagan, for six weeks, Mark and Shelly slept on the pull out couch in shop, while Sara ran around the shop getting dirty as her little hands and dirty footprints all ways on the wall, Mark and Shelly never painted over them. The last driver left the shop at 6:00pm, the family of three transformed the shop into their home for the evening as Shelly took over the phones until 6:00am.

Mark and Shelly always placed their employees' needs before their own. Mark and Shelly answered the office phones on Christmas and other holidays so their employees could spend time with their families. Mark and Shelly liked the employees to work with them, not for them.

Taking a page out of Mark's father's playbook, Mark and Shelly diversified expanding their business to hauling equipment, police towing, heavy duty towing complimenting their light duty towing. When one industry slows down you get busy in another. Do not just focus on police towing or dealership towing, it takes all types of business to stay busy.

In the early 2000's Mark and Shelly began attending more tow shows while speaking with business owners realizing they have more in common than they thought. Soon after, Mark became a board member of the MPTA and eventually the President. Mark was very in tune with training and legislative issues- loved getting everyone together at towing association picnics. Mark has been quoted "just because you are competitors in business does not mean you have to be enemies in life. I do not care who you are or how many trucks you have we all need to work together!"

Mark and Shelly sold Mark's Towing in 2022. Residents of Eagan and the towing industry for the past 40 years, Mark's Towing was a name you could trust, a name on which you could rely.

"I could have never done it without my father putting in all those hours at the airport, could not have done it without my sister Ruth answering the phone all those years. Shelly's mom watching the kids when working long hours and most of all he could not have done it without his wife and partner Shelly by his side. I am most proud that my family was there with me. We were able to provide a good life for our children, giving my kids the opportunity to go to college and graduate. That is what I am most proud about." – Mark Bonstrom



MPTA Hosts Two-Day Advanced Light Duty Training Class



On September 24th and 25th MPTA supported our towing operators with a 2-day advanced light duty training class. MPTA board directors Ron Gardas Jr. and Ron Feist taught the early classroom portion of the school with new information and safety statistics and everyday basics of getting ready for each towing shift. With an ever-changing industry, it's always nice to open the classroom up for instruction and FAQ's. Students were taught everything from sizes of chains, straps, pressure points, Lever's, recovery, use of snatch blocks and even how to better prepare yourself mentally and professionally.



With nearly forty students in attendance, MPTA board directors hosted several hands-on training sessions featuring difficult hook ups, recovery situations, roll-overs, working load limits and experiencing use of chains and straps getting a feel for what our industry has to offer. Although the school gives you a great "Hands on" experience, it can only prepare you for the "real thing!" Teaching students the advanced lessons of recovering vehicles in a tough environment while learning the "Do's and Do not's" of our industry.



MPTA Board Directors sponsored the event providing many vehicles and the use of their own equipment. The students were promised to get hands on training while getting dirty- just like every MPTA training class. Every training class the MPTA conducts, all of us learn more from the instructors as well as from our students. Special thanks to Ron Gardas Jr. and Ron Feist for teaching recovery fundamentals in the classroom as well as Many MPTA Board of Directors assisting in the classroom and recovery sessions.



Shout out to Western National Insurance for sponsoring our event! Together we support our industry, but more importantly our professionalism. I would say when one looks at the time, money, and personal commitment, at the end of the day, it's all well worth it!

Hope to see you or your employees at the next MPTA endorsed training class!



MN AG's - pricing transparency guidance (Junk Fees) Takes effect January 1, 2025



As reported at the end of the 2024 Legislative session, the “Junk fee” bill for all businesses in Minnesota is effective January 1, 2025. MSSA members in the Auto repair, C-store and towing industries, this does apply to all of you. Example, when installing new tires, MSSA members will have to quote a price with all fees in the price (See example in the attached documents). Price for the tires, fees, and labor. Basically transparent. Our towing members, same thing. Price of the tow bill, fuel surcharge and any other fees (credit card, etc.) Only rates exempt from the “Junk fee bill) are all state and Federal taxes and fees.

Please review the attached guidelines from the Minnesota Attorney General’s office and reach out to me if any questions or concerns. - Lance



Effective January 1, 2025, Minnesota’s Deceptive Trade Practices Act (Minn. Stat. 325D.44, *et seq.*) will contain new provisions that make it illegal for someone to advertise, display, or offer a price for goods or services that does not include all mandatory fees or surcharges. The law is not a pricing regulation and does not dictate how much someone can charge for goods or services. Instead, the law requires that the price advertised, displayed, or offered include all mandatory fees and surcharges.

To help businesses comply with this new law, and to offer consumers guidance about what they can expect, the Attorney General’s Office is releasing this set of Frequently Asked Questions. The law, 2024 Minn. Laws chapter 111, will be located at Minnesota Statutes section 325D.44, subdivision 1a-b.
paid for a good or service.

[What is the purpose of this law?](#)

This law intends to help businesses compete fairly on price and allow consumers to make accurate price comparisons by requiring disclosure of the total price for goods or services, inclusive of all mandatory fees or surcharges. The law seeks to prohibit drip pricing—which involves advertising a price that is less than the actual price that has to be paid for a good or service—as well as other tactics used to hide or obscure the true, total price that must be paid for a good or service.




The law requires honest and transparent pricing. It prohibits someone from advertising, displaying, or offering “a price for goods or services that does not include all mandatory fees or surcharges.” In other words, it requires that if persons advertise, display, or offer a price, this must be the total price for a good or service, that includes all mandatory fees and surcharges.

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Mandatory fees and surcharges that must be included in the total price advertised, displayed, or offered include any fee or surcharge that: (1) must be paid in order to purchase the good or service; (2) is not reasonably avoidable by the consumer; and (3) a reasonable person would expect to be included in the purchase of the goods or services being advertised. Taxes imposed by a government entity on the sale, use, purchase, receipt, or delivery of the goods or services are not “mandatory fees” under the new law, and thus, do not need to be included in the total price.

Below is an example of two compliant advertised prices and one non-compliant advertised price under this new pricing transparency law:

 Compliant	 Compliant	 Not Compliant
Advertised Price: \$20.00	Advertised Price: \$20.00 *Price includes \$2.00 service fee and \$3.00	Advertised Price: \$15.00 Surcharge: \$ 3.00 Service Fee: \$ 2.00

What can be excluded from the advertised price under this law?

Taxes imposed by a government entity on the transaction, such as sales tax, can be excluded from the total price advertised, displayed or offered. In addition, the total price does not need to include reasonable shipping costs that are actually incurred by the consumer.

Additionally, if a fee or surcharge is reasonably avoidable by consumers, it is not “mandatory” and thus, can be excluded from the total price advertised, displayed, or offered. Examples of fees or surcharges that may not be mandatory—so long as they are reasonably avoidable by consumers—include but are not limited to: (1) late fees for equipment rentals, (2) charges for smoking in a hotel room, or (3) credit card surcharges (see below question “Can a business still charge a credit card surcharge”).

The law also provides for some industry-specific exceptions, which are discussed in more detail below.

Can businesses comply with this law by disclosing mandatory fees or surcharges separately from the advertised price, before a consumer finalizes a transaction?

No. The price advertised, offered, or displayed to consumers must be the full price that the consumer is required to pay, inclusive of all mandatory fees or surcharges.

Who needs to follow this law?

The law broadly applies to any person who, in the course of their business, vocation, or occupation, advertises, displays, or offers a price for goods or services in Minnesota. Accordingly, the law generally applies to individuals or businesses that advertise, display, or offer a price for goods or services in Minnesota or to Minnesota consumers.

While the law generally applies to almost all industries, it does not apply to:

- “fees authorized by law related to the purchase or lease of a motor vehicle that are charged by a motor vehicle dealer”
- businesses or business affiliates “regulated by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission”; or
- “any fees, surcharges, or other costs associated with settlement services, as defined in the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act, United States Code, title 12, section 2602(3)” excluding real estate broker commissions and fees.

Are industries or businesses that are already governed by state law for pricing disclosures exempt?

Generally, no. While the law provides several exemptions for certain industries and fees, for all other businesses, regardless of whether those businesses are also regulated by state law for certain pricing disclosures, this law will apply. Also, this new law does not act to supersede any other statutes, rules, or regulations that businesses may be subject to.

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Does the law limit how much someone can charge for a good or service or the types of fees that someone can charge?

No. A business is generally free to charge however much it wants and can then provide a breakdown of the various fees that are included in its advertised, displayed, or offered total price. But the total price advertised, displayed, or offered must include the full amount, including all mandatory fees or surcharges, that a consumer must pay for that good or service.

Can businesses still advertise discounts or sales?

Yes. Nothing in this new law prevents a business from offering goods or services at a discounted price from the advertised, displayed, or offered price. But other Minnesota laws prohibit advertising that is false or misleading, so businesses that advertise discounts must do so in compliance with those laws.

When does this new law become effective?

For most industries, this law will become effective January 1, 2025. But for businesses whose prices are regulated by the Metropolitan Airports Commission, this law is not effective until June 1, 2025.

Is this new law retroactive? What about contracts which were signed before January 1, 2025 but are not complete until after January 1, 2025?

This law is not retroactive. To the extent a contract was signed before January 1, 2025, this law does not apply regardless of when the contractual obligations are completed.

Can a business still charge a credit card surcharge? Does that surcharge need to be included in the advertised price?

This law does not govern what fees or surcharges a business can charge. It governs how those fees or surcharges are disclosed to consumers. If the credit card surcharge is an optional charge, meaning a consumer could reasonably avoid the surcharge by paying with cash, then this credit card surcharge is not a “mandatory fee” under the law and the surcharge would not need to be included in the total price that is advertised, displayed, or offered. Businesses should be aware, however, of other consumer protection provisions that still apply to such surcharges. So to the extent a business decides to impose such surcharges or fees, its communication of such surcharges or fees must comply with other state consumer protection laws.

Can restaurants continue to charge a health and wellness fee as long as it is clearly and conspicuously disclosed ahead of time?

The law governs how mandatory fees, such as a restaurant’s “health and wellness” fee, are disclosed to consumers. To the extent the “health and wellness” fee is a mandatory fee as defined under the new law, any such fee would need to be included in the total price the restaurant advertises, displays, or offers to consumers. This law does not prohibit a restaurant from charging such a fee nor does this law prohibit a restaurant from also itemizing the fee, in addition to showing the total price.

Can restaurants continue to charge an automatic and mandatory gratuity (e.g., a 15% automatic gratuity is added for parties of 8 or more)?

Food and beverage establishments, including hotels, can continue to charge automatic and mandatory gratuities. These gratuities do not need to be included in the advertised total price, but instead, this law requires that such automatic and mandatory fees be disclosed clearly and conspicuously. However, if the charge at issue is not a gratuity as that term is defined under applicable Minnesota laws and rules, and is instead a mandatory fee, then that fee must be included in the total price advertised, displayed, or offered to consumers by the restaurant.

How does this law affect tips or gratuities left voluntarily by customers?

This law does not affect tips or gratuities because they are not mandatory.

What about mandatory fees charged by restaurants?

If a restaurant charges a mandatory fee, other than an automatic and mandatory gratuity as gratuity is defined elsewhere in Minnesota law, it must be included in the total price advertised, displayed, or offered to consumers by the restaurant.

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Below is an example of two compliant menus and one non-compliant menu under this new pricing transparency law:

✓ Compliant

Sandwich \$10.50
Salad \$7.88
Soup \$7.10

All parties of 8 or more people will incur a 20%

✓ Compliant

Sandwich \$10.50
Salad \$7.88
Soup \$7.10

All parties of 8 or more people will incur a 20% automatic gratuity.

**All prices include a 5% health and wellness fee, which helps pay for health insurance for our employees.*

✗ Not Compliant

Sandwich \$10.00
Salad \$7.50
Soup \$6.75

All parties of 8 or more people will incur a 20% automatic gratuity.

**All orders will incur a 5% health and wellness fee, which helps pay for health insurance.*

What about delivery platforms? How do they comply with this new law?

Third-party delivery platforms must clearly and conspicuously display any flat fee or percentage charged for delivery at the time that the customer selects a vendor or item for purchase, and again prior to checkout.

How does this new law apply to auctions?

Persons selling goods or services in an auction must disclose “in a clear and conspicuous manner any mandatory fees associated with the transaction and that the total cost of the goods or services may vary.”

What if a business cannot determine the total price at the outset, because the price depends on consumer selections and preferences, or the total price relates to distance or time?

If the total price of a service is determined by consumer selections and preferences, or if the total price relates to distance or time, the seller must disclose “in a clear and conspicuous manner (1) the factors that determine the total price, (2) any mandatory fees associated with the transaction, and (3) that the total cost of the services may vary.”

What if an individual or business does not comply with the new law?

First and foremost, the Attorney General’s Office is focused on working with businesses and individuals to get voluntary compliance with this law. Our Office will continue to educate businesses and consumers about this law to promote and ensure voluntary compliance. However, if a business or person refuses to comply with the law, the Attorney General can further investigate their business practices. If the Attorney General substantiates that a person or business is not complying with the law, it can file a civil law enforcement action in district court and seek to recover the remedies of injunctive relief, restitution, disgorgement, civil penalties of up to \$25,000 per violation, costs and disbursements, including costs of investigation and any reasonable attorneys’ fees.

We Cannot Give Legal Advice to Individuals

We are not authorized to give specific legal advice to individuals or to act on behalf of individuals in private legal matters. If you feel you need legal advice and want an attorney to advise you, the Minnesota State Bar Association’s Attorney Referral Service is available on the Internet at www.mnfindalawyer.com. A flyer called “Hiring an Attorney” is also available on the Attorney General’s website, which provides tips on locating and retaining an attorney.

Towing cars has become a deadly business in Canada's largest city.

TORONTO—Towing cars has become a deadly business in Canada's largest city as Rival gangs control parts of the tow-truck industry here, using the heavy-duty vehicles to transport drugs, extort car-crash victims with high fees, and fake automobile accidents to defraud insurance. They once resolved their territorial differences with their fists, but now a wave of gun smuggling from the U.S. has turned their fights into a lethal blood sport.

This year through late August, Toronto shootings are up 50% compared with the same period last year and homicides are up 20%—a surge caused in part by "the tow-truck violence," said Inspector Paul Krawczyk of the Toronto Police Service's guns-and-gangs unit. In all, about one in seven of Toronto's shootings and dis-chargings of firearms this year have been related to the towing industry, police said.

Drive-by shootings have targeted drivers and company offices. Masked arsonists have doused trucks in gasoline and torched them. In July, police said, two teenagers with a stolen Glock handgun killed a man after going on a two-day, citywide shooting spree that targeted towing-company offices and tow trucks.

In March, a towing-company owner was shot dead in a gangland-style killing in Toronto's north end. His killing, which remains unsolved, triggered a spasm of violence. Things have gotten so bad that Toronto's police department has created a tow-truck task force.

Authorities blame guns smuggled from the U.S. for the surge in violence. Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow has boosted the city's policing budget and invested in programs to prevent youths from joining gangs, but she said the police are scrambling to keep up.

Organized gangs rely on a readily available supply of guns smuggled north from such places as Ohio, Michigan, Texas and Florida, where it is much easier to buy a gun than in Canada.

Many Canadians own hunting guns, but can't legally buy handguns, and semiautomatic rifles such as the AR-15 are banned. Background checks for firearms licenses are mandatory. Smuggled U.S. firearms are used in as many as 90% of all gun crimes in Toronto, according to the city's police.

In Toronto, the crime groups often overcharge accident victims for towing and storage fees. Sometimes they fake accidents and, working with body shops and physiotherapists, create fake auto-repair and healthcare bills that bring in thousands of dollars from insurance companies. In raids on towing gangs, police have seized cash and drugs along with guns.

The province of Ontario, where Toronto is located, has introduced regulations that will force towing companies to be certified and for drivers to pass background checks.

"While the vast majority of Ontario's towing industry operates in good faith, bad actors have preyed on vulnerable drivers for too long," said Prabmeet Sarkaria, minister of transportation, in a June announcement.



11 Million ICE Vehicles Bypass the Junkyard



"Nearly 11 million cars and light trucks were not scrapped in the U.S. from 2018 through 2023 due to annual vehicle scrappage rates averaging one-sixth lower than during the previous 15 years. Almost all vehicles escaping the junkyard were Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) cars and light trucks."

"This reduction in scrappage has four significant consequences for the country's vehicles in operation (VIO): the number of cars and light trucks on the road, the share of domestic and foreign nameplate vehicles, the growth of older automobiles, and the ICE vehicles' VIO domination. See the expanded 2025 Lang Aftermarket Annual for an analysis of ICE vehicles' share of the nation's VIO and aftermarket product volume.

Modest Annual Scrappage

Vehicle scrappage (vehicles removed from operation) in the U.S. has traditionally increased when new car and light truck sales climb or the numbers of older vehicles expand.

Although new vehicle yearly sales rose to record heights between 2015 and 2019, the next four years were a different story as they suffered an average annual 15% reduction. At the same time, the population of older vehicles (12 years plus) rose to record heights. Nevertheless, yearly scrappage rates trended downward from 2018 through 2023.

Vehicles in Operation (VIO)

Lower vehicle scrappage during 2018 through 2023 boosted the nation's VIO by nearly 11 million cars and light trucks, vehicles that would have headed to the junkyard had the yearly scrappage rates not declined.

The nearly 11 million cars and light trucks not scrapped accounted for over 95% of the total VIO gain (just over 11 million) during these years.

Domestic Nameplate VIO

Domestic nameplate cars and light trucks have accounted for nearly three-quarters of all vehicles scrapped over the past ten years.

This means that the domestic nameplate population was boosted by about 8 million during this period, slowing the growth of foreign nameplates as a percentage of all cars and light trucks in operation despite their robust share of new vehicle sales.

More Vehicles in Older Age Groups

Older cars and light trucks, particularly those at least 15 years old, represent a disproportionate share of vehicles scrapped.

They are more likely than newer vehicles to be "totaled" in accidents (because of their diminished value) and less likely to be spared from the junk pile when expensive repairs are needed.

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Accordingly, the below-average scrappage rates have been a significant factor driving the record growth of vehicles topping 15 years on U.S. roads.

More ICE Vehicles Stay on the Road

Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles constituted virtually all of the nearly 11 million cars and light trucks that had not been scrapped from 2018 through 2023.

The total number of ICE vehicles not scrapped amounted to about three times the sales of Electric Vehicles over these six years, both Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV) and Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV).

As a result, ICE vehicles accounted for over 98% of the 2023 VIO, a much larger share than if scrappage rates had remained high and the nearly 11 million ICE vehicles had gone to the junk pile.

Aftermarket Consequences

Low scrappage rates have impacted the aftermarket in three important ways.

First, the expanding VIO and growth of older cars and light trucks facilitate aftermarket product growth.

Second, the impact of below-average scrappage on the foreign and domestic nameplate mix has consequences for the aftermarket regarding where automotive parts are sold, where vehicles are serviced, and the brands of products used in vehicle repair and maintenance.

Third, the dominant ICE share of the VIO has significant aftermarket consequences ranging from the brands of repair products used to the total volume of aftermarket products and where parts and services are purchased.

Six Major Takeaways

- From 2018 through 2023, annual vehicle scrappage rates in the U.S. averaged one-sixth lower than over the preceding 15 years.
- The below-average scrappage rates kept nearly 11 million cars and light trucks from landing on the scrap heap in the U.S. during the past six years (2018 through 2023).
- The nearly 11 million vehicles not scrapped represented more than 95% of the total VIO gain from 2018 to 2023. Without the falling average annual scrappage rates, the nation's VIO would have remained nearly flat.
- Domestic nameplates comprise the largest share of older vehicles. The declining scrappage rates kept millions of domestic nameplates on the road and slowed the share growth of foreign nameplates during these six years.
- Since older cars and light trucks generally account for the largest portion of scrapped vehicles, the decline in annual scrappage rates enabled the number of older vehicles on the road (particularly those at least 15 years) to increase from 2018 through 2023. This fueled aftermarket product growth since older cars and light trucks use more aftermarket products per mile than newer ones.
- ICE cars and light trucks constituted virtually all of the nearly 11 million vehicles that escaped the junkyard between 2018 and 2023. This helped to maintain the ICE vehicles' dominant share of the nation's VIO. See the just-released 2025 Lang Aftermarket Annual for an analysis of the ICE vehicles' dominant share of the expanding VIO and aftermarket product volume. [Click Here](#) for a Table of Contents and [Click Here](#) for the Order form.

Jim Lang, Publisher



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MPTA Members Have Fun at Elko Speedway! “Once again the MPTA’s Eve of Destruction didn’t disappoint”



This past September marked the tenth time the MPTA has hosted and sponsored its annual picnic at Elko Speedway. Just over 250 MPTA towing members, friends and family attended this perfect evening of fun and excitement as the MPTA event. The early afternoon began with towing members displaying their trucks and equipment out on the plaza for the crowds of people to view.



Throughout the afternoon and evening, MPTA members and guests were treated to many food basket options. A 50/25/25 raffle, raising \$1,000 for the International Towing Museum “Survivors Fund” and nearly \$700 contributed to MPTA Lobbying fund through the MPTA live Raffle. Congratulations to Paige Kreminski and Bruce Kennebeck for each winning \$500 in cash! MPTA is sending a check in the amount of \$1,000 to the International Towing Hall of Fame on behalf of the Members of the MPTA! Our towing members have the biggest hearts. For information about the “survivors fund. Please visit <https://internationaltowingmuseum.org/survivor-fund/>

All kiddos that evening awarded \$10 DQ gift cards satisfying their future ice cream cravings as Burda’s/B&B Industries Toy and Candy Shop was on full display as kids licked their chops! This was just the beginning!



MPTA members led the “parade lap” out on the track with their wreckers dressed up in American flags, lights flashing as race fans cheered on our members. With many events including live racing and other activities as the “Eve of Destruction” was under way at Elko Speedway.

The highlight of the evening was the Western National, Corporate Four Insurance and Citywide Service Spectator Drags. Many MPTA towing members brought their own cars to the track testing their driving skills. Congratulations to Mark Heltne of Twin Cities Transport & Recovery taking home first place and \$300 cash and JP of Feist Towing winning second place and \$250 Cash! Special thanks to those for taking the time to bring a car to the track and giving the crowd a heck of show!



From what I am hearing, MPTA members and guests had a great time. If you missed the MPTA Annual Picnic at Elko Speedway this year, will have to attend next year to see how we can top this past year’s event.



(continued on next page)

Thank you to all our Sponsoring Partners for making this year's
Eve of Destruction a huge success!



Gardas Family Hosts MPTA Legislative Champions Fundraiser



The evening of October 15th the Gardas family Hosted a fundraiser for MPTA legislative Champions Senator John Jasinski and Representative Dave Baker. Great political conversations while sharing many concerns within the towing industry and the support Minnesota businesses need moving forward. Change is happening and the evening of the 15th was a great night! A huge thank you to the Gardas family for hosting and Dan Bothman, Jill Hoover, Chris Frovik, Rob Leighton, Noah Kreitinger and Lance Klatt for co-hosting and as an abundant of MPTA members coming out and showing their support!





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Anoka	North Star Towing 763-427-4160	Dayton	MN Towing and Repair 612-326-6687	Kasson	T & K Towing Service 507-250-4573
Apple Valley	Dick's Valley Service 952-432-2848	Currie	Radke Wheel Service 507-763-3129	Lakeville	Marek's Towing & Repair 952-469-3182
Arlington	After Burner Auto Body & Towing 507-964-2809	Cushing	Always Available Towing & Repair 218-575-3096	Little Falls	Collins Brother Towing Of Little Falls 320-257-5525
Austin	Otomo's Auto Towing 507-450-0051	Duluth	Dukes Towing 218-722-8885	Loretto	Burdas Towing 320-257-5525
Big Lake	Bob's Towing & Recovery 763-262-8697	Eagan	Mark's Towing 651-454-1533	Luverne	G&S Auto LLC 507-283-8146
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	Frovik's Towing 763-786-9220	Eden Valley	Jack's Towing 320-453-6560	Melrose	Shaggy's Towing 320-256-7855
	Hooked Up Towing & Recovery 612-913-0702	Elk River	Bob's Towing of Elk River 763-441-3666	Minneapolis	Blaine Brothers 763-780-5130 612-333-8900
	Twin Cities Transport & Recovery, Inc. 651-642-1446	Elk River	Collins Brothers Towing 763-241-9177		Bobby & Steve's Auto World South Minneapolis 612-861-6133
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	Citywide Service 763-424-4900	Grand Meadow	Gregerson Towing & Recovery 507-272-4088	Moorhead	Aggressive Towing & Recovery 218-287-2344
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Twin Cities Transport & Recovery
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Siewerts Garage
651-388-9163

Rochester CSC Towing
507-289-8344

Gregerson Towing & Recovery
507-272-4088

Rochester Towing, LLC
507-288-7317

Pulver Towing
507-282-3851

Rogers Burdas Towing
763-428-9911

Sauk Centre Centre Towing Inc.
320-352-1500

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651-257-3975

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763-432-4550

St. Anthony Twin Cities Transport
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651-642-1446

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320-251-5691

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320-257-5525

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763-434-7766

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651-439-5744

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320-264-5852

Virginia Armory Shell Towing & Service
218-741-6050

Waseca Bocks Service Inc.
507-835-5407

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UPCOMING EVENTS

MPTA Board Meeting

December 3, 2024

Dinner: 6:00 pm

Meeting: 6:30 pm

MPTA Office
Little Canada, MN

Meetings may be cancelled due to weather please check <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mnprotow> for all event updates.

