



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2005 Wisconsin Act 185
[2005 Assembly Bill 240]

**Immobilizing, Impounding, and
Disposing of Unregistered Motor
Vehicles**

Under *current law*, any city, village, or town (municipality) or any county may enact an ordinance prohibiting unregistered motor vehicles and providing for the immobilization, impoundment, and disposal of such vehicles. *Prior law* defined an “unregistered motor vehicle” to mean any motor vehicle located upon a highway that is currently not registered and that reasonably appears to have been unregistered for at least 30 days. *Prior law* provided that a person charged under a local ordinance with having an unregistered motor vehicle could not be convicted or subject to costs for immobilizing or impounding the vehicle if, at the time of the offense, the vehicle was exempt from registration in this state or a complete application for registration had already been submitted to the Department of Transportation (DOT).

2005 Wisconsin Act 185:

1. Changes the definition of “unregistered motor vehicle” so that it applies to any motor vehicle that is located upon a highway, and that is not displaying valid license plates, a temporary operation plate, or, for vehicles registered with DOT on a quarterly or consecutive monthly basis, other evidence of registration for the vehicle’s current registration period or a registration period that expired the preceding month (rather than, as under prior law, to a motor vehicle that is currently not registered and that reasonably appears to have been unregistered for at least 30 days).
2. Repeals the provision that specifies that a person may not be convicted of violating an ordinance or subject to immobilization or impoundment costs if, at the time of the offense, the vehicle was exempt from registration in this state or a complete registration application had already been submitted to DOT.
3. Provides that, in addition to those enforcement persons currently listed, *parking enforcers* who are employed by a municipality or county or the state may enforce such ordinances. “Parking enforcer” is defined to mean a person who enforces nonmoving traffic violations and who is employed by any municipality or county or by the state.

Effective Date: Act 185 takes effect on April 7, 2006.

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March 28, 2006

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This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature’s Web site at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>.