



Ohio Revised Code

Section 4513.66 Removal of highway obstruction.

Effective: March 23, 2015

Legislation: Senate Bill 274 - 130th General Assembly

(A) If a motor vehicle accident occurs on any highway, public street, or other property open to the public for purposes of vehicular travel and if any motor vehicle, cargo, or personal property that has been damaged or spilled as a result of the motor vehicle accident is blocking the highway, street, or other property or is otherwise endangering public safety, a public safety official may do either of the following without the consent of the owner but with the approval of the law enforcement agency conducting any investigation of the accident:

(1) Remove, or order the removal of, the motor vehicle if the motor vehicle is unoccupied, cargo, or personal property from the portion of the highway, public street, or property ordinarily used for vehicular travel on the highway, public street, or other property open to the public for purposes of vehicular travel.

(2) If the motor vehicle is a commercial motor vehicle, allow the owner or operator of the vehicle the opportunity to arrange for the removal of the motor vehicle within a period of time specified by the public safety official. If the public safety official determines that the motor vehicle cannot be removed within the specified period of time, the public safety official shall remove or order the removal of the motor vehicle.

(B)(1) Except as provided in division (B)(2) of this section, the department of transportation, any employee of the department of transportation, or a public safety official who authorizes or participates in the removal of any unoccupied motor vehicle, cargo, or personal property as authorized by division (A) of this section, regardless of whether the removal is executed by a private towing service, is not liable for civil damages for any injury, death, or loss to person or property that results from the removal of that unoccupied motor vehicle, cargo, or personal property. Further, except as provided in division (B)(2) of this section, if a public safety official authorizes, employs, or arranges to have a private towing service remove any unoccupied motor vehicle, cargo, or personal property as authorized by division (A) of this section, that private towing service is not liable for civil damages for any injury, death, or loss to person or property that results from the removal of that



unoccupied motor vehicle, cargo, or personal property.

(2) Division (B)(1) of this section does not apply to any of the following:

(a) Any person or entity involved in the removal of an unoccupied motor vehicle, cargo, or personal property pursuant to division (A) of this section if that removal causes or contributes to the release of a hazardous material or to structural damage to the roadway;

(b) A private towing service that was not authorized, employed, or arranged by a public safety official to remove an unoccupied motor vehicle, cargo, or personal property under this section;

(c) Except as provided in division (B)(2)(d) of this section, a private towing service that was authorized, employed, or arranged by a public safety official to perform the removal of the unoccupied motor vehicle, cargo, or personal property but the private towing service performed the removal in a negligent manner;

(d) A private towing service that was authorized, employed, or arranged by a public safety official to perform the removal of the unoccupied motor vehicle, cargo, or personal property that was endangering public safety but the private towing service performed the removal in a reckless manner.

(C) As used in this section:

(1) "Public safety official" means any of the following:

(a) The sheriff of the county, or the chief of police in the municipal corporation, township, or township or joint police district, in which the accident occurred;

(b) A state highway patrol trooper;

(c) The chief of the fire department having jurisdiction where the accident occurred;

(d) A duly authorized subordinate acting on behalf of an official specified in divisions (C)(1)(a) to



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(c) of this section.

(2) "Hazardous material" has the same meaning as in section 2305.232 of the Revised Code.