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AB-630 Abandoned recreational vehicles. (2025-2026)

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Assembly Bill No. 630

CHAPTER 699

An act to add and repeal Section 22851.5 of the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

[Approved by Governor October 13, 2025. Filed with Secretary of State October 13, 2025.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 630, Mark González. Abandoned recreational vehicles.

Under existing law, if a peace officer or employee of a public agency has reasonable grounds to believe a vehicle is abandoned, they are authorized to remove the vehicle from a highway or public or private property and store it, as specified. Existing law provides a specific procedure for the disposal of an abandoned vehicle valued at \$500 or less that includes notifying the Stolen Vehicle System of the Department of Justice and contacting the registered and legal owners of record with the Department of Motor Vehicles, among other procedural requirements.

This bill, until January 1, 2030, would authorize the Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles to implement similar procedures for the disposal of recreational vehicles, as defined, valued at \$4,000 or less. The bill would impose specified conditions on this authority, including requiring a public agency, prior to disposing of a recreational vehicle, to provide authorization that the recreational vehicle is inoperable, except as specified. The bill would make the public agency that removed, or caused the removal of, the recreational vehicle and that directed any towing or storage, responsible for the towing and storage costs if it is determined that the vehicle was not inoperable or was not a hazard to public health, safety, and welfare. The bill would require each local public agency that is authorized and designated to remove vehicles pursuant to these provisions to report certain data to their governing body on an annual basis, including the number of recreational vehicles removed and the number of people found in the recreational vehicle prior to removal.

This bill would make legislative findings and declarations as to the necessity of a special statute for the Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 22851.5 is added to the Vehicle Code, to read:

22851.5. (a) The Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles may implement a program to dispose of recreational vehicles subject to the requirements described in subdivision (b).

(b) Whenever a peace officer, as defined in Chapter 4.5 (commencing with Section 830) of Title 3 of Part 2 of the Penal Code, or any other employee of a public agency authorized pursuant to Section 22669, removes, or causes the removal of, a recreational

vehicle pursuant to Section 22669, and the public agency or, at the request of the public agency, the lienholder determines the estimated value of the recreational vehicle is four thousand dollars (\$4,000) or less, the public agency that removed, or caused the removal of, the recreational vehicle shall cause the disposal of the recreational vehicle subject to all of the following requirements:

(1) Not less than 72 hours before the recreational vehicle is removed, the peace officer or the authorized public employee has securely attached to the recreational vehicle a distinctive notice which states that the recreational vehicle will be removed by the public agency and that if the recreational vehicle is towed, it can be recovered for at least 30 days after the public agency notifies the registered owner of the recreational vehicle pursuant to paragraph (4). The notice shall also include contact information for an individual to learn where their recreational vehicle and other possessions may be recovered. This subdivision does not apply to abandoned recreational vehicles removed pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 22669 which are determined by the public agency to have an estimated value of three hundred dollars (\$300) or less.

(2) Immediately after removal of the recreational vehicle, the public agency which removed, or caused the removal of, the vehicle shall notify the Stolen Vehicle System of the Department of Justice in Sacramento of the removal.

(3) The public agency that removed, or caused the removal of, the recreational vehicle or, at the request of the public agency, the lienholder shall obtain a copy of the names and addresses of all persons having an interest in the recreational vehicle, if any, from the Department of Motor Vehicles either directly or by use of the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System. This paragraph does not require the public agency or lienholder to obtain a copy of the actual record on file at the Department of Motor Vehicles.

(4) Within 48 hours of the removal, excluding weekends and holidays, the public agency that removed, or caused the removal of, the recreational vehicle or, at the request of the public agency, the lienholder shall send a notice to the registered and legal owners at their addresses of record with the Department of Motor Vehicles, and to any other person known to have an interest in the recreational vehicle. A notice sent by the public agency shall be sent by certified or first-class mail, and a notice sent by the lienholder shall be sent by certified mail. The notice shall include all of the following information:

(A) The name, address, and telephone number of the public agency providing the notice.

(B) The location of the place of storage and description of the recreational vehicle, which shall include, if available, the vehicle make, license plate number, vehicle identification number, and mileage.

(C) The authority and purpose for the removal of the recreational vehicle.

(D) A statement that the registered owner has up to 30 days from the date of notice to claim the recreational vehicle.

(E) A statement that the owners and interested persons, or their agents, have the opportunity for a poststorage hearing before the public agency that removed, or caused the removal of, the recreational vehicle to determine the validity of the storage if a request for a hearing is made in person, in writing, or by telephone within 10 days from the date of notice; that, if the owner or interested person, or their agent, disagrees with the decision of the public agency, the decision may be reviewed pursuant to Section 11523 of the Government Code; and that during the time of the initial hearing, or during the time the decision is being reviewed pursuant to Section 11523 of the Government Code, the recreational vehicle in question may not be disposed of.

(5) If the agency performing the removal is unable to collect the information necessary to identify the registered and legal owner of the recreational vehicle, including, but not limited to, the vehicle identification number, and is consequently unable to send the notice described in paragraph (4), the agency shall instead place and affix at least two copies of the notice within close geographic proximity to the removal location within 48 hours of the removal.

(6) (A) A requested hearing shall be conducted within 48 hours of the request, excluding weekends and holidays. The public agency that removed the recreational vehicle may authorize its own officers to conduct the hearing if the hearing officer is not the same person who directed the storage of the recreational vehicle.

(B) Failure of either the registered or legal owner or interested person, or their agent, to request or to attend a scheduled hearing shall satisfy the poststorage validity hearing requirement of this section.

(7) The public agency employing the person, or utilizing the services of a contractor or franchiser pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 22669, that removed, or caused the removal of, the recreational vehicle and that directed any towing or storage, is responsible for the costs incurred for towing and storage if it is determined in the hearing that reasonable grounds to believe that the recreational vehicle was abandoned are not established.

(8) The public agency that removed, or caused the removal of, the recreational vehicle and that directed any towing and storage pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 22669, is responsible for the costs incurred for towing and storage if it is

determined in the hearing that the recreational vehicle was not inoperable or was not a hazard to public health, safety, and welfare.

(9) An authorization for disposal may not be issued by the public agency that removed, or caused the removal of, the recreational vehicle to a lienholder who is storing the recreational vehicle prior to the conclusion of a requested poststorage hearing or any judicial review of that hearing.

(10) (A) If, after 30 days from the notification date, the recreational vehicle remains unclaimed and the towing and storage fees have not been paid, and if no poststorage hearing was requested or a poststorage hearing was not attended, the public agency that removed, or caused the removal of, the recreational vehicle shall provide to the lienholder who is storing the recreational vehicle, on a form approved by the Department of Motor Vehicles, authorization to dispose of the recreational vehicle. Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the authorization to dispose of the recreational vehicle shall include a verification that the recreational vehicle is inoperable. The lienholder may request the public agency to provide the authorization to dispose of the recreational vehicle.

(B) If the recreational vehicle is operable, the public agency may authorize the disposal of the recreational vehicle only if it was towed due to it posing an environmental or public safety hazard.

(11) If the recreational vehicle is claimed by the owner or their agent within 30 days of the notice date, the lienholder who is storing the vehicle may collect reasonable fees for services rendered, but may not collect lien sale fees as provided in Section 22851.12.

(12) Disposal of the recreational vehicle by the lienholder who is storing the vehicle may only be to a licensed dismantler or scrap iron processor. A copy of the public agency's authorization for disposal shall be forwarded to the licensed dismantler within five days of disposal to a licensed dismantler. A copy of the public agency's authorization for disposal shall be retained by the lienholder who stored the recreational vehicle for a period of 90 days if the recreational vehicle is disposed of to a scrap iron processor.

(13) (A) If the names and addresses of the registered and legal owners of the recreational vehicle are not available from the records of the Department of Motor Vehicles, either directly or by use of the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System, the public agency may issue to the lienholder who stored the recreational vehicle an authorization for disposal at any time after the removal.

(B) The lienholder may request the public agency to issue an authorization for disposal after the lienholder ascertains that the names and addresses of the registered and legal owners of the recreational vehicle are not available from the records of the Department of Motor Vehicles either directly or by use of the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System.

(14) A recreational vehicle disposed of pursuant to this section may not be reconstructed or made operable, unless it is a vehicle that qualifies for either horseless carriage license plates or historical vehicle license plates, pursuant to Section 5004, in which case the vehicle may be reconstructed or made operable.

(15) Local public agencies authorized and designated to remove recreational vehicles pursuant to this section shall annually report to their governing body the following information regarding recreational vehicles removed pursuant to this section for the preceding year:

(A) The number of recreational vehicles removed.

(B) The number of people found in recreational vehicles prior to removal.

(C) The number of recreational vehicles that were operable.

(D) The number of recreational vehicles that were inoperable.

(c) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) A "recreational vehicle" has the same meaning as defined in Section 18010 of the Health and Safety Code.

(2) A recreational vehicle is "inoperable" if it can only be moved by a tow truck.

(d) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2030, and as of that date is repealed.

SEC. 2. The Legislature finds and declares that a special statute is necessary and that a general statute cannot be made applicable within the meaning of Section 16 of Article IV of the California Constitution because of the unique needs of the Counties of Alameda and Los Angeles to address issues related to abandoned recreational vehicles.