

# Aggies risk towing fees daily

By DEBBIE NELSON  
Battalion Reporter

Despite signs posted at the Skaggs Albertsons parking lot, 75-100 Texas A&M University students park their cars there daily, Tim Catalino, manager of D&H Towing Co., said Wednesday.

Every school day, several of these students return to the lot to find their cars have been towed, Catalino said.

D&H Towing hires spotters to sit in the parking lot and watch for students who park their cars there while going to class. These spotters give the license numbers to the towing company, which then sends a wrecker to the lot.

From 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., Catalino said, they have time to tow only 12 of the illegally parked cars to the company lot on Groesbeck Street in Bryan.

D&H Towing charges \$50 for each car towed. Catalino said the money goes entirely to D&H. Neither Skaggs Albertsons nor Culpepper Properties, which owns the lot, receives any of the money.

Will Moyers, comptroller for Culpepper Properties, said last week they had to implement the towing policy because students were parking there and taking away shopper's access to the shopping center.

Some days as much as 20 percent of the parking lot is taken up by student vehicles, he said.

Buddy Lindley, credit manager for the Skaggs Albertsons store, said Skaggs has nothing to do with the towing because they only lease the building from Culpepper Properties.

Lindley said the only thing he can do is give out the towing company's phone number.

The phone number for D&H Towing as listed on the signs at Skaggs Albertsons has been disconnected.

However, Lindley has another phone number for D&H Towing which he gives to inquirers.

Sherry Albrecht, assistant to the city manager of College Station, said the amount charged for towing a vehicle is not regulated by the city.

A city ordinance proposed last year, but not passed, would have limited the charge for impounding a vehicle from a private lot to \$30.

Although D&H charges \$50, Lt. John Kennedy, of the College Station police department, said the fee for most wrecker services is \$35.

Each wrecker service must be inspected and approved by the city before it can begin operation. When the city needs a car towed, it calls the wrecker services on a rotating basis.

However, Kennedy said the police department has nothing to do with cars being towed from the Skaggs lot.

Since the parking lot is private



An employee of A-1 Wrecker Company, identified only as "Lonnie," prepares to tow a car parked illegally on the Texas A&M campus. Many students risk high fees daily by parking illegally both on and off campus.

Battalion photo by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.

property and signs are posted, Kennedy said, it is legal for a spotter to sit in the lot and watch for illegally parked cars.

Although it is not required, wrecker services usually report the license number and a description of the towed car to the police.

D&H Towing Co. reports every car towed to the police, Catalino said. This is to avoid people reporting their cars as stolen.

For a student to recover his towed car, he must go to the com-

pany lot on Groesbeck Street and pay the \$50 fee.

If a car is towed for being illegally parked on campus, the charge is \$20, said Capt. Morris Maddox of the University Police Department. The same wrecker service charges \$35 for towing a car from a city location.

Students have two choices: pay \$27 for a 2-semester parking sticker, or don't buy a sticker, park somewhere else, and risk a \$20-\$50 towing charge.

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