

A salvage vehicle is any vehicle that has been declared:

A total loss: Damaged so badly that the required repairs (not including painting) would total more than 65% of the car's market value at the time before the damage occurred.

Flood damaged: Submerged in water so deep that it came over the door sill and came in contact with the electrical system; or a car with a total loss, resulting from water damage, of more than 65% of market value.

Nonrepairable: Is useful only for parts or scrap metal, or has fire or smoke damage or body damage that cannot be repaired.

If the car is insured, the insurance company will be the party to declare the vehicle as salvage. If you don't have insurance, you can declare it as salvage as long as it fits one of the above definitions.

Salvage Titles

You have several options when your car has been destroyed to the point that it is now salvage. You can keep it and repair it, transfer the title to an insurance company, or sell the vehicle to a wrecking yard, salvage company, or rebuilder.

Remove your license plates from the damaged vehicle, even if you're keeping it. You'll have 30 days to transfer the plates to another vehicle, or turn them in to your local full-service DMV office.

Within 10 days of the occurrence of damage, notify your car's lienholder (if any) to request the title. The lienholder has 30 days to send you the current title.

If you're signing the car over to your insurance company or a salvage yard, you'll have to give that company the title. If you're keeping the car to rebuild it, bring the title and a completed Application for Salvage Title in to a full-service DMV office.

Once you've submitted your application, you will not be able to sell the car or transfer ownership to any other party until you receive your new salvage-branded title, which will be orange to differentiate it from other titles.

It is illegal to sell a salvage vehicle to another private party, so your choice is to keep it and rebuild it or sell it to a salvage yard or other auto dealer.

Restoring the Vehicle

If you're planning on repairing or rebuilding the car (or paying to have a garage or other mechanic do it), the car will need a DMV inspection before the work is done if the car is less than six years old.

Bring the vehicle in to a full-service DMV office (make sure the DMV office has an inspection station first) and the DMV examiner will complete the Authorization for Vehicle Restoration. Once that inspection is completed, you can begin restoration work on the vehicle.

When the restoration is completed, you'll need to have your mechanic or garage complete their portion of the Certificate of Inspection, stating that all repairs were done in compliance with federal and state regulations. The car will then require a second inspection at the DMV, and the examiner will complete the form signed by the mechanic.

Now you can apply for registration and a new title for the car, which will be considered rebuilt from this point onward. You'll receive a title that is similar to most other titles, but it will be branded with the term "Rebuilt." The brand will appear on this title and every subsequent title the vehicle receives.

You are free to sell a rebuilt vehicle once you have received the branded title.

Salvage Disclosure

Because some car dealers have been caught making shady deals in the past, the law is serious about the principle of full dis-

closure.

Hiding the fact that the vehicle was once a salvage vehicle, or attempting to erase or cover up the brand on a rebuilt vehicle's title, is a felony criminal offense. Conviction can result in large fines and even jail time.

The law also dictates that you must obtain a salvage title before transferring a salvage vehicle out of the state to sell it.

Nonsalvage Rebuilds

Sometimes a car requires extensive repairs that move it into the category of rebuilt, without being damaged enough to declare it salvage. You must obtain a rebuilt title for a vehicle if you have replaced one or more of the following: cowl, rear, roof, or floor pan assembly; conventional frame plus one other major component; or complete front inner structure.

If you need a nonsalvage rebuilt title, your garage or mechanic will need to fill out the Certificate of Inspection for Rebuilt Vehicles (Not Salvage), much like the other salvage form.

Bring the form and your current title in to your local full-service DMV office for a final inspection and a DMV authorization on the form. You can then apply for a rebuilt title using your current title and the inspection form.

Protect Yourself from Fraud

While vehicle fraud laws are stringent, people still get duped from time to time. Make sure you don't fall victim to an auto dealer who tries to pass damaged cars off as quality vehicles. Check out the DMV's information page about spotting a flood-damaged vehicle.

Additional Resources

For technical questions about salvage titles and rebuilt vehicles, you might want to check out the DMV's 43-page Salvage Title & Non-Repairable Vehicle Guide. While it's geared mainly to auto industry professionals such as insurance companies and salvage yards, it may contain information you can use.

For further details about salvage vehicles and rebuilt titles, please see the DMV's information page, or contact the DMV at:

Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles

Central Services and Records Division

Salvage Unit

555 Wright Way

Carson City, NV 89711

Phone: (775) 684-4785

Fax: (775) 684-4493