

Washington's Department of Licensing (DOL) provides plenty of information on salvaged vehicles, including how they are defined in the state, reporting them, retitling them, and more.

Washington defines a salvage vehicle as one that has been damaged to the extent that it is uneconomical to repair it?such as when an insurance company deems a wrecked car to be a total loss. This must be documented by the title being handed over to the DOL.

The following parties are responsible for declaring a vehicle to be destroyed, wrecked, or otherwise a total loss and reporting it to the DOL:

- Insurance companies providing coverage for the vehicle in question

- Licensed wreckers

- Registered or legal owners

Insurance companies must notify the Washington DOL within 15 days of filing a claim or settlement on a wrecked or destroyed vehicle. Washington car wreckers must notify the DOL by the 10th of any month following a salvage vehicle acquisition. As for registered owners, they must give the title to the DOL within 15 days of the vehicle's damage or destruction.

When reporting a salvage vehicle, the Washington DOL asks that you provide the following information:

- Vehicle identification number (VIN)

- License plate number

- Registered owner name and address

- Name and address of the insurance company declaring the vehicle salvaged

You must also write the word "DESTROYED" in all capital letters across the face of the title.

Washington drivers may not operate vehicles that have been reported damaged, destroyed, wrecked, a total loss, or salvaged. In fact, you can't even park such a car on a public road.

You may, however, retitle a salvage vehicle, provided it has been inspected and approved by the Washington State Patrol (WSP) and you have paid all the required license and title fees.

To get a WSP inspection, contact the the agency and schedule an appointment at a WSP location. To drive a salvaged car to an inspection legally, you must visit a DOL Vehicle Licensing Office first to obtain a transit permit.

After passing a WSP inspection, paying the appropriate fees, and applying for a new title, you will receive a "WA RE-BUILT" brand on the certificate of ownership if the vehicle is no more than five years old. The vehicle is also eligible for a rebuilt title if it meets all three of the following requirements:

- The vehicle is is between six and 20 years old.

- The vehicle is a used car, pickup truck, or sport utility vehicle.

- The vehicle had a retail market value of \$6,790 or more before it was damaged.