

If your vehicle is declared a total loss by your insurance company, there are certain things that have to happen:

The vehicle must be taken off the road.

The registration is canceled and the plates must be removed.

"Salvage" must be stamped on the vehicle's title.

But this doesn't necessarily mean the end of the line for the vehicle. A vehicle designated as "salvage" but not "salvage un-rebuildable" or "salvage unrepairable" can be repaired, inspected and retitled. This is important to you for a couple of reasons: It's possible that if you buy a used car in Connecticut, it could be a salvage vehicle and, if you keep possession of your totaled vehicle, you can eventually put it back on the road.

Rebuilding

Here are the official steps to repairing and retitling a vehicle designated as salvage:

As you repair your vehicle, it's very important to keep receipts from all parts used in the repair. If you use any used parts, make sure to keep VIN numbers as well. You will need these to pass the salvage inspection. Without proper receipts, your vehicle will not pass.

You will also need to take photos of the entire rebuilding process and present them at the inspection.

When you are ready to have your vehicle inspected, call (860) 263-5491 to set up an appointment. Salvage inspections are given only in Enfield, Hamden, New Britain, and Wethersfield by appointment only.

The inspection costs \$88 in cash or check, plus a \$10 administrative fee if the vehicle has never been registered in Connecticut or is more than 10 years old.

The vehicle must be brought to the inspection station on a flat-bed truck or car carrier. It cannot be driven or towed.

If the vehicle passes inspection, it will be given a new title, with the word "rebuilt" replacing the salvage designation. "Rebuilt" titles can be used to register a vehicle through the normal registration process.