



FACT SHEET

What is Tow and Go™?

The Gulf Coast Regional Tow and Go Program provides no-cost towing for vehicles that break down from mechanical failure (e.g., out of gas, overheating, flat tire) while traveling in the main lanes of a freeway, shoulder, ramp or in a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)/High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lane managed by the Tow and Go program.

Where Tow and Go™ is Available

Currently, Tow and Go is available only on camera-monitored freeways within the City of Houston. The regional quick clearance program will expand next into Harris County and eventually to freeways in neighboring counties where camera coverage is available and as funding is allocated.

Benefits to Motorists

- Quick clearance of freeway breakdowns is an essential component of effective Traffic Incident Management. It prevents secondary incidents, keeps traffic moving, and most importantly, saves lives.
- The likelihood of a secondary crash increases by nearly 3% each minute the primary incident continues to be a hazard, raising the risk to both driver and responder lives.
- Quick clearance of freeway breakdowns not only saves motorists time and money by reducing fuel consumption from time spent idling in stopped traffic but also benefits the environment through reduced emissions.
- Americans burn more than 3.1 billion gallons of fuel every year stuck in incident-related traffic, that's nearly 24 gallons of gas per driver.
- On average, a Houston driver wastes 61 hours of time in traffic per year and consumes an extra 29 gallons of fuel, resulting in a congestion cost of nearly \$1,500 per commuter.

Community and Regional Impact

- According to Rice University's most recent Kinder Institute for Urban Research study, traffic is the largest concern for Houston area residents and has been for the last five years.
- Last year, more than 30,000 stalled or disabled vehicles required roadside assistance on freeways monitored by Houston TranStar.
- In May 2018 alone, more than 3,600 vehicles were towed within the Tow and Go service area. Of those, approximately 2,400 were no-cost tows.
- Because mechanical failures and flat tires represent the largest number of vehicle breakdowns in the Tow and Go service area, the new quick clearance program is expected to have a substantial impact on traffic management in Houston and surrounding areas.

Operations and Funding

The Houston-Galveston Area Council manages The Gulf Coast Regional Tow and Go Program through funding provided by the Federal Highway Administration and the Texas Department of Transportation. Initial participants in the program include the City of Houston, Harris County, and representatives from the towing industry that operate out of Houston TranStar.

Resources: 2018 H-GAC Regional Incident Management System Data, U.S. Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Administration and Texas A&M Transportation Institute/INIRX 2015 Urban Mobility Scorecard.

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