

**Chapter 47.41 RCW**  
**JUNKYARDS ADJACENT TO INTERSTATE AND PRIMARY HIGHWAYS**

**Sections**

- 47.41.010 Legislative declaration—Purpose.
- 47.41.020 Definitions.
- 47.41.030 Junkyards adjacent to highways prohibited—Exceptions.
- 47.41.040 Screening or removal of junkyard.
- 47.41.050 Administrative rules—Review of action.
- 47.41.060 Other laws not affected.
- 47.41.070 Violations—Penalty—Abatement as public nuisance.
- 47.41.080 Agreements with United States secretary of transportation.

*Vehicle wreckers: Chapter 46.80 RCW.*

**RCW 47.41.010 Legislative declaration—Purpose.** For the purpose of promoting the public safety, health, welfare, convenience, and enjoyment of public travel, to protect the public investment in public highways, and to preserve and enhance the scenic beauty of lands bordering public highways, it is hereby declared to be in the public interest to regulate and restrict the establishment, operation, and maintenance of junkyards in areas adjacent to the interstate and federal-aid primary systems within this state. The legislature hereby finds and declares that junkyards which do not conform to the requirements of this chapter are public nuisances. [1971 ex.s. c 101 s 1.]

**RCW 47.41.020 Definitions.** The definitions set forth in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) "Junk" means old or scrap copper, brass, rope, rags, batteries, paper, trash, rubber debris, waste, or junked, dismantled, or wrecked automobiles, or parts thereof, iron, steel, and other old or scrap ferrous or nonferrous material.

(2) "Automobile graveyard" means any establishment or place of business that is maintained, used, or operated by storing, keeping, buying, or selling wrecked, scrapped, ruined, or dismantled motor vehicles or motor vehicle parts.

(3) "Junkyard" means an establishment or place of business that is maintained, operated, or used for storing, keeping, buying, or selling junk or for the maintenance or operation of an automobile graveyard, and the term includes garbage dumps and sanitary fills.

(4) "Interstate system" means that portion of the national system of interstate and defense highways located within this state, as officially designated or as may hereafter be so designated by the department and approved by the United States secretary of transportation under Title 23 United States Code.

(5) "Federal-aid primary system" means that portion of connected main highways as officially designated or as may hereafter be so designated by the department and approved by the United States secretary of transportation as the federal-aid primary system pursuant to the provisions of Title 23 United States Code.

(6) "Department" means the Washington state department of transportation. [1984 c 7 s 216; 1971 ex.s. c 101 s 2.]

**RCW 47.41.030 Junkyards adjacent to highways prohibited—**

**Exceptions.** No person may establish, operate, or maintain a junkyard any portion of which is within one thousand feet of the nearest edge of the right-of-way of any interstate or federal-aid primary highway, except the following:

- (1) Those which are screened by natural objects, plantings, fences, or other appropriate means so as not to be visible from the main-traveled way of the system or otherwise removed from sight;
- (2) Those located within areas which are zoned for industrial use under authority of law;
- (3) Those located within unzoned industrial areas, which areas shall be determined from actual land uses and defined by rules adopted by the department and approved by the United States secretary of transportation; and
- (4) Those which are not visible from the main-traveled way of the system. [1984 c 7 s 217; 1971 ex.s. c 101 s 3.]

**RCW 47.41.040 Screening or removal of junkyard.** Before July 1, 1971, the department shall determine whether or not the topography of the land adjoining the highway will permit adequate screening of any junkyard lawfully in existence located outside of a zoned industrial area or an unzoned industrial area as defined under RCW 47.41.030 on August 9, 1971, that is within one thousand feet of the nearest edge of the right-of-way and visible from the main traveled way of any highway on the interstate and primary system and whether screening of the junkyard would be economically feasible. Within thirty days thereafter the department shall notify by certified mail the record owner of the land upon which the junkyard is located, or the operator thereof, of its determination.

If it is economically feasible to screen the junkyard, the department shall screen the junkyard so that it will not be visible from the main-traveled way of the highway. The department is authorized to acquire by gift, purchase, exchange, or condemnation such lands or interest in lands as may be required for these purposes.

If it is not economically feasible to screen the junkyard, the department shall acquire by purchase, gift, or condemnation an interest in the real property used for junkyard purposes that is visible from the main traveled way of the highway, restricting any owner of the remaining interest to use of the real estate for purposes other than a junkyard. In addition to compensation for the real property interest, the operator of a junkyard shall receive the actual reasonable expenses in moving his or her business personal property to a location within the same general area where a junkyard may be lawfully established, operated, and maintained. This section shall be interpreted as being in addition to all other rights and remedies of a junkyard owner or operator and shall not be interpreted as a limitation on or alteration of the law of compensation in eminent domain. [2010 c 8 s 10015; 1984 c 7 s 218; 1971 ex.s. c 101 s 4.]

**RCW 47.41.050 Administrative rules—Review of action.** The department shall adopt rules for the administration of this chapter consistent with the policy of this chapter and the national policy set forth in 23 U.S.C. Sec. 136, and the regulations promulgated thereunder by the United States secretary of transportation.

Proceedings for review of any action taken by the department pursuant to this chapter shall be instituted by filing a petition only in the superior court of Thurston county. [1984 c 7 s 219; 1971 ex.s. c 101 s 5.]

**RCW 47.41.060 Other laws not affected.** Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to permit a person to maintain any junkyard that is otherwise prohibited by statute or by the resolution or ordinance of any county, city, or town, nor to abrogate or affect the lawful provisions of any statute, ordinance, regulation, or resolution which are more restrictive than the provisions of this chapter. [1971 ex.s. c 101 s 6.]

**RCW 47.41.070 Violations—Penalty—Abatement as public nuisance.**  
(1) If the owner of the land upon which any such junkyard is located, or the operator thereof, as the case may be, fails to comply with the notice or remove any such junk within the time provided in this chapter after being so notified, he or she is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition to the penalties imposed by law upon conviction, an order may be entered compelling compliance with this chapter. Each day the junkyard is maintained in a manner so as not to comply with this chapter constitutes a separate offense.

(2) If the operator of the junkyard or the owner of the property upon which it is located, as the case may be, is not found or refuses receipt of the notice, the department, the chief of the Washington state patrol, the county sheriff, or the chief of police of any city or town shall post the property upon which it is located with a notice that the junkyard constitutes a public nuisance and that the junk thereon must be removed as provided in this chapter. If the notice is not complied with, the department, the chief of the Washington state patrol, the county sheriff, or the chief of police of any city or town shall abate the nuisance and remove the junk, and for that purpose may enter upon private property without incurring liability for doing so. [2003 c 53 s 261; 1984 c 7 s 220; 1971 ex.s. c 101 s 7.]

**Intent—Effective date—2003 c 53:** See notes following RCW 2.48.180.

**RCW 47.41.080 Agreements with United States secretary of transportation.** The department is authorized to enter into agreements with the United States secretary of transportation as provided in Title 23 United States Code, relating to the control of junkyards in areas adjacent to the interstate and primary systems, and to take action in the name of the state to comply with the terms of the agreement. [1984 c 7 s 221; 1971 ex.s. c 101 s 8.]