

## Tow zone pilot program

Learn about our pilot program to clear highways safely and quickly after an incident

Call 911 in an emergency or if you are in a travelled lane.

Call 511 for a tow only if you are in a restricted towing zone on a provincial highway (see map below).

In all other areas, call a towing company directly. Please do not call 511.

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### Overview

Ontario has introduced restricted towing zones on sections of provincial highways as part of a pilot program.

The Tow Zone Pilot helps us clear incidents such as collisions or vehicle breakdowns on our highways more safely and quickly.

The pilot is planned for up to four years. We will evaluate continuously throughout the pilot to ensure it meets the intended goals.

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### About the pilot

Restricted towing zones are defined sections of provincial highways where only authorized towing companies can remove vehicles that require a tow. This means no other towing company can solicit towing of vehicles within a restricted towing zone.

**In a restricted towing zone, you must use an authorized towing company.**

Authorized towing companies are under contract for each restricted towing zone.

If you need assistance in a restricted towing zone:

- call 911 if it is an emergency or if you are in a travelled lane and cannot safely move your vehicle to a safe location
- call 511 if you are in a safe location and you need a tow (select the option for the Tow Zone Pilot)

If your personal vehicle breaks down in a restricted towing zone, you may call your roadside assistance provider if you need a tow and you are in a safe location on the shoulder.

### **Roadside assistance memberships**

If you have a membership with an approved roadside assistance provider, you can call them directly instead of calling 511 if:

- you are in a safe location on the shoulder in a restricted towing zone
- you are driving a light vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 4,500 kg or less, such as a car, pick-up truck, SUV or minivan.

If you are driving a vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating over 4,500 kg GVWR, including commercial trucks, do not call your roadside assistance provider for a tow. You must call 511 if you are safely on the shoulder, or 911 in an emergency.

### **Goals of the pilot**

The goals of the Tow Zone Pilot are to:

- ensure tow operators have the training, experience and proper equipment to clear highways safely and efficiently
- reduce congestion and delays on provincial highways by clearing the highway more quickly
- help ensure reasonable tow rates for drivers by providing standard pricing and invoicing for towing services in the restricted tow zone

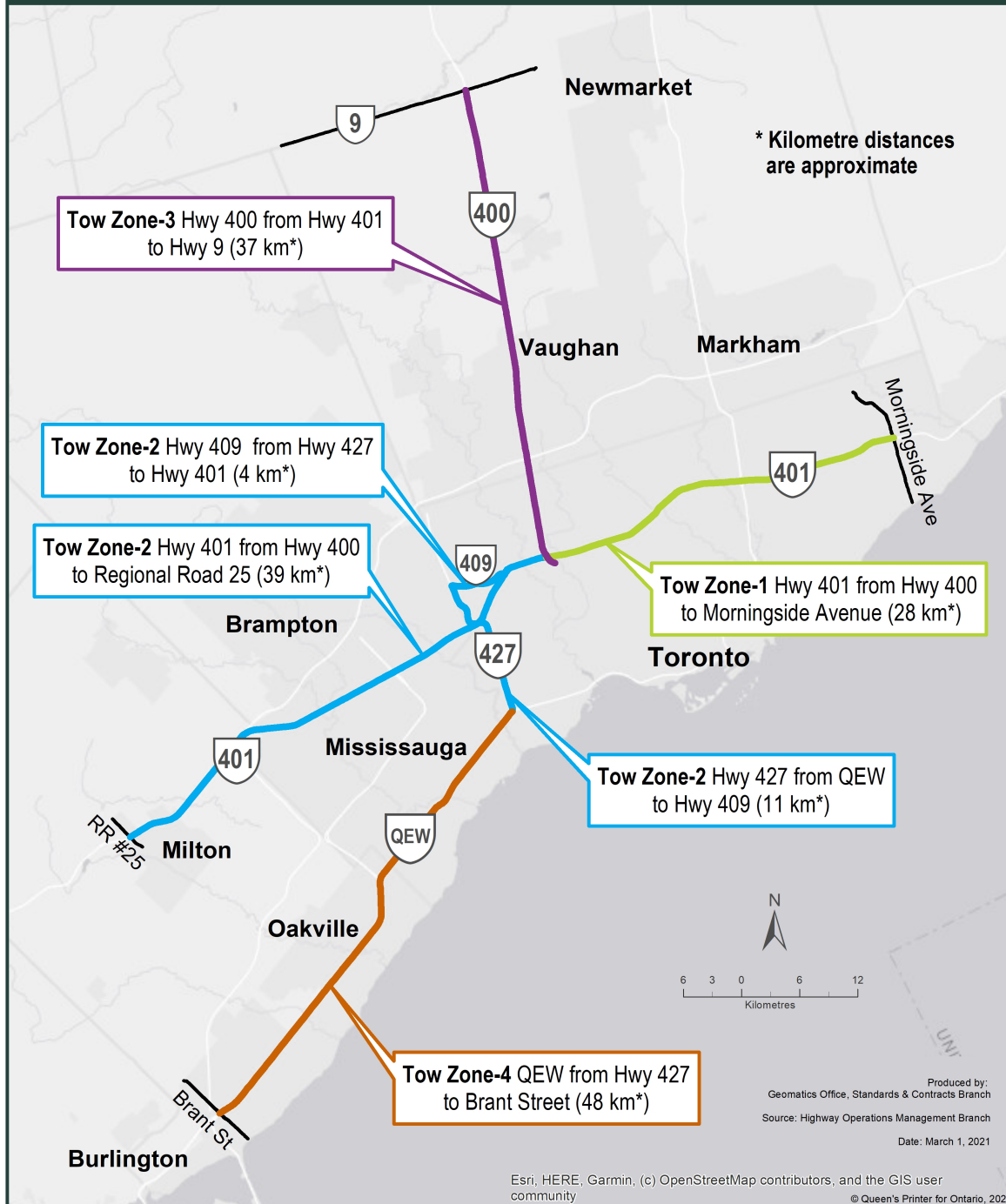
## Pilot locations

The pilot locations are four restricted towing zones on sections of highways in the Greater Toronto Area.

Each pilot location has been carefully chosen based on factors including traffic volume and collision data. We may consider additional restricted tow zones outside the Greater Toronto Area as part of a future expansion of the pilot.

The locations of the pilot are:

- Restricted Towing Zone 1: Highway 401 from Highway 400 east to Morningside Avenue
- Restricted Towing Zone 2:
  - Highway 401 from Highway 400 west to Regional Road 25
  - Highway 427 from QEW to Highway 409
  - Highway 409 from Highway 427 to Highway 401
- Restricted Towing Zone 3: Highway 400 from Highway 401 to Highway 9
- Restricted Towing Zone 4: QEW from Highway 427 to Brant Street



A map of the tow zone locations in the Greater Toronto Area. .

## What to do if you breakdown or have a collision in a restricted towing zone

If you have a breakdown or are in a collision in a restricted towing zone:

- stay calm and take note of your vehicle's location
- call 911 if it is an emergency or if you are in a travelled lane and cannot safely move your vehicle to a safe location
- call 511 if you are in a safe location in a restricted towing zone and you need a tow (select the option for the Tow Zone Pilot)

If your vehicle is not operational:

- turn on your hazard lights (four-way flashers)
- if it is safe and if available, use safety cones, warning triangles or flares to warn oncoming traffic

If your vehicle is operational and if it is safe, either:

- take the next exit
- move your vehicle to a shoulder location

While on the highway, it is preferred you stay inside your vehicle. Wait for responders to arrive and do not try to repair your vehicle or change a flat tire.

If you must get out of your vehicle, watch carefully for oncoming traffic and never stand behind or directly in front of your vehicle, as you are at risk of being struck by oncoming traffic.

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## **Rights of drivers in a restricted towing zone**

Only authorized towing companies operating under contract with the Ministry of Transportation may provide towing services in a restricted towing zone.

You may select the towing service and destination of your choice once your vehicle is outside the Tow Zone Pilot area (unless otherwise directed by the police).

Read more about towing and storage services. (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/getting-towed-storage-lot>)

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## Obligations of authorized towing companies

Authorized towing companies that are under contract for restricted towing zones must:

- provide prompt, safe, courteous, and high-quality service in accordance with the standards set by the Ministry of Transportation
- show their identification to customers upon request and provide customers with the fee schedule and other information materials
- obtain permission to tow the vehicle to the customer's destination of choice once the vehicle is outside the Tow Zone Pilot area (unless otherwise directed by the police)
- provide customers with an itemized invoice listing the services provided, the cost of each service and the total cost before asking for payment
- allow customers access to their vehicle between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on all business days and 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, excluding statutory holidays at no charge so they can get any personal items (unless otherwise directed by the police)
- not solicit or recommend any services related to vehicle sales, repair shops, body shops, garages or legal/medical services

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## Rates and methods of payment

The rates for the Tow Zone Pilot are listed in a fee schedule (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/tow-zone-pilot-fee-schedule>) provided to authorized towing companies operating under contract with the Ministry of Transportation.

Towing of breakdowns and impoundments is based on a flat rate that includes towing for a 10-kilometre distance.

Towing and recovery of collisions is based on an hourly rate. Hourly billed items are based on one-hour minimum for the first hour and 30-minute increments thereafter.

The preferred modes of payment are credit card or debit card.

## List of authorized towing companies

Only authorized companies can provide towing service in the restricted towing zones, and each zone may be divided up between several companies. The authorized towing companies will rotate through “subzones” within their zone every month. Authorized towing companies may subcontract a portion of the towing services.

<b>Restricted towing zone</b>	<b>Authorized towing companies</b>	<b>Subcontractor(s)</b>
<b>Zone 1</b>	Abrams Towing	N/A .....
<b>Zone 1</b>	Williams Towing Service Ltd.	Auto Route Towing Inc.
<b>Zone 2</b>	Classic Towing & Storage	N/A .....
<b>Zone 2</b>	Fellows Towing	N/A .....
<b>Zone 2</b>	Bill & Son Towing	GN Towing Inc.
<b>Zone 3</b>	COMTOW	SD Transport & Recovery
<b>Zone 3</b>	JP Towing Service & Storage Ltd.	Tiger Towing & Heavy Recovery Inc. / Legacy Towing & Recovery Inc.

<b>Restricted towing zone</b>	<b>Authorized towing companies</b>	<b>Subcontractor(s)</b>
<b>Zone 4</b>	JKM Towing Inc.	CH&R Towing Inc., Classic Towing & Storage
<b>Zone 4</b>	ABC Towing	SD Transport & Recovery
<b>Zone 4</b>	A Action Towing & Recovery Inc.	Fellows Towing

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- show their identification to customers upon request
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## **Storage yard locations**

Vehicles, trailers, or loads that require storage services will be towed to an approved Tow Zone Pilot storage yard. View the storage yards on Ontario 511 (<https://511on.ca/>)

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## **Questions or comments**

If you have a question, comment or complaint about the Tow Zone Pilot or your experience receiving towing services within any of the restricted towing zones, please email [TowZonePilot@ontario.ca](mailto:TowZonePilot@ontario.ca) (<mailto:TowZonePilot@ontario.ca>) or call 1-855-702-8794.



## Related

Ontario 511 (<https://511on.ca/>)

Consumer protection information for drivers (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/consumer-protection-information-drivers>)

Getting towed to a storage lot (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/getting-towed-storage-lot>)

Tow Zone Pilot fee schedule (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/tow-zone-pilot-fee-schedule>)

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