

What happens to my damaged car after a collision?

The aftermath of an automobile accident can be a very scary experience. Many people are scared, uncertain, and stressed out. This is one of those times when you hope you have good insurance, and you need a lawyer who understands your rights, and what you are entitled to.

If your car was not drive-able after an accident, it may be towed away to a tow yard (to clear the city streets). It may be taken to a storage facility, and stored there until you tell the storage company what to do with the vehicle. You are often responsible for arranging to move the vehicle from the tow or storage yard, and you can be liable for a daily "storage fee" for each day your vehicle is stored, plus the cost for the tow-truck.

The insurance company for the person who caused the accident (and sometimes your own insurance company) is usually responsible for the payment of towing and storage fees, but only if you demand it. They will also refuse to cover the storage if they deem you waited too long, and the storage bill is too high. This is one reason to contact an attorney right away.

You should take your car (or have it towed) to a body shop immediately, and get a free estimate of the cost to repair your car. You do not need three estimates, but it can be helpful to get more than one. It is ok to let the insurance companies inspect your car, and take pictures, but you should not give the at-fault insurance company a recorded interview statement, or speak to them about the accident, or your injuries, until you have contacted and met with an attorney who can advise you further. You should take pictures of your car, and your injuries.

You may choose whatever body shop or repair facility you want, but you should make sure they are reputable, licensed, and insured. Sometimes a body shop is "certified" by your insurance company, or the at-fault driver's insurance company. You do not need to use that facility, but sometimes it is easier and faster to obtain approval from the insurance company to fix your vehicle if a body shop is "certified".

Since the insurance company may be responsible for payment of the bill, they are always in favor of lower estimates. Be careful, because a lower estimate could overlook important parts that have been damaged in the accident, such as proper alignment, matching paint or fenders, headlight adjustment, and other unseen damage. Also, the Law Offices of Adam Sorrells suggests you demand "certified factory parts". For example, if your car is a Ford, you should demand Ford parts. If you do not specify, your car will surely be fixed with after-market parts, which are cheaper for the insurance company, but are not as good, and likely do not fit your car as well as those made by the original manufacturer of your vehicle.

After choosing your mechanic or body shop, and agreeing with them as to the type of work to be done, you can then present the insurance company with the estimate. The insurance company may then try to negotiate a lower price with your mechanic. That is ok, as long as the job is done correctly.

The Law Offices of Adam Sorrells , if they have agreed to represent you for your personal injuries, will help you with the repair or replacement process for free, as a courtesy to a new client!

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