



Trespass Towing in Gainesville

FL State Statute 715.07
City Ordinance 14.5
Permitting and Inspections
Tow Complaint Process
Recommendations

Gainesville Police Department, Towing Administrator
Mike Barnes

FL State Statute 715.07

- Requirement to notify law enforcement
- Must drop vehicle if owner arrives, prior to tow
- Requirements for signage on private property
- Allowed to enter car to make vehicle safe for towing
- Vehicle must be released within 1 hour after request

City Ordinance 14.5

- **Tow service and operator permits**
- **Revocation of permits**
- **Prerequisites to towing**
- **Authorized fees**

Sign Regulations

- **Sign must be placed at each driveway access, within 5' of ROW**
- **Properties w/o curb or driveway must have 1 sign for every 25' of frontage**
- **Words "TOW AWAY" must be between 3'-6' above ground level**
- **"ROAM TOWING" must be added for towing w/o specific requests**

Sign Regulations



Towing Agreements

- **Required by City Ordinance**
- **Approximately 450 towing agreements**
- **Renewed annually or if the owner changes tow companies**
- **Tow signs inspected whenever a tow agreement is renewed**
- **Accessed online at GPD's website**
- **Call in tows, Roam tows and Immobilization**

Permits and Inspections

- **Trespass Towing permits renewed annually**
- **Facility and trucks inspected annually**
- **Records checked approximately once per month with unannounced inspections**

Tow Complaints

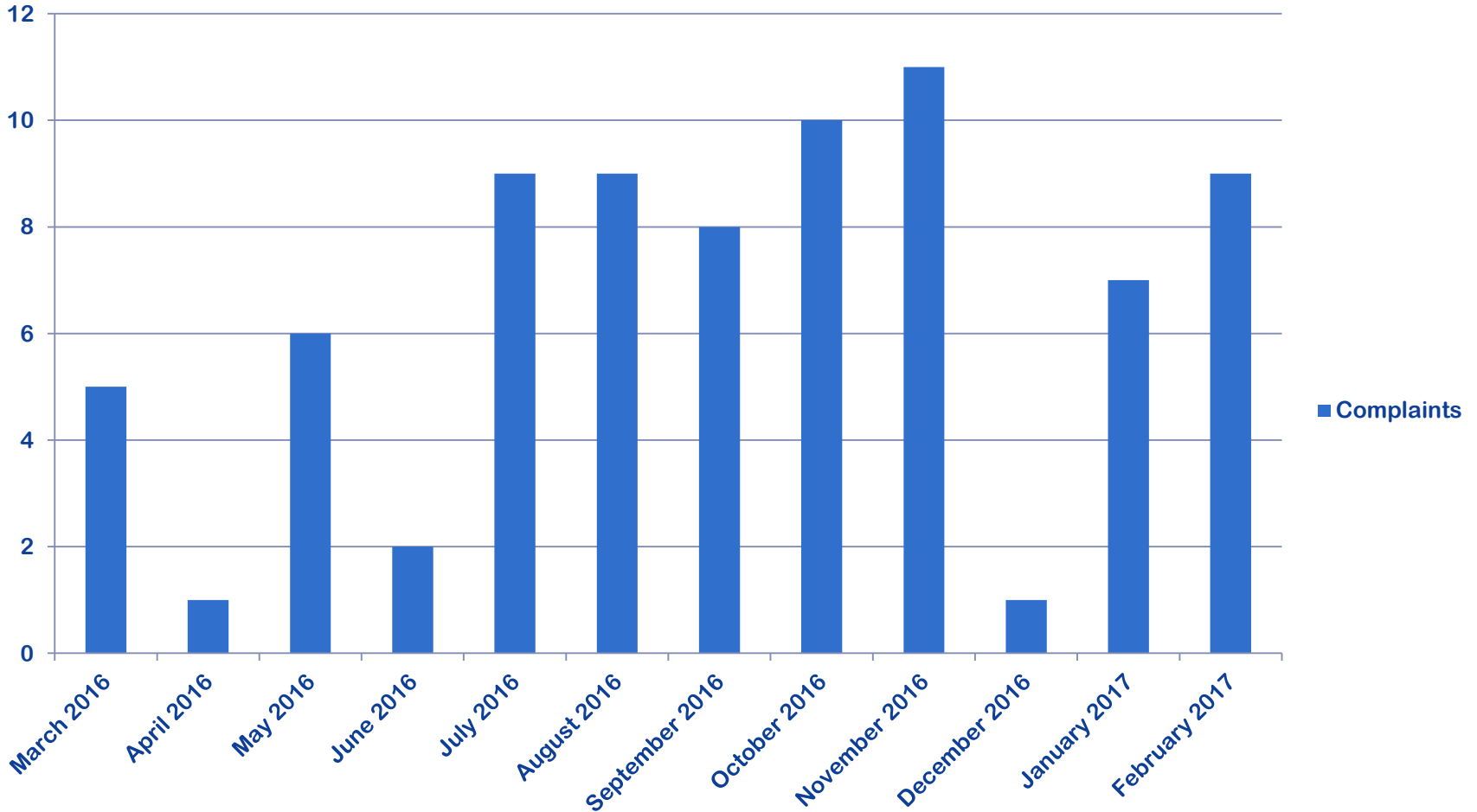
- **Filed online @ gainesvillePD.org, emailed or mailed**
- **Inspect property and tow company records**
- **Legality of tow determined by proper signage, proper agreement and proper permitting**
- **Improper tow is not necessarily an illegal tow**

Tow Complaints

- **78 total complaints from March 2016-February 2017**
- **3 warning violations to different tow drivers**
- **1 warning violation to tow company**
- **Vehicle owners were issued refunds by tow companies**

Tow Complaints

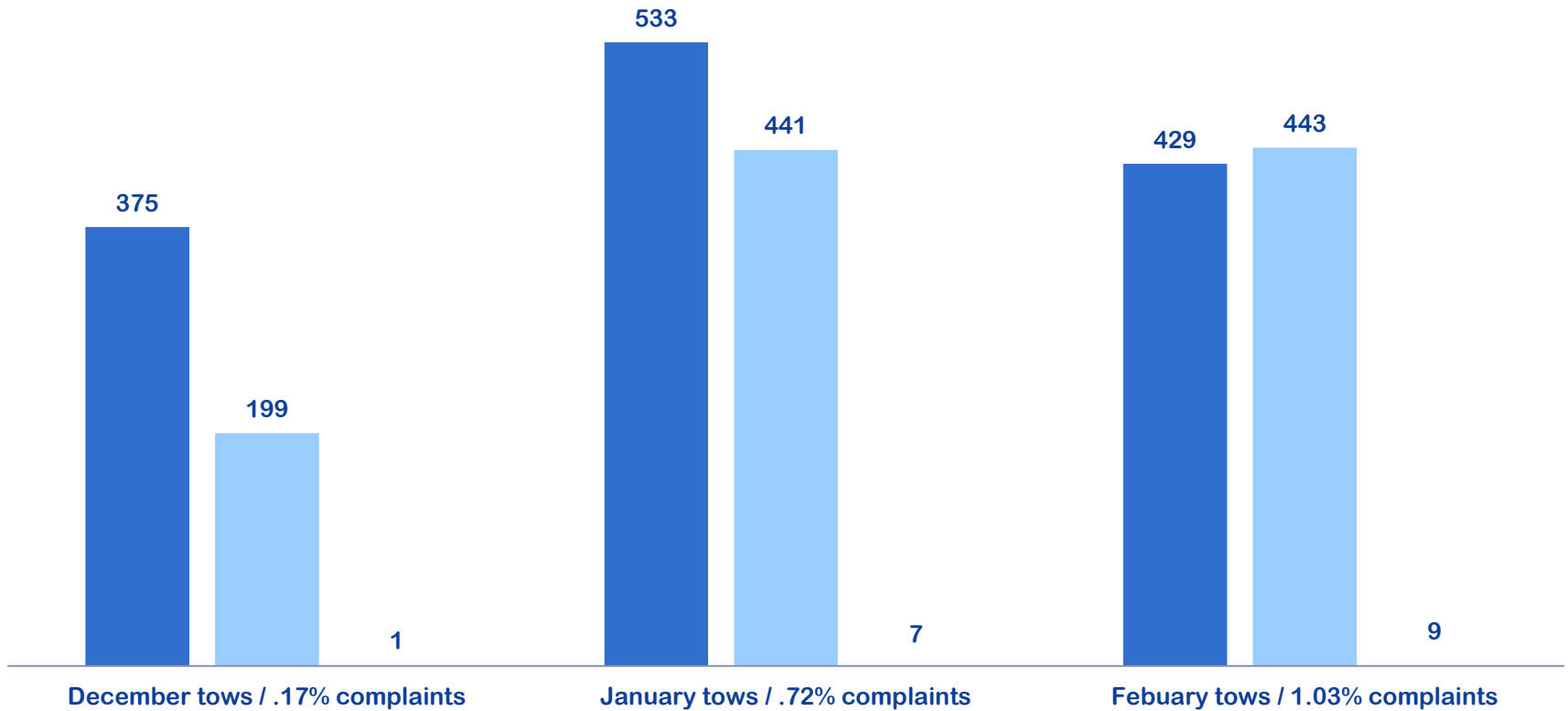
Complaints



Comparison of Tows vs Complaints

Number of Roam Tows

■ Ultimate Towing ■ Superior Towing



Sun Center Tows

- **Most tows occur on Wed-Thur-Fri**
- **Between hours of 5PM-8PM**
- **Average of 8 cars, most being 16 (for previous 12 months)**

Recommendations

- Consider changing sign color from black/white back to red/white



Recommendations

- **Change definition of “Normal business hours” by adding wording that would allow tow company offices to be closed for State of Florida holidays, unless towing. (If closed, business is still required by ordinance to release vehicle one hour after request.)**
- **Allow the service fees to change in relation to the Consumer Price Index**

Questions

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