

## *TOWING: WRECK CHASERS*

### **Trap**

Margie was driving home and stopped for a red light. The car behind her didn't stop and ran into her. Dazed, Margie was still able to call 9-1-1 and report the accident. Within minutes, a man appeared and gave Margie a business card for a body shop. The man said that he could tow her car to the shop, and they would fix it like new. The shop could also waive her insurance deductible! Although still upset, Margie agreed. The next day she spoke with her insurance agent and decided to have her car repaired elsewhere. Margie called the body shop and was told she would need to pay \$750 in cash to get her car released! Margie was stunned. How could this happen?

### **Tips**

Beware of "wreck chasers" and remember these tips:

- "Wreck chasers" monitor the police channels with scanners to get to accidents and take advantage of drivers who may not be thinking clearly. They promise discounted rates and savings on insurance deductibles.
- "Wreck chasers" usually have an affiliation with a body shop that pays them for their services.
- Most law enforcement agencies have procedures to call for a licensed and insured towing company to recover your vehicle safely after an accident. If the law enforcement agency is not under contract with a towing company, the maximum fees are regulated by the Palm Beach County Board of Commissioners.
- Keep the business card of a local reputable licensed tow company in your vehicle, just in case. It is a good idea to establish a relationship with a towing company. Even though you may be a member of AAA, often their tow companies are unable to timely respond to an accident scene.

**For more information OR to file a complaint, contact  
Palm Beach County Consumer Affairs at 561-712-6600  
(Boca/Delray 888-852-7362 toll free)**

[www.pbcgov/consumer](http://www.pbcgov/consumer)