

April, 2007

"MPEA Permit Issue"

by Martin Mann

Wisconsin Limousine Association, Inc.

We spoke to the Illinois Department of Revenue and MPEA in regards to the issues at the airport yesterday with Wisconsin limousines being impounded for not having the MPEA permit. We were told that cars with Wisconsin plates or just operators from Wisconsin should be exempt. They were not sure why this was happening, but like all governmental agencies, it appears one agency is not talking with the other. I will be sending a letter to the officials at O'Hare airport to request a response as to the proper information and procedure.

In the mean time, they did suggest having the MPEA permit in your vehicle to avoid any issues. Nice answer when they are stating we are exempt... I know I don't quite understand it myself. We did have a vehicle down at O'Hare yesterday and several this morning and have not had any issues. I will continue to work on this issue.

I spoke with the City of Chicago Consumer Services who handles the MPEA permits. According to them we are exempt from paying the wheel tax which is associated with this permit, for operators in Illinois, in order to collect this tax, but we are not exempt from having the permit in our vehicles. Logical, I think not; easy way to generate revenue by impounding cars and issuing fines, yes.

They could not provide me with the logic behind this decision, they just told me the permit is required to be displayed in the window of the vehicle. We did have a driver at the airport on Sunday and he was stopped; permit was in the car, but not displayed; yelled at driver but did not issue citation. They did state that they have upped enforcement on this... no kidding!

If you would like to make contact yourself, here is their information:

Dept. of Consumer Services

50 West Washington, Room 208

Chicago, IL 60602

E-mail: cserv@cityofchicago.org

Telephone: 312.744.4006

FAX: 312.744.9089

TTY: 312.742.8705

I spoke to Jeff Greene today from the NLA and forwarded an email in regards to the recent issues at O'Hare. He will be speaking with Barry Lefkowitz tomorrow and having Barry call me direct, as he was not available today.

I will keep you posted as to the progress, or lack of.

Thanks,
Martin