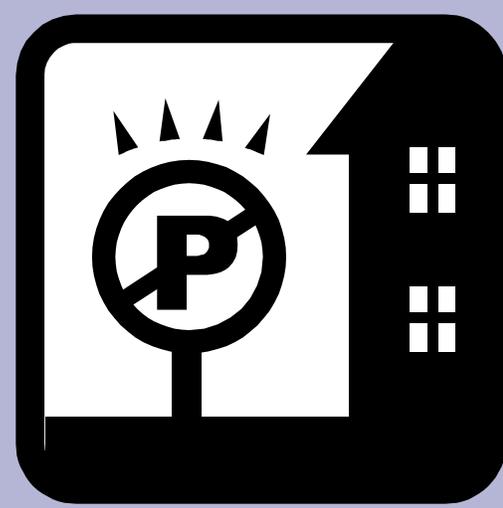


# Where You Park Makes a Difference

By Tom Grandy



I have a quick question for you: Does the customer really care where you park your vehicle? The answer is a resounding yes!

Here are just a few reasons why from the customer's perspective and from your company's perspective.

- **Parking in the driveway** – That's no big deal, right? Well it might be from the customer's standpoint. What if one of the members of the family wants to leave while you are still working? Now they have to ask you to move the truck. That just caused lost time (and increased expense to the customer, if you are still on time and material pricing). Not only that, but now the customer is a bit irritated that you are in the way and a bit embarrassed that they have to come to you and ask you to move the vehicle. Both strain customer relations.

- **Does your vehicle leak fluids?** – Do you want someone else's vehicle leaking oil on your driveway? The homeowner doesn't appreciate it either. Parking in the street helps, but here's a better solution. Carry a pack of cardboard with you to the service location. When you get out of the vehicle place the cardboard under your vehicle in the area where it leaks. If you do that, and the customer sees you doing it, that earns brownie points. The customer is thinking, "If the tech cares about dripping oil on my driveway or the street, surely he will care about my home and equipment as well."

- **Marketing** – There is no better marketing and/or advertising than word of mouth. How many times has a neighbor seen your truck at their neighbor's home and then called your company for service? The neighbor may be thinking, "If ABC Company is doing work for my friend, Bill, they must do great work. I

will call ABC Company next time I need work done." Your vehicle is a moving billboard.

Now let's take a quiz. Would more people see your vehicle parked: A.) in the driveway, B.) next to the house, or C.) on the street in front of the house? Answer: C.) in front of the house.

- **Don't kill the customer's grass** – Now that we are parking in the street, remember one more thing. Don't pull too far off the street and, therefore, onto the customer's grass. Parking in the street is the best place to be, but killing your customer's grass wipes away all the benefits of parking in the street!

- **Beware of where you walk** – It's the first call of the day. You did a great job of parking in front of the customer's home without being on the grass. Since it's early morning, the grass is still damp. PLEASE use the driveway and/or sidewalk to get to the customer's front door. Don't walk through the yard and track all that wet grass into the customer's home. Yes, that does sound a bit ridiculous, doesn't it? It did to me ... until the plumbing tech did exactly what I just described! Think before you walk.

These are just a few things to think about as you arrive at the customer's home. They may not seem like a big deal to you, but they are in the eyes of the customer and they are the ones that will make to decision whether to use your company again ... or not!

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