

Only residents with permits to be allowed to park their cars during free time

Authorities expect system to be up in two weeks

- By Samir Salama, Associate Editor
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Abu Dhabi: Only residents with permits will soon be allowed to park their cars during free time in the areas covered by the paid-parking system, a senior official has said.

"Within two weeks, a new system will be enforced giving only residents with permits parking rights to park their cars during free time between 9pm and 8am," Khalid Mohammad Hashim, executive director of land transport sector at the Abu Dhabi Department of Transport, told *Gulf News* recently.

Hashim declined to elaborate, but said details will be announced at a later date.

Currently residents with permits complain they find it extremely difficult to find parking spaces during free time. They say they spend nearly an hour to find a place after 9pm in many areas such as Khalidiya and on Hamdan Street.

Abdullah Rashid Otaiba, Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Department of Transport, said by the end of 2014 every resident and guest in the capital will easily find a parking space.

Areas

"The paid parking scheme will roll out in 43 areas offering 75,000 spaces, of which 35,000 spaces will be covered by the end of this year," Hashim said.

He said efforts are being made to increase Mawaqif parking capacity. "Our aim is to implement this change gradually and in turn reduce congestion and wrong parking in high-density areas.

"To date, the Mawaqif paid parking service has managed to significantly increase the number of available parking spaces in areas where it has been introduced as well as reduce traffic and traffic-related accidents."

Around 10,000 new parking spaces have been opened since January.

Standard spaces, marked with turquoise and black kerbstones, cost Dh2 per hour or Dh15 per day. Premium spaces, marked with turquoise and white kerbstones, cost Dh3 an hour for a maximum four-hour stay.

Paid parking is enforced from 8am to 9pm, except on Fridays. Individuals who live in an area where there are paid parking spots can apply for permits at Mawaqif customer service centres to park in standard spots for free.

Enforcement

Parking regulations are enforced 24 hours a day.

Residents' permit is available to owners or tenants and their family members living with them with a maximum of two permits per household. The documents required to obtain the residents' permit include passport copy with valid residency visa; lease of contract or residency ownership proof, and vehicle ownership proof.

Annual fee for a resident's permit is Dh800 for the first vehicle, and Dh1,200 for the second. Verification and processing of resident permits, takes a minimum of three working days.

The medium and long-term solutions include development of public parking buildings — two robotic structures and six multi-storey buildings at various locations across Abu Dhabi City, said Najeeb Al Zarouni, general manager of parking at the Department of Transport.

He said contracts for two robotic parkings will be awarded by the end of this year.

Women only

Women's only parking spaces are strictly enforced and drivers who do not abide by the rule are fined, said Najeeb Al Zarouni, general manager of parking at the Department of Transport.

He was responding to complaints from *Gulf News* readers that parking spaces allotted for women only were used by men.