

# 24 hours, 365 days of paid parking in Abu Dhabi

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- By Samir Salama, Associate Editor
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Abu Dhabi: From Sunday, the paid parking system in Abu Dhabi will be enforced round-the-clock, all year round, including Fridays and public holidays, a senior official said on Monday. Najib Al Zarouni, General Manager of Parking at the Department of Transport, said the move will help organise parking and prevent illegal parking.

"The move is also aimed at keeping roads and passageways clear for fire brigades, ambulances, police and municipality vehicles especially in an emergency. About 25 to 30 per cent of the underground parking facilities remain unutilised, especially at night," Al Zarouni explained.

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Al Zarouni said the Department of Transport is mandated to implement the parking law. "With this in mind, we urge the public to make proper use of the available spaces and underground parking facilities and not to park illegally, specifically in the spaces allocated for special needs or near fire hydrants."

## Peak times

The pay-to-park system was rolled out in Abu Dhabi in October with fees levied for using 2,500 spaces located between Hamdan Street and Baniyas Street.

Within two years, paid parking will apply to around 75,000 parking spaces identified across 43 sectors of the city, including 5,000 spaces in underground car parks, Al Zarouni said.

However, studies show that during peak times there is a need for more than 100,000 spaces. Between 2005 and 2008, the number of registered vehicles in the emirate increased by an average of 16 per cent annually, and the number of people holding driving licences rose by 10 per cent annually.

### **Penalties: Fines and rates**

Drivers who park outside the designated spaces — indicated by turquoise-and-white or blue-and-black kerb markings — will get fines ranging from Dh200 to Dh1,000.

At premium parking lots, which are on main streets, vehicles can be parked up to four hours at the rate of Dh3 per hour. In standard spaces, the rate is Dh2 per hour for a maximum of 24 hours.

People living in the paid parking areas can purchase permits, which allow unlimited parking in standard spaces only. Every resident may get two permits — the first costs Dh800 and the second will cost Dh1,200.

*What do you think of this move? Will it help reduce the number of violations in Abu Dhabi?*

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