



David Gold helped found Charity Car as a way for auto recyclers to dispose of ELVs while helping out their communities.

CHARITY CAR

Cash For Cars ... Cash For Charity

It's a really simple idea. Buy unwanted vehicles from the public, donate the money to charity, recycle the parts. It's an idea, called Charity Car, that was brought to life by 1877EndOfLifeVehicles.com and its affiliates, including David Gold, president of Standard Auto Wreckers in Toronto, Ontario.

Before Gold's idea, he and industry colleagues witnessed numerous end-of-life vehicle (ELV) donation campaigns that were not representing our industry. Auto recyclers were not involved and the full value of the vehicles was not given to charities.

"These outsiders were taking vehicles from us," said Gold. "They were marketing them better, but they were also taking part of the vehicle's value as an expense. We should be the sole proprietors of end-of-life vehicles."

To counter these campaigns, Gold helped create Charity Car in 2004 as an add-on to 1877EndOfLifeVehicles.com. It is an easy and simple cash-for-cars charity program. A person with an ELV can log-on to CharityCar.ca or CharityCar.us, fill out an online form about the vehicle (make, model, ownership, etc.) and choose which registered nonprofit association to donate the vehicle's value. An auto recycler picks up the vehicle - for free - and donates 100 percent of the salvage value to the charity. The charity sends the seller a tax receipt for the value or allowable tax value by law.

"We're trying to create a win-win-win situation for everyone involved," said Gold. "We're going to buy ELVs anyway. We're not looking to make any additional profits. Any recycler is welcome to become a part of this."

The Charity Car program has been tried and tested in the Toronto area. The program began with only a couple of charities, but through word-of-mouth, now includes 30 charities in the Toronto area alone. Gold said because of Internet searches, the program now stretches across Canada and the United States.

"We were donating to the Toronto Cat Rescue and someone across the country saw us online and wanted to donate," said Gold. "That is how it started to spread."

Each charity involved receives a link on the Charity Car web site and in turn, places the Charity Car logo on its site. Charities can register to become a recipient right on the Charity Car web site.

"It's meant to be extremely simple and transparent," said Gold. "That's what we're trying to foster and grow."

Charity Car itself virtually has no expenses, except for the web site, which uses 1877EndOfLifeVehicles.com technology. The automated technology that runs the Charity Car web site uses proprietary software and an automated call-distribution system to disseminate vehicles to recyclers. Charity Car is basically the brand both the public and charities can recognize, but auto recyclers completely run the program. There is no money exchanged between the seller and auto recycler and the charity receives the same amount the recycler would pay for any salvaged vehicle.

"We all have an intrinsic desire to help," said Gold. "Every time I write a check to a charity, I feel like my month is complete." ❧

BY ERIN SANDAGE

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