



Vehicle Residency Research Guide

This guide was produced by the Seattle University *Project on Family Homelessness* and the *Vehicular Residency Research Project* to help identify and document vehicles which are used as homes. This information is for data collection only, so that service providers or governmental agencies can better identify people who may be in need of assistance and secure the proper resources to aid.

Vehicle Identification Schema

A vehicle should be considered a vehicle residence if it exhibits three of the following six characteristics:

1. The view through the front to rear windows is blocked.
2. The side and/or rear windows are blocked by sheeting, panels, and/or curtains to restrict visibility on both sides,
3. There is evidence of unfrozen condensation on windows.
4. At least one window is partially open.
5. There are items often associated with vehicle residency such as generators, bicycles, or storage containers externally secured.
6. There are unusually large volumes of possessions, sometimes appearing to be “refuse” (often in bags), within or near the vehicle.



Vehicle Residence Mapping Instructions

1. **DO NOT INTERACT WITH ANYONE. DO NOT SHINE LIGHT INSIDE OTHER VEHICLES. DO NOT BRING ATTENTION TO YOURSELF OR OTHER VEHICLES.**
2. Attach your Study Area Map to your clipboard, write the researchers’ initials, create a basic color code key (suggested below), then note the date and time when you are beginning the count.
3. On your Study Area Map, highlight each block in **red** if there is a vehicle residence (VR) matching the *vehicle identification schema* parked on that block, **green** if there is no VR.

If there is a VR parked on a block, write the total number of vehicle(s) in descending order to the WEST of a N/S street or SOUTH on the EAST side of a W/E street.

Use your color code to show the total of each vehicle type; suggested color code:

Car

Van

Truck (including any non-car or van VRs which is less than 80” wide)

RV (including and limited to any VR over 80” wide)

Example:

Total: 14 / 3 / 3 / 2



4. When you have documented all blocks within your study area(s), write the end time, then tally the totals by vehicle type, using the color code for each total.

Fig. 13: Vehicle Residency Research Guide