



## **KEEP RIGHT OF CENTER**

By Beven Bentley, Community Peace Officer

Over the next few months I will be addressing the issue of parking or more specifically parking infractions.

I will attempt to give you an explanation of the offense as well as the practical reasons for the restriction, which at times is not always clear to the offender. Over the past 25 years there has been approximately 6000 parking tickets issued in the Town of Hinton for various offenses. Of those tickets there is one parking offense that occurs more times in a day, month or year than any other. What is the most common parking offense in Hinton? The answer "Left of Center" It is a generic term used for parking with right hand wheels in excess of 500 mm from the right hand curb. Still confused? Maybe this will help: the next time you are traveling a street, you will notice that all the vehicles on your right are parked in the same direction you are traveling, you then may notice one on the right that is parked facing you, that one is parked "Left of Center".

The operator of that vehicle has crossed over into the opposing driving lane to park, as well when leaving will again travel a certain distance in the opposing driving lane. There is a reason why this is prohibited; first, you put yourself and others at risk when you initially cross over into the on coming driving lane, then again put yourself and others at risk when leaving the location by cutting across the street while vehicles may be approaching from the rear. To date we have been fortunate that this practice has not caused a serious accident, however we may not be so fortunate in the future. Now that I have explained the safety factors surrounding the offense, let's put a different take on it.

If you were told that for convenience sake you could pay \$2.85 per foot to avoid walking 20 feet, your first reaction would probably be, "why would anyone pay that price for the sake of not walking 20 feet". Yet when charged with this infraction you are doing exactly that.

The fine for the offense is \$57.00, the distance crossing the street about 20 feet, keeping that in mind you have just paid \$2.85 per foot for the convenience of not having to walk 20 feet.

I do not want to conclude this article with the citizens of Hinton carrying total responsibility for the number of tickets that have been issued regarding this offense. The trucking industry has played a major part in those statistics, with most of the offenses happening on Carmichael Lane. For that reason signs have been posted in that area, which is not commonly done. However, the Town of Hinton felt it in the best interest of the public to post signs in the area to attempt to alleviate some of the safety issues.

For further information regarding the parking restrictions you may call Bylaw Services at 865-6009 or visit [www.hinton.ca](http://www.hinton.ca).