

GREENE COUNTY POLICY

Subject: Fleet Policy	Policy Number: 6
	Effective: July 17, 2000
	Approved by: Board of Commissioners

This policy is established to regulate the use of County vehicles assigned to employees in the performance of their duties.

USE OF COUNTY OWNED VEHICLES

1. Permitted Uses

- a. Only County employees or drivers authorized by departments may drive or Operate County vehicles or equipment.
- b. County owned vehicles will be used for official County business only.

2. Driver Requirements

- a. The driver of any County owned vehicle must have a valid North Carolina operator's license. County employees who drive vehicles weighing more than 26,000 pounds or carrying 16 or more passengers must have a valid Commercial Class B license with a passenger endorsement.
- b. With the passage of the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act, all drivers who are required to have a Commercial Drivers License (CDL) are now subject to drug and alcohol testing.

There are four tests required for both alcohol and drugs:

1. Pre-Employment: To occur after a conditional offer of employment.
2. Post-Accident: Any driver of a commercial motor vehicle who is involved in an accident resulting in the loss of human life or who receives a citation under state or local laws for a moving traffic violation in connection with the accident, must undergo an alcohol test within 24 hours and a drug test within 32 hours of the accident. If the alcohol test is not

administered within these time frames, employers are required to document reasons why they were not promptly administered. Attempts to test for alcohol must be made for up to 8 hours.

3. Random: The minimum annual testing rate for alcohol is 25% of the average number of driver positions, while the minimum annual rate for drug testing is 50% of the average number of driver positions.
 4. Reasonable Suspicion: When a trained supervisor determines through observations that there is a reasonable suspicion that a driver has consumed alcohol or has used drugs, an alcohol or drug test can be required.
- c. A driver history inquiry must be made by the department head on each employee.
 - d. Employees will be responsible for any vehicle or equipment assigned to them.
 - e. Employees driving County vehicles are required to obey all traffic laws.
 - f. Vehicles are to be driven in a manner that creates a favorable impression with the public.
 - children are playing on the roadway, alley or near the curb
 - passing schools, playgrounds or school buses
 - approaching pedestrians or persons on bicycles
 - adverse weather or road conditions are encountered.
 - g. No vehicle will be operated if any controlling mechanism (such as steering, brakes, headlights, horn or windshield wipers) is not in proper working condition. Do not operate a vehicle that is not in proper mechanical condition; report such conditions to your supervisor.
 - h. Drivers and all passengers must wear seat belts at all times.
 - i. The County will not pay traffic tickets or parking fines, including those received while using personal vehicles for County business. Employees found guilty of a moving violation may be subject to disciplinary action by their supervisor.

3. **Vehicle Assignment**

- a. County vehicles are normally assigned to an individual at the start of their assigned work period and are the employee's responsibility until the completion of the period.
- b. A County vehicle may be assigned to an individual employee who regularly requires the use of the vehicle both on and off duty. Such an assignment may be of a permanent nature or for a specified time period such as a week of on call duty.
- c. During vacation periods or leaves of absence an employee who is assigned a vehicle on a non-permanent basis will turn the vehicle in to his/her department.

4. **Personal Use of County Vehicles**

- a. Use of County vehicles shall be in accordance with Section 6 of the Greene County Personnel Ordinance.
- b. When a vehicle is not being used for County business purposes, it is to be kept on County premises/property except as specifically exempted by a department head.
- c. No County vehicle will be allowed to be driven to an employee's home unless the employee is subject to frequent/emergency duty after normal working hours. Exceptions to this policy will be made with the approval of the department head. Only the following employees will be authorized to drive County vehicles to their homes:
 - Animal Control Officers on call
 - Emergency Management Director
 - Fire Marshal
 - Sheriff and Deputies (Jailers not included)
 - General Services/maintenance personnel on call
 - Landfill Supervisor
 - Emergency Medical Services Director
 - Utilities/Water & Sewer Director
 - Building Inspectors
 - Water Supervisor
 - Well Operator
 - Transportation Drivers

- Parks & Recreation Director
- d. An employee's title or position will no be regarded as justification for taking a County vehicle home. Justification is based on the above types of need without regard to official capacity.

ACCIDENTS

If a vehicle is involved in an accident, the driver's first duty is to stop the vehicle. Regardless of the situation the following procedures must be followed in the event of an accident:

1. Immediately notify the local law enforcement agency to obtain their accident report as well as report any emergency needs.
2. Notify supervisor, department head and County Manager within 24 hours.
3. Complete a County accident report form within 48 hours. This report along with the law enforcement agency's report should be turned in to the Greene County Manager.
4. Notify your supervisor of any possible injuries to yourself, including possible worker's compensation claims.
5. The department, which assigned the vehicle, is responsible for obtaining two damage estimates on the County vehicle within 72 hours.
5. Failure to promptly report accidents and provide the necessary information may result in a loss of County driving privileges, suspension, demotion or dismissal.

MAINTENANCE OF COUNTY VEHICLES

1. Each employee assigned a County owned vehicle is responsible for making an appointment and ensuring periodic maintenance for the vehicle.
2. In the event of a mechanical failure, employees will call the garage to report the need for service and possibly a wrecker.

3. Special equipment (fire extinguisher, flashlights, first aid kits, gasoline cards, etc) must stay with the vehicle at all times. Important information (warranty booklet, tag registration cards, state inspection certificate, owner's manual and insurance information) should also remain with the vehicle at all times. Drivers are responsible for the security of these items.
4. The driver is responsible for ensuring that mechanical fluid levels are maintained including gasoline, engine oil, transmission fluid, radiator fluid and washer fluid. The driver is responsible for having the following maintenance performed:
 - Tires
 - Installation or repair of communications equipment
 - Washing or other appearance/cleanliness needs of the vehicle
5. The garage of the County is not responsible for personal items, which are lost or stolen including outside service locations.

SAFE DRIVER PROCEDURES

Defensive Driving

As a "defensive" driver you are expected to exercise more caution than merely observing traffic laws and rules. You should always drive with the expectation that you can defend yourself against any sudden accident situation. To do so, you should expect and make allowances for the reckless and careless actions of others by staying constantly on the alert. Look and think far enough ahead so as to be able to take necessary preventive actions should the need arise. Adjust your driving to meet all conditions of traffic, roads and weather.

Driver's License

Drivers will carry their NC driver's license at all times when operating motor vehicles. Drivers are required to report any change in their license status to their supervisor, including expiration, suspension, revocation or restriction of driving privilege. Should driving privileges be limited by the state, the County is under no obligation to accommodate the person in a different position. In other words, loss of driving privileges may result in dismissal. Failure to report changes in drivers license status may result in disciplinary action.

Seat Belts

Seat belts will be worn by drivers and all passengers at all times. It is the responsibility of the driver to see to it that passengers are buckled up before starting up.

Riders and Passengers

No unauthorized riders are allowed in or on County vehicles. Seats will not be crowded beyond the capacity of the available seat belts.

Intersection and Railroad Crossings

Many severe accidents occur at intersections and railroad crossings. When negotiating intersections observe the following practices:

- When approaching an intersection, reduce your speed with your foot off the throttle and over the brake. This reduces your stopping reaction time. Reduce speed further or stop at blind intersections.
- Always be ready to take evasive action and to sacrifice the right of way. A green light does not guarantee safe passage.
- Upon entering an intersection look first to the left then right. At an intersection of roads, the vehicle on the right has the right of way if both reach the intersection at the same time. But never assume this will always happen. Yield accordingly.

Passing

Overtaking and passing other vehicles should be attempted only when it is safe to do so. When passing, you are more exposed to a variety of accident types. Before attempting to pass, a driver should determine the following:

- Is it necessary to pass?
- Do I have ample time to pass?
- Can the pass be made without interrupting the normal flow of traffic?

A “no” to any of these should cause reconsideration of the maneuver.

When passing observe the following practices:

- Always give yourself plenty of time to pass; lack of time or space may force you to “cut in” and disrupt other traffic. On two lane roads, have a good feel for both the speed and acceleration of your vehicle and the speed and distance of any oncoming vehicle before attempting to pass.
- Before you pass, look to the rear and signal the traffic following you. Be sure there is nothing in front of the vehicle you are going to pass

that might cause it to turn into you or prevent you from returning to your lane safely.

- On two/three lane roads, always pass on the left.
- Never pass in or near an intersection, on a hill, in a curve or in the vicinity of pedestrians.

When being passed by another vehicle, keep well to the right of your lane and if necessary reduce speed to accommodate the passer. Do not signal other drivers that it is safe to pass; doing so may burden you and the County with partial responsibility for any ensuing accident.

Following

Following too closely is a common cause of accidents. Never follow another vehicle so closely that you cannot stop safely if the vehicle ahead makes an emergency stop. Allow at least one vehicle length between you and the vehicle ahead for every ten miles per hour of speed. Also, use a three second time interval for adequate following distance at moderate speeds; increase for adverse driving conditions.

Backing

A significant amount of automobile accidents involving backing. To avoid backing accidents, the best rule is to avoid backing situations themselves whenever possible. Plan your turns and parking so that backing is unnecessary.

When backing is absolutely necessary be certain that nothing is behind your vehicle. Check all rear-view mirrors and provide sufficient mirrors to eliminate any "blind spots" behind your vehicle.

Try to have someone guide you by standing to one side to signal, especially if you do not have a clear view of the back up area behind you. Be sure the guide never stands behind your vehicle. Even with a guide you are still the one in control, so do not depend entirely on the judgement of a guide.

Where there is no clear view and no guide is available, you should stop, get out of the vehicle and inspect the backing area before proceeding.

Never back around a corner or intersection in order to turn around or park.

When using a driveway to turn around, back into it from the street if possible in order to be able to drive out forward into street traffic. Always stop before backing over sidewalks or other pedestrian rights of way.

Back slowly and in stages, especially in longer backing situations. Always be aware of your surroundings.

Hard Braking and Skidding

To avoid skidding and possible loss of control of the vehicle, the best rule is to avoid hard braking in the first place. This in turn is done by governing your speed appropriately to the situation, not following too closely and not speeding.

When braking is necessary, apply brake pressure in a steady and slow manner to avoid locking the brakes. Keep the steering straight if possible, especially in wet conditions.

If you find yourself in a skid in a rear wheel drive vehicle, turn the wheels in the direction of the skid but not beyond. Drivers of front wheel drive vehicles should turn in the opposite direction of the skid. A secondary skid can be more dangerous than the first. Hold the skid and maintain controlled acceleration; over acceleration can cause the vehicle to spin out. When you feel traction, steer back to the center of your lane.

When entering curves, reduce speed and begin to brake if necessary. Apply steady and light acceleration through the turn.

Stopping and Parking

Stopping or parking on road shoulders, curves and steep inclines, where visibility is limited, and on other rights of way should be avoided whenever possible. Avoid mud, sand or other soft ground conditions. Avoid stopping for extended periods where other traffic's view may be obstructed by your vehicle.

When stopping along the roadside is unavoidable, use the vehicle's emergency flashing lights, especially at night.

Avoid parking spots that will require subsequent backing into traffic.

When parking, set the vehicle's transmission in park or lowest gear and set the parking brake. On inclines, turn the wheels toward the curb and away from the road.

Avoid opening vehicle doors into traffic and exercise extreme caution when it is necessary to do so.

When vehicles are unattended, even temporarily, never leave the keys in the ignition and always lock the vehicle.

Adverse Driving Conditions

Night

Statistics show that 80% of fatal accidents occur between 8:00 PM and 8:00 AM.

When driving after dark, you should automatically increase your alertness. Turn on your headlights when light first begins to fade. At night reduce your speed accordingly and drive at speeds, which permit stopping within the visibility range of headlights and streetlights.

When using high beams you must dim them:

- Within 500 feet of an oncoming vehicle
- Within 300 feet of another vehicle you are overtaking or passing

Fog

Visibility is seriously restricted under foggy conditions and objects may appear distorted. Reduce your speed so that the stopping distance does not exceed on half the distance you can see. Keep headlights on low beam; remember that parking lights should be used for parking only. Stop if extremely poor visibility warrants it; pull off the road and use emergency flashing lights.

Rain-Snow-Ice

Rainy and especially icy-snowy road conditions greatly increase the possibility of skids and resulting in accidents. To improve visibility, it is important that windshield wipers and blades are working properly. Use your headlights on low beam. Regulate speed according to road conditions to always allow for a controlled stop. Check your brakes periodically.

Winter means more darkness, less visibility, reduced traction and cold weather conditions requiring greater driver alertness and skills. Add the extra margin of safety between your vehicle and others.

Accident Reporting

If you are involved in an accident follow these procedures:

- Stop. Failure to do so is a criminal offense and may also result in County disciplinary action.
- Stay calm.
- Do not admit fault for blame other persons.

- Obtain names of any witnesses.
- Obtain an incident report from appropriate law enforcement agency, i.e. police, telephone numbers.
- Obtain names, addresses and telephone numbers of all other persons involved (including drivers, passengers, pedestrians and/or other persons possibly injured and owners of property damaged).
- Exchange automobile insurance information with other persons involved (including vehicle owners and drivers). This information should include the name of the insurance company and the policy number for each driver and vehicle involved.

If someone is hurt and there is a danger of fire, explosion or other further damage, call 747-3888. Assist injured to the extent possible.

If you are injured or suspect an injury, notify your supervisor.

Within 48 hours following the accident fill out an accident report form (including diagram of the accident) and turn it in to your supervisor/fleet coordinator.

Drugs

Any person found to be operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs will be subject to disciplinary action up to and possibly including immediate discharge.

Anyone who is using or intends to use prescription or over the counter drugs that may impair driving ability (as on the product label) will report this situation to their supervisor. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.

Vehicle Inspection

Drivers will inspect vehicles frequently following the approved inspection form/vehicle condition report and turn it in to his/her supervisor. It is the responsibility of each driver to ensure that their vehicle is operating properly at all times.

Any employee who is instructed to drive a vehicle they feel is unsafe, has the right to contact the supervisor/safety director for inspection and a decision as to whether the vehicle should be driven.

Cleanliness

Vehicles are to be maintained in a clean condition, especially the windshield. They are to be kept free of interior debris or trash, especially that which could impair operation. Necessary objects should be secured if possible.

Mobile Communications

The mobile communications in your County vehicle are to be used for County business only. Check this equipment to be sure it is functioning properly before leaving. Make your conversations short and courteous. Report if you encounter serious delays, hazardous driving conditions or accidents.