

## **Vehicle Fuel Conservation Policy**

### **A. General**

Orange County's "Environmental Responsibility in County Government" goal includes the objective: "Initiate policies and programs that conserve energy, reduce fuel/utility/resource consumption..." In support of this goal, the County has adopted this Vehicle Fuel Conservation Policy.

Costs for gasoline and diesel fuel for County vehicles and motorized equipment are significant. Beyond this, fuel consumption for vehicles and motorized equipment has significant environmental impacts. As a result, it is both necessary and beneficial for the County to adopt a policy of fuel conservation and efficiency.

Water conservation and energy conservation for County buildings are addressed in separate policies.

### **B. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to reduce the County government's vehicle fuel consumption, wherever possible; improve fuel efficiency; and maximize the use of alternative fuels for that fuel that must be used to operate Orange County vehicles and motorized equipment, consistent with the need for safe, and reliable County vehicles and motorized equipment.

### **C. Policy Goals**

1. Establish the policy foundation of responsibilities, planning, programs, standards, performance measures and the like to manage the County government's vehicle fuel use and conserve fuel.
2. Manage vehicle and motorized equipment fuel consumption to minimize use to the greatest extent possible while maintaining safe and reliable vehicles and motorized equipment.
3. Provide for the use of alternative fuel (which may include compressed natural gas, bio-diesel, hybrid gas/electric, or the like) vehicles and motorized equipment, unless service needs cannot be met with an alternative fuel vehicle or motorized equipment – as determined by the County Manager.
4. Purchase vehicles and motorized equipment that meet service delivery needs with the greatest fuel efficiency possible whether alternative or traditional fuel.
5. Achieve a reduction in average fuel consumption per mile annually for vehicles and per hour of operation for motorized equipment.

6. Support change to State agency policies that fosters monetary incentives to make fuel efficiency and alternative fuel efforts economically attractive and to streamline program justification requirements so that projects can be executed within a timely interval, and savings quickly realized.

#### **D. Scope**

This policy applies to all County owned and leased vehicles and motorized equipment and the operators of these vehicles and equipment.

#### **E. Responsibilities**

1. Energy Conservation Task Group

As provided in the County's Energy Conservation Policy, the Manager appoints an Energy Conservation Task Group. The Task Group provides direction, counsel and oversight as to implementation of the Vehicle Fuel Conservation Policy. As necessary, the Task Group addresses questions of policy interpretation and adherence.

2. Purchasing and Central Services Director

The Purchasing and Central Services Director manages the vehicle acquisition or replacement process as provided in this policy.

3. County Manager

The County Manager's advance approval is required for purchase of any new or replacement vehicle or motorized equipment.

4. Public Works Department

The Public Works Department is responsible for:

- Performing preventive and corrective maintenance for County vehicles and motorized equipment to ensure maximum fuel efficiency is achieved.
- Preparing the annual vehicle replacement report.

5. Department Heads

Department Heads are responsible for:

- Communicating the County's fuel conservation goals and policies to staff, providing guidance and promoting adherence.
- The assignment of departmental vehicles to departmental staff.

- For vehicles not assigned to a single individual, designating one operator and one backup operator to monitor use and schedule preventive maintenance service as needed.
- Communicating and justifying any request for new and replacement vehicles and motorized equipment as part of the annual budget process.
- Monitoring employee conformance with requirements for vehicle and motorized equipment maintenance, including scheduling of preventive maintenance service.

## 6. Employees

Employees who operate County vehicles and motorized equipment are responsible for ensuring that:

- Tire and fluid inspections for vehicles are performed (by self, or by Motor Pool staff) according to published directions from the Public Works Department.
- The assigned vehicle is scheduled and delivered to Public Works for preventive maintenance service within time and/or mileage intervals identified by Public Works.
- Corrective maintenance is scheduled with Public Works as soon as possible when a problem with the vehicle is encountered or identified.
- Vehicles are operated according to all applicable laws and rules of the road. This increases fuel conservation and safety.
- Information about fuel transactions other than those through the automated fuel system are reported to Public Works as provided by Public Works procedures.

## F. Vehicle Operation

1. Vehicles are to be operated in keeping with manufacturers recommendations and specifications, and applicable County policy.
2. To maximize fuel efficiency, vehicles are to be serviced at intervals identified by the Public Works Department.
3. To meet department specific service levels while achieving the highest fuel economy, departments, where applicable, use geographic information systems (GIS) or other industry tools and standards to design and implement vehicular routes/schedules and deployment strategies/schedules.

## G. Fuel Conservation Action Plan

1. Public Works, in consultation with the Energy Task Group and others involved, coordinates the development of an annual "Vehicle Fuel Conservation Action Plan."

The annual action plan includes recommended charge back rates to departments for vehicle operation costs and recommendations for the annual "Vehicle Replacement Report."

2. The annual plan identifies specific actions to be implemented, proposed and estimated time lines and responsibilities for implementation.
3. The action plan is submitted to the Board of Commissioners for review and approval, in coordination with the annual budget process.
4. The action plan is reviewed and updated annually along with evaluation of the previous year's performance during the annual budget process.

#### **H. Charge Back Rates**

As part of the annual budget process, vehicle cost charge back rates to departments are set each year. Among other things, these take account of fuel and repair costs and are designed to promote the use of alternatively fueled and fuel efficient vehicles.

#### **I. Vehicle Acquisition**

1. The Purchasing and Central Services Director develops, communicates and maintains a written process for the systematic consideration of vehicle acquisition needs (whether new or replacement) and the decision-making as to the type of vehicle to be purchased, including whether it is an alternative fuel vehicle (which may include compressed natural gas, bio-diesel, hybrid gas/electric, etc.). Among other things, this process provides for the following:
  - Determination as to whether the vehicle needs to be acquired or replaced.
  - Determination as to whether an alternative fuel vehicle will meet the service needs.
  - Whether an alternative fuel vehicle that will meet the needs is available on State contract; or if not available on State contract otherwise available; or whether a retrofit of a standard fuel vehicle is an option.
  - Analysis of the costs of the alternative vehicle versus standard fuel vehicle
  - Report and recommendation to the County Manager on vehicle acquisition and replacement.
  - County Manager decision as to the specific vehicle to be acquired.
2. As part of the Item I1 process, Public Works prepares an annual "Vehicle Replacement Report" which includes recommended priorities for vehicle replacement. This report considers the following factors in prioritizing vehicle replacements:

- Miles driven to date (odometer reading).
  - Mileage (miles per gallon) compared to baseline/industry standards for comparable vehicle.
  - Repair and maintenance cost per mile for most recent 12 months, compared to baseline/industry standards for comparable vehicles.
  - Vehicle use (front-line emergency response vehicle versus Motor Pool fleet vehicle).
  - Overall mechanical assessment by Public Works staff.
3. Vehicles identified for replacement are removed from service within one month of the replacement being placed in service, except with the written approval of the County Manager for the vehicle to continue in service.

#### **J. Monitoring and Reporting**

1. The Public Works automated fuel system provides records of most fuel transactions. Public Works obtains information regarding fuel received at other locations (UNC Chapel Hill, Town of Chapel Hill, etc.) and adjusts the transactions database accordingly. These data are used to create performance reports.
2. Information is used to benchmark performance:
  - From year-to-year for total miles driven and average miles per gallon.
  - Compare to results for similar vehicles/vehicle use in other local governments.

In addition to actual vehicle fuel performance, the County reviews other benchmarks such as reducing reliance on fossil fuel vehicles.

#### **K. Programs**

To support the vehicle fuel conservation, the County implements a variety of programs including:

1. Employee Awareness

The County conducts communications programs to promote employee awareness of the need for fuel conservation. This includes activities such as distribution of the Vehicle Fuel Conservation Policy, reminders via pamphlets, e-mails, Orange Alive, coverage in new employee orientation, and opportunities at employee events to reinforce the conservation ethic.

2. Incentives

Incentive programs will be developed to improve compliance and acceptance by employees who operate County vehicles. These may include department versus department contests, financial incentives, preferred parking and the like.

3. Preventive Maintenance

Preventive Maintenance procedures are used to obtain optimal fuel-efficient operation of all equipment.

4. Repairs

Repairs/replacement of all vehicles and motorized equipment take into consideration the most cost-effective solution over the life of the repair/equipment. This includes future maintainability, improved operation, improvements to fuel efficiency, requirement for additional or reduced preventive maintenance, and the like.

5. Innovative Strategies

The County considers and pursues innovative strategies that may reduce the need for gasoline consumption such as video conferencing, "smart travel" with other departments and County car pooling, including educating employees about these.