



Policy No. 034
Policy Name: Vehicle Operation
Control Date: 08/2006

1.0 Scope and Application

The following policy governs the use of vehicles owned, leased, rented and/or operated for county business and covers the use of these vehicles if used for personal use as allowed by Executive Order. It also governs the use of personal vehicles that are used to conduct County business.

2.0 Responsibilities

Risk Manager: Support and management of this policy.
Department Heads: Implementation of this policy.
Supervisors: Ensure policy is adhered to by all employees.
Employees: Follow policy requirements.

All employees are responsible for complying with the requirements contained in this policy. Failure to abide by these requirements may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

3.0 Departmental Policies and Requirements

This policy represents minimum requirements for vehicle operation and maintenance. Departments may develop their own vehicle policies provided that they contain all of the requirements of this policy.

4.0 Definitions

None.

5.0 Training

Vehicle operators shall receive instruction in this policy and become familiar with the Guide to Determining Accident Preventability which is included in the appendix. Operators of special equipment shall be trained according to the special equipment requirements contained in this policy.

6.0 Documentation Requirements

Numerous documentation requirements are contained throughout this policy. See the pertinent sections for details. Records of all training and instruction provided under this policy shall be maintained within the Department.



7.0 Use Of Vehicles

- 1) All employees driving County vehicles, and those using their personal vehicles in pursuit of County business, must comply with all applicable laws of the State of Wisconsin as well as the following regulations of the County. Emergency vehicles under pressing emergency situations are exempted from normal motor vehicle laws and rules. However, this does not relieve such operator from the duty to drive in a prudent fashion under the circumstances for the safety of all persons nor does this protect such operator from the consequences of their reckless disregard for the safety of others.

The operation of a County vehicle is a privilege which may be withdrawn at any time. In order to operate a County vehicle of any type, an employee must have completed the following:

- a) Participation in a defensive driving or driver perception course as required by the Personnel Department and/or employing Department. Temporary driving privileges may be granted by the Risk Manager prior to the course being offered.
 - b) Orientation to County Driving rules and insurance procedures contained within this policy.
 - c) Training in the maintenance and use of vehicles and off-the-road equipment and machinery. No employee should be directed to operate a vehicle for which they have not been adequately trained to operate. This includes training and knowledge of safety procedures, tire and wheel changing procedures as appropriate, and vehicle maintenance requirements that pertain to the operation.
 - d) Successful completion of motor vehicle registration review as required by the Personnel Division.
- 2) Parking citations shall be the responsibility of the operator.
 - 3) All employees who drive as part of their work assignment and their passengers are required to properly wear their seat belts and if applicable their shoulder harness.
 - 4) Riding on the sides, running boards, tool boxes, tailgates, truck beds, or roof of any truck or vehicle is prohibited.
 - 5) Drivers shall direct their full attention to the safe operation of their vehicle.



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- 6) During periods of limited visibility or any time windshield wipers are in use, headlights must be turned on.
- 7) Trailers will be fastened securely to hitches according to manufacturer procedures.
- 8) All items which might be transported either in a vehicle or trailer, which may move around during transport, must be secured.
- 9) Inappropriate and unauthorized personal use of County vehicles is not permitted. Exceptions include travel to and from work and lunch stops only for those employees specifically authorized by Executive Order. Occasional trips expressly authorized by the Department Head may also be exempt. Passengers shall be limited to County employees and others as may be authorized in advance by the Department Head.
- 10) Operators are the first line of defense against equipment wear, failure and damage. Vehicles should be visually inspected by the operator daily; before, during and after operation, so that malfunctions can be detected before they result in serious damage, equipment failure or accident. Report any noted findings to your Supervisor immediately.
- 11) Backing of vehicles which do not have a clear view of the entire rear end will be done with the assistance of a guide, if available. If a second person is in the vehicle, they must get out and guide the vehicle back using the appropriate hand signal and voice signal. If the driver is alone, he or she will get out of the vehicle and inspect the area behind before backing. If that is not feasible, avoid backing. Backing accidents that occur during snow plow and other emergency situations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will take into consideration operational necessity.
- 12) A current automobile insurance identification card or certificate showing the insurance company name, policy number, and expiration date shall be kept in the glove box of every County vehicle. A copy of the County Accident Scene Procedures that are contained in this policy shall also be kept in the glove box (see appendix). These procedures must be adhered to following an accident. Replacements can be obtained from the Personnel Division.

Use of vehicle turn signals shall be utilized appropriately by all drivers at all times in any vehicle that is so equipped.
- 13) Tailgates will be up and latched when vehicles are in motion. If a vehicle's function requires that the tailgate remain in the open position, the warning lights or other appropriate caution device must be used.



- 14) If the vehicle does not have a tailgate but is loaded, the driver of the vehicle will ensure that the load is secure on the truck and that overhangs are properly marked with the use of a red flag or cloth.

8.0 Parking

- 1) County vehicles shall not be parked in “No Parking” zones except in emergency situations or in the required performance of official duties. At the time a vehicle is parked in a “No Parking” zone, emergency flashers will be turned on in any vehicle that is so equipped or can be so equipped.
- 2) No County vehicle will be left unattended with the ignition key left in the ignition, where anyone not employed by the County could have access to the vehicle.
- 3) When possible, vehicles will be locked when not occupied.
- 4) Employees who occupy a metered parking space will pay the meter for the duration of the stay while conducting business. Should any citation or ticket be issued, the employee will assume responsibility for payment.
- 5) Vehicles must be parked where they will not interfere with the operation of other vehicles or traffic. Emergency response units are exempted when necessitated by the emergency.

9.0 Equipment

- 1) Safety equipment, including seat belts, shall not be removed, bypassed or tampered with.
- 2) Doors will not be tied open.

10.0 Special Equipment

- 1) Special equipment such as tractors, hi-lifts, high rangers, graders, plows, cranes, or any unit which has special devices added for specific types of work, will require formal instruction prior to use by a driver. This special training will include the following:
 - Explanation and demonstration of all control devices.
 - Explanation and demonstration of all safety equipment.
 - Explanation of maintenance items such as fuel, water, oil, or other minimum operating needs of the unit.
 - Demonstration of operation.



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- New driver operation under supervision with testing.
- Instruction in driving to and from or on and off trailer, parking procedures, and method of securing.

A report showing completion of this training must be provided to and maintained by the employing Department.

- 2) Passengers will ride only in seats designed for passengers on special equipment.
- 3) Operators shall be familiar with the equipment's operating manual. Safety devices shall remain intact at all times.

11.0 General Requirements

In addition to the following general rules, department rules and regulations should be adhered to for specific procedures:

- 1) Each County Department shall maintain a current listing of all personnel within their operation who may drive a County vehicle for County business. The list must include employee name (legal), date of birth, social security number, Driver License Number, and State of issue. This list shall be provided to the Risk Manager by September first of each year. Changes and revisions to the list shall also be provided in a timely manner.
- 2) Each County Department shall maintain a current listing of all County vehicles utilized within their operation, including Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), year, make, model, license plate number, driver/operator or Supervisor, overnight storage location (including authorized take home vehicles), and service location. This list shall be provided to the Risk Manager by September first of each year. Any additions or deletions to this list must be provided to the Risk Manager no later than the deadline in order to coordinate the updating of County records for insurance renewal purposes. County vehicles, as referred to in this plan, include vehicles owned, leased, rented, or those which the County has responsibility of insuring, such as KCCSU Sheriff Department vehicles.
- 3) The driver's license status of all County employees who may be required to drive County vehicles as a part of their work assignment may be checked with the Department of Motor Vehicles. The status of an employee's license may be monitored more frequently if the license had previously been suspended, revoked, or is a Commercial Drivers License (CDL). The employee's entire driving record is considered in determining driving habits and potential liability to the County. The County has a legal obligation to determine each employee's ability to safely operate a vehicle.



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- 4) Each employee who operates a vehicle must report the suspension or revocation of their license to their Supervisor, who will in turn advise the Risk Manager. Failure of an employee to report a change in license status will result in disciplinary action.
- 5) Employees are not permitted to drive any licensed vehicle while conducting County business if their driver's license is expired, suspended, or revoked. Suspension or loss of a driver's license may result in layoff.
- 6) All drivers may receive periodic reviews of their general driving ability.
- 7) Cell Phone Usage Safety Policy when operating motor vehicle:
 - Make every attempt to plan your calls so that they can be made while you are not operating your vehicle.
 - If available, always ensure your hands free unit is attached and functioning. Become familiar with its use prior to using it while driving.
 - When possible, pull the vehicle off the road into a safe parking area prior to making or receiving calls.
 - Never take notes or refer to maps or any materials while the vehicle is in motion.
 - Unless you are expecting an urgent call, do not answer the phone while driving. Use the voice mail on the phone and return the call later.
 - If available, let a passenger make or answer calls.
 - Keep calls brief and stop calls immediately if driving conditions become hazardous.

12.0 Operation of Personal Vehicles

- 1) Whereas part of the IRS mileage reimbursement rate is intended to compensate employees for the cost of insurance on their vehicles, employees who use personal vehicles for County business must have a current insurance card or certificate on file with the Personnel Division at all times. This card must state the insurer, coverage limits and effective dates of the policy. Those employees who have insurance information on file will be allowed to drive their personal vehicles on County business. Employees who drive their personal vehicles on County business and who do not have insurance information on file will be subject to progressive discipline.
- 2) Employees must continue to provide the Personnel Division with a new insurance certificate each time their auto policy is renewed or canceled.



- 3) In the event an employee has an accident in a personal vehicle while conducting County business, the employee's insurance is primary.
- 4) The above procedure must be followed by all employees, both represented and non-represented, including Department Heads. Department Heads will notify the affected employees in their departments and stress the need for compliance.

13.0 Driver Violations/Discipline/Training

- 1) Driver and passenger misconduct or substantial negligence such as operating under the influence of an intoxicant or controlled substance, reckless driving, inattentive driving or driving without a valid driver's license will result in immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- 2) Employees will be restricted from driving County vehicles (pulled off the road) whenever any one of the following occurs:
 - Any two (2) moving traffic violations in the previous twelve (12) months.
 - Any one (1) preventable accident during the previous twelve (12) months of service while conducting County business.
 - Any one (1) conviction of a major offense as categorized by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. WI DOT document BDS109 or its equivalent will be used in identifying major offenses.
 - While their license is revoked, suspended, expired or otherwise not valid.
 - A positive drug or alcohol test including Reasonable Suspicion, Random (CDL Requirement), and Post –Accident (CDL Requirement).
- 3) Employees will be restricted from driving Personal Vehicles while conducting County business whenever any one of the following occurs:
 - Any one (1) preventable accident during the previous twelve (12) months of service while conducting County business.
 - Failure to maintain an active personal automobile liability insurance policy.
 - While their license is revoked, suspended, expired or otherwise not valid.
 - A positive drug or alcohol test including tests resulting from Reasonable Suspicion.
- 4) The County's "Guide To Determining Accident Preventability" (see appendix) will be used in determining accident preventability. Other factors and information sources may also be used. Employees are encouraged to read this guide.



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- 5) The County Risk Manager will determine the duration of driving restrictions, the need for retraining and/or driving assessment on a case-by-case basis.
- 6) Traffic citations and parking violations are the responsibility of the driver. Parking fines must be paid promptly or resolved satisfactorily with the issuing agency. Failure to adequately resolve parking violations may result in disciplinary action.
- 7) A County employee who causes or is involved in a preventable accident may be subject to disciplinary action within the guidelines of existing labor contracts. A review of the accident shall determine whether it was preventable or non-preventable.
- 8) A written Kenosha County Vehicle Accident Investigation Report (see appendix) shall be placed in the employee's personnel file to document both preventable and non-preventable accidents.
- 9) Repeated offenses will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- 10) Failure to wear seat belts will result in a verbal warning for the first offense, to be followed with progressive discipline if the situation persists.

14.0 Vehicle Accident Reporting & Investigation

- 1) An accident is defined as an event that causes a collision or similar incident involving a moving vehicle often resulting in property damage, injury and/or death. All accidents occurring while driving on behalf of the County must be reported to your Supervisor.
- 2) The employee's immediate Supervisor or manager shall ensure that the Finance and Personnel Divisions are notified promptly, and that the proper forms are completed and forwarded.
- 3) The Supervisor/manager shall investigate the accident, document the investigation on the Kenosha County Vehicle Accident Investigation Report, make a determination as to whether the accident was preventable or non-preventable, and submit the report to the Department's Incident Review Committee (IRC), or the Division Director and Risk Manager in the absence of such a committee.
- 4) The County Guide to Determining Accident Preventability shall be used in analyzing and determining preventability (see appendix). The appropriate committee or management personnel will also recommend remedial safety procedures, specify driver retraining as needed and disciplinary action as necessary. The preventability determination, necessary actions, and recommendations, if any, will be documented on the Kenosha County



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Vehicle Accident Investigation Report and returned to the Supervisor/Department Head for implementation.

- 5) The Kenosha County Vehicle Accident Investigation Report and related records shall be kept as a permanent record in the employee's personnel file.

15.0 Accident Scene Procedures

Immediately following an accident there are several things that you should do, as well as things you should not do. Conducting yourself in a professional manner and following the procedures below may help prevent another accident from occurring, will aid in minimizing damages, and will assist the County in documenting what actually happened.

- 1) Secure The Scene
 - Stop immediately and remain at the scene until the authorities give you permission to leave.
 - Do not move your vehicle unless necessary for safety reasons. Location and position of the vehicle can help determine the cause of the event.
 - Before exiting your vehicle, turn the engine off, turn the emergency flashers on, and set the parking brake to ensure your vehicle does not roll.
 - If your vehicle is equipped with reflective triangles or other warning devices, place them appropriately.
- 2) Lend Assistance To The Injured
 - Send or call for help.
 - If you are able, check on the injured and render immediate assistance. Do not move anyone who is injured unless it is a life-threatening situation. Only give what first aid you have been trained to give by a qualified agency such as the American Red Cross. Do what you can do to help, but do not talk about the collision or events leading up to it.
- 3) Information You May & May Not Share With Others
 - When police arrive, cooperate fully and follow all of their instructions. Answer their questions honestly, but avoid speculating on cause or guilt, especially your own. Do not offer any more information than asked. Do not offer opinions and do not ad lib.
 - Notify your Supervisor as soon as time permits. You may give your name, address, employer name and address, vehicle license number, your driver's license number, and information off of the insurance identification card or certificate in your glove



box to the police and other party involved. If anyone else asks for details, be polite, but firmly refuse to discuss the accident with them.

- You may only discuss details of the accident with the investigating members of the investigating law enforcement agency, your Supervisor or other County official, and Wisconsin Municipal Mutual Insurance Company representative. Do not discuss details of the accident with anyone other than those listed here without prior approval from the Personnel Office. Do not hesitate to ask individuals for identification.
- Do not apologize for the accident.
- Do not argue cause.
- Do not offer to pay medical expenses.
- Do not admit responsibility.
- Driver reprimands at the scene are not permissible. If necessary, reprimands should take place in a confidential environment.

4) Secure Driver/Witness Information & Statements

- Gather information. Write down as much information as you can right away. Information documented at the scene is significantly more accurate than that recalled at a later time. Write down the other driver, passenger and witness information and statements. Be sure to get the other driver's insurance information.

5) Inspect And Verify The Scene

- Inspect the accident scene carefully. Details are essential. Use the Kenosha County Vehicle Accident Investigation Report to record conditions at the scene, as well as other accident details. If this form is not available, gather as much information as you can and write it down as soon as possible.
- Make a sketch of the scene before any vehicles are moved. Do not worry about drawing a vehicle that looks realistic. The important thing is to show the position of the vehicles as they approached the scene and where they were following the collision.
- Include your description of what occurred. Your statement should be simple, to the point, and purely factual.

6) Complete Forms As Soon As Possible

- If you did not have time to fully complete the Kenosha County Vehicle Accident Investigation Report while at the scene, do so as soon as possible.
- Submit the form to your Supervisor as soon as possible.

16.0 Vehicle Maintenance



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- 1) Effective vehicle maintenance is necessary to provide a reliable and safe vehicle. Drivers shall follow the recommended maintenance schedule per the manufacturer and/or departmental procedures.
- 2) Vehicle windows shall be kept clean as practicable by the individual driver.
- 3) Interiors of County vehicles shall be kept clean of all paper, magazines, bottles, cans, rubbish, etc.

End Policy