Awards and plaudits have become more common for Cobb County Fleet Management during the past year. The department was recently ranked number 23 out of about 38,000 applicants for the “100 Best Fleets in North America” competition. It ranked in the top 50 leading fleets in an evaluation by Government Fleet magazine – the only county in the state to make the list.

Fleet Management Director Al Curtis said his staff was happy to move upward in the national rankings.

"With all of the attention that we have had, it has really instilled in them a deep since of pride in the department and in the county," he said.

Curtis added that the department has also been recognized as the governmental fleet with the most electric vehicles in the state. In April, the county unveiled a new $30,000 electric vehicle charger donated by Nissan North America and installed at the Powder Springs Station in Marietta. This added to the 22 other chargers spread throughout the county.

"Fleet Management has made great strides in embracing green energy alternatives," he said. "It has the largest diversity of fuels used in the state – compressed natural gas, biodiesel, propane and electric."

Cobb recently added the 16 all-electric Nissan LEAFs to its vehicle fleet. The leased vehicles are spread among various county departments, including the Tax Assessor’s Office, Risk Management, Juvenile Court and Senior Services. These vehicles joined 23 hybrids already in use by Cobb County Government.

Fleet Management monitors and maintains more than 2,000 county vehicles and equipment, ranging from police cars to PARKS trucks. With only 17 full-time mechanics, the department works on an estimated 120 vehicles each week with 85 percent of the jobs turned around within 24 hours.

“We’re lean and we definitely have to be efficient to keep up with the workload,” Curtis said.
Residents to get inside view of safety

Cobb Department of Public Safety staff will host the fall session of its Citizens Public Safety Academy Program, which provides an opportunity for residents of Cobb County to get an inside look at the various organizations which make up the county’s public safety efforts. During the course, participants will experience the emergency communications center, fire, animal control and police and gain knowledge and insight as to how each perform their duties to protect residents.

There is no charge for the 14-week program and classes will be held every Tuesday evening at 6:30 p.m., beginning Tuesday, Sept. 8 (that session will begin at 6 p.m.) The location of the classes can change from week-to-week depending on the topic or unit being discussed.

Applicants must be more than 21 years old and a resident of Cobb County, or work for Cobb County Government. In order to be accepted into the program, applicants must fill out the application, print it and bring it in person to the Cobb County Public Safety Internal Affairs Department, 1150 Powder Springs Street, Suite 300, Marietta, by 4 p.m., Friday, Aug. 14.

Anyone interested in participating should obtain an application by contacting Renee Cameron at 770-590-5650 or Renee.Cameron@cobbcounty.org.

Learn how to protect your identity

Seniors who want to learn how to protect themselves from hacking and being victims of identity theft are encouraged to attend the “Credit Freeze? Hacking?” seminar 10-11 a.m., Friday, Aug. 21, at East Cobb Senior Center. Seminar participants will be guided through the process of placing a credit freeze. Please bring your own laptop or tablet. Space is limited, so sign up by calling the center at 770-509-4900. East Cobb Senior Center is located at 3332 Sandy Plains Road, Marietta.

New school year, students on the road

The Georgia Department of Education asks the public to be alert and exercise patience and caution as school goes back in session this year.

Impatient, uninformed or apathetic drivers pose a great threat to children will be waiting at school bus stops. Follow these safety practices:

- Be on the alert as children walk to and from their school bus stops.
- Be ready to act when you see the yellow flashing lights on the school bus. This is your warning that a stop is about to take place. Begin to slow down and look for students in the area. NEVER speed up to beat a school bus.
- Abide by the law when a school bus comes to a full stop and you see the flashing red lights activate and the stop arm deploy. Motorists are required to STOP in nearly every instance. The only exception to this rule is when highways are separated in the center by a dirt, grass or concrete median. In this situation, only vehicles following or traveling alongside a school bus in the same direction must stop. Be attentive after stopping.
- You must remain stopped until all loading students are aboard in the morning or all unloading students have cleared 12 feet off the roadway in the afternoon.

Ease your commute with new Web app

Cobb Commute is a Geographic Information System based Web map that will display up-to-date traffic conditions in Cobb County about any event, including road construction, that could hinder traffic around the county.

Cobb Commute features both desktop and mobile versions. Go to cobbcommute.com/full#/ to check out Cobb Commute and view commute impact areas, traffic speeds and road restrictions and closures in real time.