

Cobb County Government

Green Vehicles Purchase Policy

Approved by the Board of Commissioners on February 24, 2009

BACKGROUND: Cobb County appreciates the benefits of operating the most functional, fuel efficient and least polluting fleet available to support county operations, while at the same time being fiscally prudent in vehicle purchase and operational costs. It is important to regularly evaluate the size and make-up of the fleet to ensure it is efficiently supporting county operations. It is recognized that transition to alternative fuels and hybrid or other “clean” vehicles are options for achieving these goals.

ACCORDINGLY, IT IS THE INTENT OF THIS POLICY TO ESTABLISH A GREEN FLEET THROUGH A PROCESS of consideration of all aspects of fleet operations that will contribute to: (1) use of cleaner technology with reduced emissions; (2) reduced dependency on any particular energy source; (3) redundant types and sources of fuel; (4) lower or contained fuel costs; (5) improved fuel efficiency; and, (6) the Cobb County fleet serving as an example to others both in the public and private sectors.

1. The County Manager shall appoint a task force that will meet as appropriate, be knowledgeable of current fleet operations; become knowledgeable of new technologies and fuels; give consideration of potential application of alternative technology or fuels for the county’s fleet; and, to offer recommendations for improvements. The Purchasing Director and Fleet Manager shall be Green Fleet Task Force members.

2. The following are several of the primary issues that, addressed comprehensively, will result in a Green fleet:

a. Vehicle Purchases – the goal of purchasing low emitting fuel efficient vehicles and equipment for both vehicle replacement and additions to the fleet where practicable and reasonably cost competitive.

b. Optimum Fleet Size – only vehicles that have a recognized need and demonstrated use shall be maintained. There will be periodic reviews with recommendation to the County Manager. Unnecessary vehicles only contribute to liability, fuel consumption, maintenance costs and emissions.

c. Vehicle Specifications – prior to the purchase of any new vehicle or equipment, the user department shall develop specifications with the Fleet Manager to ensure appropriateness for its mission. Life cycle costs, standardization, ease of use and emissions quality are several of the issues which need be addressed.

d. Vehicle Maintenance – there will be evaluation of the maintenance practices for all type equipment. This includes consideration of frequency, supplies, fluids and tires. This has important impact on the equipment’s efficiency, mile per gallon, costs of fuel and reduced emissions.

e. Vehicle Technology – a primary goal of this policy is to change fleet equipment from high pollution, low-mileage petroleum based fuel equipment to clean, more efficient, higher mileage and alternative fuel use equipment. Currently technology is transitioning to hybrid, full electric and hydrogen equipment. Research will refine these and offer others in the future.

The Green Fleet Task Force will continually evaluate the merits of alternative technologies and fuels to identify appropriate adoption by the County. Consideration will also be given to opportunities to retrofit existing equipment to improve efficiency and emissions.

f. Fuel – a primary goal is to use a highly efficient, clean readily available fuel(s) to operate all type equipment in the fleet. There is merit in use of several alternative fuels to avoid reliance on one source and possible supply disruption.

Among fuel or energy sources to be considered for the fleet are biodiesel, E-85, CNG (compressed natural gas), propane, hybrid, electric and several combinations. The intent is to phase out or “retire” conventional, fossil-fuel vehicles.

g. Fuel Sources – To secure reliable and cost contained fuel sources.

3. Cobb County is committed to accomplish, through the implementation of this policy, the transition of the current fossil fueled fleet to an environmentally, efficient “green” fleet which will make it more self-sufficient, reduce or contain fleet costs and be environmentally best for our community.