Fleet Improvement Team

Fleet Administration Division celebrated the first anniversary of the Fleet Improvement Team (FIT). FIT is comprised of Fleet employees who have come together to identify, analyze and recommend more efficient or effective ways of providing service to Fleet customers, more cost effective ways of doing business or simply addressing “there has got to be a better way” questions. Over the past year, the group has pulled in resources and topic experts from throughout Fleet to review a variety of issues, process and forms. An example of one of the successes is the development and implementation of the Standardized Multipoint Inspection Check List. The group merged several inspection forms for light duty vehicles into one form with standardized terms. The new check list is electronic, allowing the data to be typed once and inserted into FASTER database for future reference by technicians and eliminating the need to hand write notes and type them into FASTER. Laminated copies of the check list were also produced to aid technicians during the performance of the inspection.

Other improvements include: implementation of a loaner car system, eliminating “stand around” time for King County employees that have cars in for maintenance and repair; better shared information between inventory control staff and technicians; a newsletter to share “What’s Up” at Fleet with staff and customers. If you have suggestion for a work place improvement, forward your idea to one of the members of FIT: Bruce Barnes, Barry Ladenburg, Blade Hilton, Tracey Post, Pat Skanes, Maria Van Horn and Alison Yamasaki.

Best Practices Award from National Association

King County Fleet Administration Division received the National Property Management Association’s (NPMA) Best Practices Award for excellence, innovation and team efforts responsible for asset management operations. Russ Johnson, Personal Property Supervisor in Fleet Administration, and the Western Region Vice President for NPMA (the region also includes Guam, the Marshall Islands and a chapter in Yorkshire England) accepted the award at the association’s national conference in June. The award submission featured a case study that included the countywide vehicle utilization standards that resulted in a reduction of assigned vehicles and the introduction of an online Motor Pool Dispatch system. Both efforts saved the County an estimated $300,000 annually in replacement and maintenance costs, improved efficiencies, and supported the County’s strategic goals.

The Best Practices Award includes $1,000 in credit for services from the National Property Management Association (course registrations etc.), a feature article in The Property Professional magazine and a workshop presentation on King County’s Vehicle Utilization Standards case study at next year’s NPMA conference.

Rebate on Clean Vehicle Purchases

Fleet Administration received a rebate check for $24,000 from Legacy Ford. The money was for nine liquid petroleum gas (LPG, or propane) Ford F-Series trucks purchased in 2010 under the Western Washington Clean Cities Coalition (WWCCC) Petroleum Reduction Project (a United States Department of Energy (USDOE) American Reinvestment and Recovery Act program). The rebate was the result of the dealership passing on half of the Alternative Fuel Motor Vehicle Tax Credit it received to Fleet. Under the terms of the grant, this rebate should have been returned to the granting agency. With some negotiating, WWCCC and USDOE agreed to treat the rebate as additional grant funds and gave us permission to use the money to pay down the cost of two more LPG vehicles.
Public Health Vehicles Join King County Fleet

On January 1, 2013, ownership of 198 Department of Public Health (DPH) vehicles was successfully transferred to the County from the City of Seattle. By far the most daunting challenge in the process was ensuring that each vehicle would be transferred in a timely fashion. While the paperwork could be prepared in advance, the Department of Licensing (DOL) could not issue the license plates until December 31, 2012. An added challenge was that the vehicles could not be driven until the license plates and registration were changed. Since DPH did not have the option of shutting down their operations, this made for a very tight turnaround time.

Fleet created an assembly line to sort vehicle number decals, license plates, fuel cards, and registrations. The fuel cards and registrations were distributed by DPH personnel. Fleet Administration technicians were deployed to various DPH clinic and administration locations at 6:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 2, 2013, to change out the license plates and affix the new vehicle number decals. With the exception of about a half dozen vehicles requiring special attention, all plates and decals were installed by 12:00 noon on January 2. All vehicles were completed by the next day. A great team effort across the division to provide excellent customer service, appreciated by Fleet’s new Public Health customers!

Reminder: No texting while driving

Let’s do our part to help increase awareness regarding the State of Washington and King County ban on texting while driving. The texting law, RCW 46.61.668, took effect January 1, 2008, and states that a driver who sends, reads or writes a text message is guilty of a traffic infraction. As cell and smart phones become increasingly popular, texting while driving has become a major source of distracted driving. Drivers assume they can handle texting while driving and still remain safe, but the numbers don’t lie:

- 1,600,000 accidents per year (National Safety Council)
- 330,000 injuries per year (Harvard Center for Risk Analysis Study)
- 11 teen deaths EVERY DAY (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety Fatality Facts)

These numbers illustrate the seriousness of texting while driving. So when driving, remember to:

- Silence your phone before you begin your trip
- Set up a voice mail message that explains you’re on the road and can’t take the call
- Pull over and park if a call or text is absolutely necessary
- Encourage your friends and family to leave their phones out of reach while driving

While you’re reading this message, two people were injured while texting and driving. No text is more important than someone’s life.

Safety Tip: Did you know you should NEVER drive in the rain with your cruise control on. Driving at high speeds on wet or icy pavement with the cruise control engaged could make it more difficult for a driver to regain control of the vehicle if it hydroplanes (skids), resulting in a dangerous accident. Be safe, turn off cruise control during adverse weather conditions.

Retired Trucks Donated

Fleet staff presented two retired trucks to local non-profits: The Soup Ladies, a volunteer group that keeps first responders nourished during backwoods search and rescue and other types of emergencies related to weather; and King County 4x4 Search & Rescue, one of the largest search and rescue organizations in the country, 100% volunteer, providing services at no cost to King County citizens. Each association was declared “eligible” to receive surplus County personal property by meeting criteria established by DCHS.

If you have an article for the newsletter, please contact Maria Van Horn.

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2012 Auction News

The 2012 semi-annual King County vehicle and heavy equipment auctions grossed a record setting $2.2 million! A wide variety of vehicles were featured, from electric carts, hybrid sedans, vans, SUVs and pick-ups to 12-yard dump trucks, refuse trailers, and 100 transit buses. Surplus materials and equipment from 13 county agencies, the Coal Creek Utility District and the Federal Way School District were included in the sales. The variety of items ranged from recovered bullets and shell casings from the Sheriff’s shooting range to salvaged building materials from houses deconstructed in flood zones. The next auction will be held Saturday, May 18, 2013.