



Policy 26

Mobile Phone & Texting Use



Mobile Phone and Texting Use Policy

Adoption Date: February 7, 2014

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

PURPOSE

The use of Utility provided cell phones by its employees may enhance a Utility employee's job performance. The purpose of this policy is to offer guidance in the use and application of Utility-owned phones. Mobile phone communication is a means which benefits the Utility and those who carry out the mission of the Utility. It is the policy of the Utility that those whose job performance can be enhanced through use of the mobile phones be provided access and become proficient in its capabilities.

A. Authorization

The Manager shall approve the use and issuance of mobile phones to the Utility's employees. The misuse of Utility-owned phones may result **in discipline up to and including immediate termination.**

B. Use of Utility-Provided Cell Phones

Employees who are given a Utility provided cell phone will use the phone to conduct Utility business. An employee may use the phone to make and receive only incidental, infrequent personal calls. Utility-provided cell phones issued by the Utility shall not be used to harass or threaten any individual.

C. Cell Phone Use During Work Hours

- a. Employees shall exercise good judgment in how and where to use their cell phones during work hours.
- b. Cell phones taken into meetings must either be turned off or to vibrate. Calls may only be taken during meetings when Utility business requires that the

- communication cannot wait until after the meeting is over. When a call must be taken during a meeting, the employee shall excuse himself or herself from the meeting to take the call and make every effort not to disrupt the meeting.
- c. The Utility encourages the safe use of cell phones when operating any vehicle or piece of machinery. When an employee must use a cell phone while driving, the employee should pull off the road into a safe area to use the phone. If available, hands free devices may be used to conduct calls while driving.
 - d. When an employee with a commercial driver's license is driving a commercial vehicle, the employee must abide by the cell phone use regulations adopted by the Federal Highway Administration for commercial vehicle drivers.

D. No Expectation of Privacy

Employees using Utility-provided cell phones will have no expectations of privacy as to communications using the phone. All communications and information transmitted by, received from and stored in Utility-provided cell phones is the Utility's property. The Utility reserves the right to inspect (view), and perform any other action deemed necessary by the Utility in relation to all communications noted above unless prohibited by federal or state law.

E. Texting

- Absolutely no texting is allowed while operating a motor vehicle.
- Employee communications by text message shall be done in a professional manner.
- No messages that are harassing, intimidating, offensive, obscene, or discriminatory toward anyone may be sent.
- All text messages sent and received on Utility-provided cell phones in the conduct of Utility business are public records subject to inspection and copying by members of the public.
- The Utility reserves the right to read or disclose, for any reason, texts sent and received on Utility-provided cell phones when not prohibited by federal or state law.
- When an employee uses a Utility-provided cell phone for internet and/or e-mail, this use must comply with the Utility's Internet/E-Mail Use Policy.