



FALL RIVER RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

GENERAL POLICY No. 613
SUBJECT: GUIDELINE FOR USE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONES
AND OTHER ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

I. PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines for safe and acceptable use of electronic equipment including but not limited to: cellular phones, portable computers, hand-held radios and testing equipment.

To specify individual employee accountability of assigned company-owned electronic equipment.

II. POLICY:

It shall be the policy of the Cooperative to allow set guidelines for the safe use of electronic equipment as specified in this policy and in accordance with accepted personnel practices and applicable state and federal laws.

III. RESPONSIBILITY:

The CEO/General Manager is responsible for seeing that the provisions of this policy are carried out.

IV. PROVISIONS:

The following procedures and conditions shall apply to the provisions of this policy: Employees who are provided with electronic equipment are expected to use such equipment properly and at all times exercise safety.

A. Cellular phones and other communication devices

1. Personal cellular phones

- a. While at work, employees shall exercise discretion in using personal cellular phones as they do for company phones.

Excessive personal calls during the workday, regardless of

the phone used, shall neither interfere with employee productivity nor be distracting to others. Employees are expected to make personal calls on non-work time and to ensure that friends and family members are aware of the Cooperative's policy. Flexibility will be provided in circumstances demanding immediate attention.

- b. The Cooperative will not be liable for the loss of personal cellular phones brought into the workplace.

2. Company Provided Cellular Phones

- a. Where job or business needs demand immediate access to an employee, the company may issue a cellular phone for work-related communications.
- b. The Cooperative will provide a cellular phone plan appropriate for normal work-related requirements. These minutes are intended to be used for company business.
- c. However, the Cooperative recognizes that employees will occasionally use their cell phone for personal use.

Employees have three options pertaining to personal use:

- i. The employee agrees to reimburse the company for any minutes, roaming, long distance, or other charges that exceed the approved plan. There will be no cost to the employee, if monthly charges do not exceed the plan.
- ii. If employees wish to purchase plans providing additional airtime, they may do so by paying the difference between the two plans.

3. Safety issues for cellular phone usage

Employees whose job responsibilities include regular or occasional driving and who are issued a cell phone for business use shall

refrain from using the phone while driving. Safety must come before all other concerns. Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, employees must pull off to the side of the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call or reading or sending text messages. Incoming calls can only be answered if a hands-free option is available in the vehicle. Employees shall keep calls short and refrain from discussion of complicated or emotional issues and keep their eyes on the road. Special care must be taken in situations where there is traffic, inclement weather, or the employee is driving in an unfamiliar area. In no circumstance should an employee be texting while in operation of a vehicle.

B. Portable Computers

1. Portable computers (laptops, meter reading devices, etc.) shall be stowed or secured properly in the driver's compartments.
2. Vehicles with portable computers shall be locked when the vehicle is unattended.

C. Other Electronic Equipment

Employees should exercise due care with all company-owned electronic equipment and use them responsibly to carry out their job functions.

D. Lost or Damaged Equipment

Actual replacement or repair costs for lost or damaged company-owned electronic equipment will be the responsibility of the employee when it is determined the item was lost, stolen, or damaged due to the employee's abuse or negligence.

E. Meeting Etiquette

All electronic devices should be turned off or placed in vibrate or silent mode during meetings to decrease interruptions.

F. Misuse

Violations of this policy will subject employees to disciplinary action up to

and including termination.

V. **PRIMACY OF POLICY:**

This policy supersedes any existing policy or policies that may be in conflict with the provisions of this policy. This policy does not represent a contract between the employer and the employee, and the policies herein may be changed by the employer alone and without notice.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Doug Schmier, President

DATE APPROVED: December 28, 2009

DATE REVISED: July 24, 2017

November 18, 2019