

February 2010

# RM News & Notes

## PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS

### WHAT IS YOUR "ATTITUDE"?

#### Personal Vehicle versus County Vehicle

Park out in the "south forty" so it doesn't get scratched

Park in closest available space

Oil change every 3000 miles

5800 miles? I'll get to Fleet next week... maybe

Dirt road? Not in my car.

Rutted field? No problem – I've got a county truck.

Check oil, tire pressure, other fluids every week

Check fluid? Tires? That's Fleet's job.

Wash and vacuum/ A clean car is a happy car.

Dirty? It is supposed to rain soon.

Watch the speed limit

What limit? I wouldn't get a ticket in a county vehicle. Would I???

Trying to keep the miles off my car

It's a county truck / more miles just means I get a new one faster.

That's warranty work: get to dealer now.

I don't have time to deal with this right now, better not mention it to Fleet.

Warranty expiring?

Oh well...county vehicle.

Aaaggh! Somebody hit my car.

Can't you see that huge (1 inch) dent.

Call the police.

I just barely touched that stump. Maybe nobody will notice the gouge down the quarter panel or ripped bumper.

Oh yeah! "Found damage".

## Emergency & Operations Division Risk Management Department

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### Web Page

<http://www.columbiacountyga.gov/home/index.asp?page=2440>

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## Message from the Risk Manager

I was talking to a land surveyor who, upon realizing who my father was, stated "Well let me tell you; your daddy takes that Blazer of his places it's not supposed to go." He further expounded about how he'd just throw it in 4-wheel drive and go across a ditch or through the woods not caring about damage or getting stuck. At least he's only doing this type of harsh driving with his own vehicle. Unfortunately, some people treat their employer's vehicle this same way. Hopefully, you aren't in this category, but when you are allowed to drive a county vehicle; it is your responsibility to help protect this investment. Keep it clean and well maintained, following the recommended maintenance and servicing schedule. Report immediately any problems or issues noted with the vehicle. Taking care of the small things on a regular basis can often prevent the big, costly problems from ever occurring. Your vehicle will be more comfortable, safer, operate more efficiently and hold its value better. Take good care of your vehicle and it will be ready and waiting when you need it.

*Darlene*

**DETECT VEHICLE PROBLEMS****Lesson in sounds: Around the vehicle**

Squeaky brakes

Dirt in the lining of the pads or hardening of the pads and shoes

Grinding brakes

Worn pads and shoes

Metal on metal when braking

Worn-out pads

Metal on metal when encountering bumps

Worn-out shocks

Growling from air conditioner

Worn Compressor

Squealing windshield wipers

Worn wiper blades

Whining from tires when turning a corner

Dry or worn out wheel bearings

Squealing from tires when turning a corner

Tires low on air or worn

**Lesson in sounds: Under the Hood**

Squeaky brakes

Dirt in the lining of the pads or hardening of the pads and shoes

Grinding while shifting gears

Worn clutch or clutch that needs repair

Screeching under the hood

Loose or worn belt

Popping from engine

Dirty air filter, bad spark wires

Scraping or buzzing from transmission

Transmission needs new fluid

Squeaking noise when shifting

Manual transmission needs lubrication

Clunking under hood when gears change

Worn joints/engine. Idle may be set too high

Knocking under hood

Need lower gas octane rating, clogged air filter, or timing off

Clicking when idling

Needs oil

Clunking that worsens as speed increases

Broken or worn engine parts

**Lesson in Liquids: If you see**

Black fluid

Motor oil leak

Red Colored Spots on your driveway

Transmission leak

Yellow, green or orange stains

Coolant/antifreeze leak

Clear liquid with no smell

Just dripping water/condensation from AC

Greasy fluid that is pink, red or clear

Power steering or transmission leak

**DON'T BE TOMORROWS' "HEADLINE"  
PREVENT VEHICLE COLLISIONS TODAY**

**Perform pre-trip safety checks** – before you operate a vehicle, conduct a visual inspection of the obvious safety features such as clear windshields and windows, tires with decent tread, lights that work, windshield wipers that wipe and check for suspicious puddles of fluid under the vehicle. What does this take...20 seconds at most!

**Buckle up!** – How many times and ways can this be stressed? Simply put...you stand a 45% better chance of surviving a crash and a 50% better chance of "walking away from" crash without injuries. Period! The word is ... there is no logical excuse to not fasten each operator and passenger's seatbelts.

**Beware the intersection** – America's first vehicular accident happened at an intersection and today this area still ranks as the number one location for a crash. Never assume that you have the right of way. Keep in eye contact with other drivers to prevent surprises.

**Speed kills, so what's your hurry!** – As one's speed increases, the ability to properly and safely react to unplanned road and/or driver conditions is diminished. The main concern is stopping distance, which is greatly reduced when speed is kept at a reasonable level. Practice accelerating as if you have an egg between your foot and the gas pedal. This will prevent "jack-rabbit" starts and will help keep speeds low.

**Play the "what if..." game** – Get the picture. Scan far ahead of you and think not what should happen but what could happen! You know, ask yourself things like "what if that idiot swerves into my lane?" or "what if that truck should lay on his brakes right now?" Staying alert to what might happen can prepare you to react appropriately when it does.

**Use the three second rule** – Easy to do, important for accident avoidance. As the vehicle ahead of you passes a stationary object, count "one-thousand one, one-thousand two, one-thousand three". If you get to the object before finishing your count, you are driving too close to effectively stop! Give yourself even more time when adverse weather or road conditions warrant.

Driving defensively means: looking out for offensive drivers, staying alert to and/or anticipating the other guy's moves and reacting in a controlled manner. Fundamental? Yes, Important? You bet. Difficult? Not even close! These are very easy steps to take, but are very important to preventing your becoming tomorrows' "Headline!"

## Policy Highlight

### Combined Policy Handbook / Health and Safety Section

Policy Number 508.1 / Vehicle Safety / General Policy, Page 2

#### 3) Drivers:

- c) Inspect the vehicle at the beginning of each driving day. Items to inspect can be found at *Exhibit A*, for vehicles requiring a Class C license and *Exhibit B* for CDL. Inspection check sheets provided in this manual are not intended to replace the provisions of law.

#### Discussion points regarding this Policy:

How many of you have never seen this operator’s vehicle inspection checklist? Your department may have another method they prefer, but if you are operating a county vehicle and you aren’t inspecting it each day before you begin operations, you aren’t fulfilling all of your job requirements. It only takes a couple of minutes and can really make a difference in keeping you and everyone else around you safe. For example: if you don’t check your brake lights, how do you know they are working? But if you’ve ever driven behind a vehicle with faulty brake lights, you know what a hazardous condition this creates.

So take a few minutes before you head out to work and complete the inspection. More importantly, if there is a problem, contact Fleet and make arrangements to resolve the issue. Don’t drive around planning to “get to it later” and end up creating a hazardous condition or perhaps causing damage to the vehicle.

Exhibit A

OPERATOR'S DAILY CHECKLIST		
DATE: _____ OPERATOR: _____		
VEHICLE #: _____ SHOP #: _____ MILEAGE: _____		
ITEM CHECKED	✓ OK	NEEDS MAINTENANCE
1. Horn		
2. Brakes (including Park)		
3. Lights: a. Head Lights b. Tail Lights c. Turn Signals d. Brake Lights e. Back up Lights f. 4 way flasher/hazard		
4. Tires: (tread/pressure)		
5. Seat Belts:		
6. Fluid Levels: a. Coolant b. Oil c. Brake d. Power Steering e. Transmission		
7. Battery		
8. Windshield Wipers and fluid		
9. Clutch		
10. Damage to interior/exterior Beginning and end of day		
11. Note any unusual noise/problem		
12. Damage : _____		

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE TIME IN

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

## Up Coming Events

Each program is advertised by Risk Management and is available to employees of Columbia County Board of Commissioners and the city employees of Grovetown and Harlem. Additionally, the Defensive Driving Courses may be attended by immediate family members of employees, on a space available basis, for a nominal fee.

**Pre-registration is required.**

For additional information or to register contact Risk Management. 706-312-7475

**Safety Review Board      April 15, 2010**

**Defensive Driving  
Course – 8 hour      February 9, 2010  
February 25, 2010  
March 11, 2010  
April 22, 2010**

**Defensive Driving  
Course – 4 hour**

**CPR/AED/First Aid      March 18, 2010**

**County Office Closed:**

### FEBRUARY 2010

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

### MARCH 2010

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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

### APRIL 2010

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	



March 14, 2010

#### REMINDER!!!

Replace the batteries in your smoke detectors when you set your clocks ahead. The extra seconds of warning from the alarm during a fire could mean the difference between life and death for your family.

February 14, 2010



April 4, 2010

