



**Minnesota  
Pollution  
Control  
Agency**

## **State of Minnesota Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Fleet Policy**

**Policy Statement:** The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (Agency) will manage its vehicles in a manner that reduces emissions and lowers fleet operation costs and provides safe transportation for staff through: 1) the purchase or lease of the most fuel-efficient and least polluting vehicles that meet the Agency’s needs, 2) maximizing the use of E-85 fuel in all flexible fuel vehicles, 3) minimizing the size of the fleet by maximizing the use of all vehicles with a goal of at least 6,000 miles per vehicle annually, 4) centralizing vehicles, which do not have a designated use (e.g., emergency response vehicles), in an agency fleet available for check-out, and 5) providing a well maintained fleet of vehicles and monitoring safe and appropriate vehicle use.

**Background:** The Agency as a member of Clean Air Minnesota has an opportunity to demonstrate the Agency’s commitment to volunteer efforts to reduce ozone and other air pollutants. By taking these steps we will enhance our credibility with other Clean Air Minnesota members if we “walk the talk.” Also, the Agency’s own efforts to reduce air pollution can help us as an Agency better understand what types of incentives motivate others to make cleaner choices thereby providing us the opportunity to “model the way” in reducing emissions from vehicle operation.

### **I. Scope and Purpose**

This policy applies to the Agency and covers all owned, leased, and/or rented vehicles/equipment.

This policy is not meant to supercede laws, rules, or regulations imposed by federal, state, or local government. M.S. 16B.55 [www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/stats/16B/55.html](http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/stats/16B/55.html) guides the use of state vehicles and is the basis for this policy. The Department of Administration’s Policy 99.1 provides guidance and requirements relating to “personal use of a state vehicle” and reporting for tax purposes.

Enforcement of this policy is the responsibility of the Agency. Each division in the Agency is responsible for policy enforcement. It is the responsibility of each division to make employees aware of this policy, give employees guidance concerning this policy, and take appropriate corrective action should it be necessary.

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Kristen Applegate, Deputy Commissioner

## II. Acquisition of Vehicles

- A. Additions and/or Replacements to Fleet – All requests for additions and/or replacements to the fleet will be presented with a written statement of justification for the vehicle acquisition, including the following: anticipated costs, most fuel-efficient and least polluting vehicle that meet the Agency’s needs, alternative methods of transportation that have been considered, and cost justification for the acquisition and ongoing expense.

Replacements due to mechanical failure will be examined for cause and possible vehicle, vehicle life cycle, or operational changes may be necessary to avoid future replacements.

The vehicle type and use will be reviewed to ensure the Agency is selecting an appropriate vehicle, and utilization has been, and will continue to be, environmentally beneficial and cost effective. The Manager of the Fiscal Internal Relations and Operations Section will approve additions and/or replacements to the fleet.

- B. Vehicle Type Selection – It is an objective of the Agency to supply vehicles for employee use that are well suited to performing the work needed to be accomplished but not exceed the needs for the intended use, as referenced in <http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/stats/16C/135.html> and <http://afdc.nrel.gov/fleet.shtml>. Employee safety will be taken into account when acquiring vehicles by evaluating vehicle safety standards and ratings. The following link provides staff with a measure of relative safety potential of vehicles in crashes <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/NCAP/Index.html>. Manufacturer ratings, including load carrying capacity and trailer pulling capacity, will be followed when developing vehicle specifications for acquiring vehicles. All applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations will be followed concerning vehicle type selection, including the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (<http://www.ott.doe.gov/epact/>). The Travel Management Division of the Department of Administration can help answer questions related to the State of Minnesota and/or U.S. EPA requirements regarding vehicle acquisition.
- C. Vehicle Life Cycle Selection – The Agency will follow the recommended replacement criteria of the Department of Administration’s Travel Management Division or as determined by the Agency based on vehicle operation and performance. The Travel Management Division’s rules and regulations can be found at <http://www.tmd.state.mn.us/referenc/rules.html>.

A life cycle will be established at the time of vehicle acquisition. This life cycle will include parameters for vehicle age as well as vehicle usage. This life cycle will take into account vehicle type as well as the work environment in which the vehicle will

perform. This life cycle will be used in planning of vehicle replacement as well as monitoring vehicle usage during the life of the vehicle.

- D. Vehicle Fuel Efficiency and Low Emission Selection – It is the intent of the Agency to purchase or lease the most fuel-efficient and least polluting vehicle that safely meets the Agency’s needs, use E85 fuel in all flexible fuel vehicles whenever it is reasonably available, and meet the U.S. Department of Energy’s EPAct Fleet Information and Regulations which can be found at [http://www.ott.doe.gov/epact/state\\_fleets.shtml](http://www.ott.doe.gov/epact/state_fleets.shtml). The following link is provided as a guide in choosing the cleanest and most fuel-efficient vehicle (<http://www.epa.gov/autoemissions/>).
- E. Financing Considerations – The Agency will make cost effective financial decisions when acquiring new vehicles by considering vehicle rental, vehicle leasing, and vehicle ownership.
- F. Acquisition Process – All vehicles will be acquired in accordance with Minnesota state law. All purchasing laws, rules, and regulations will be followed as provided in <http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/mn06000.htm>.

### **III. Operation of Vehicles**

- A. Compliance with State and Federal Requirements – Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 16B.55 ([www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/stats/16B/55.html](http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/stats/16B/55.html)), prohibits the personal use of a state vehicle for other than authorized state business or specified, authorized commuting. This means that any other use of a state vehicle for personal benefit is strictly prohibited. Unauthorized personal use of a state vehicle may be grounds for disciplinary action.

Special consideration will be given to the operation of commercial vehicles. Commercial vehicle laws, rules, and regulations will be followed, as provided in <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/motorcarrier/commercial/cvo.html> and <http://www.dps.state.mn.us/patrol/comveh/index.htm>. Employees should consult their immediate supervisor or the Agency’s safety officer concerning licensing and/or operational questions regarding commercial vehicles.

It is the objective of the Agency to operate all vehicles safely and according to the applicable laws, rules, and regulations as referenced in <http://www.dps.state.mn.us/dvs/DLTraining/DLManual/DLManual.htm>. Fines and/or penalties resulting from improper use of a vehicle are the sole responsibility of the vehicle operator.

- B. Ethical Use – It is the objective of the Agency to operate vehicles using the highest ethical standards. It is the intent of the Agency to prevent a public image that is above any ethical question as referenced in <http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/stats/43A/38.html>.

All Agency employees will operate vehicles in an ethical manner. Agency employees will avoid the use of vehicles in a manner that may give the appearance of being unethical (e.g., stopping to conduct personal business). Employees should consult their immediate supervisor concerning any questions in the area.

Only authorized persons are permitted to drive or ride in Agency vehicles. Authorized persons are state employees, contract employees if authorization to drive a state vehicle is specifically mentioned in their contract, volunteers or local units of government employees participating in state programs or functions (i.e., Agency Board members, Citizen Lake Monitoring Program, etc.), students or interns who are assigned to work with the Agency, and authorized persons of handicapped employees who have the permission of that person plus approval of the supervisor.

- C. Use of Personal Vehicles – The Agency encourages all staff to use state vehicles when traveling on state business. When a state-owned vehicle is not available and a personal vehicle is used to conduct state business, the Agency will reimburse an employee at the current federal IRS mileage reimbursement rate or as specified in the employee’s labor contract. If an employee is involved in an accident while using a personal vehicle, the employee’s personal insurance is responsible for covering the damages.
- D. Vehicle Utilization – Monitoring vehicle utilization is a key component in cost-effective fleet management. The Agency will monitor vehicle usage on an ongoing basis to ensure vehicles are being utilized in a cost-effective manner consistent with expectations established at the time of vehicle acquisition.
- E. Vehicle Markings – All leased and owned vehicles will be clearly marked as State of Minnesota vehicles and all vehicle licenses will be identified as Minnesota state vehicle license plates as referenced in <http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/stats/16B/581.html>.
- F. Safety – It is the objective of the Agency to operate vehicles safely. Vehicles will be operated in accordance with all traffic laws, rules, and regulations as referenced in <http://www.dps.state.mn.us/dvs/DLTraining/DLManual/DLManual.htm>. Vehicles will not be operated in any fashion that may endanger any person or property. Employees may be required to attend a Defensive Driving course as identified by their supervisor. Questions concerning safe vehicle operating practices should be addressed to the Agency’s safety officer or supervisor.
- G. Assigned Vehicles – It is the policy of the Agency to provide employees with the use of state vehicles through a centralized check-out system. Occasionally, vehicles may be assigned to an individual or program if it meets one of the following criteria: emergency response vehicle, vehicle is equipped with specialized equipment for designated purposes, or the vehicle is assigned based on the nature of the job. Vehicles are never provided for the purpose of traveling to and from work. Vehicle

assignments will not be made on the basis of status, tradition, or as a condition of employment. Vehicles will be assigned on the basis of need, as measured by the number of miles driven or qualifying use.

- H. Suitability for Work Use – Vehicles will be used in a manner that is consistent with the intended use of the vehicle, which includes the appropriate size for loads being hauled and suitable for the work to be performed (i.e., use of mid-size car versus truck to attend meetings). Vehicles will be operated in accordance with the manufacturer ratings and guidelines including load capacity and trailer pulling capacity.
- I. Fuel – Vehicles are to be operated on the type and grade of fuel recommended by the manufacturer and as referenced in <http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/stats/16C/135.html>. Whenever possible, employees must fill flex-fuel vehicles with E85. The following link offers information on stations in Minnesota that offer E85 fuel (<http://www.state.mn.us/cgi-bin/portal/mn/jsp/content.do?contentid=536885581&contenttype=EDITORIAL&agency=commerce>). Regular gasoline is recommended for use in nearly every gasoline powered vehicle operated by the Agency. The Agency will use self-service fuel pumps.
- J. Maintenance/Mechanical Repair – It is the objective of the Agency to keep all leased/owned/rented vehicles maintained in safe operating condition.

Vehicle operators will bring vehicle defects to the attention of their fleet coordinator. Safety related defects will be corrected prior to continued use of the vehicle.

Divisions experiencing ongoing vehicle repair issues, or complex vehicle repair problems should contact the Agency fleet coordinator so that the Department of Administration's Travel Management Division may be contacted for assistance in resolving these issues.

- K. State Liability - Vehicle operation involves a significant amount of potential liability. Vehicles will be insured for liability utilizing the program provided through the Department of Administration's Risk Management Division as referenced in <http://www.mainserver.state.mn.us/risk/index.html>.
- L. Business Practices/Procedures – The Agency will develop standard business practices and procedures for vehicle use and ensure that these procedures are followed.

#### **IV. Retirement/Disposal of Vehicles**

- A. Retirement/Disposal – Vehicles reaching the end of their life cycle will be reviewed for condition and purpose. Vehicles with useful life remaining may be made available for seasonal and/or temporary use when appropriate, surplus through the Department of Administration's Surplus Services, or returned to the Travel

Management Division following applicable laws, rules, and regulations as referenced in <http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/mn03000.htm>.