



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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To: All Wyoming Employees
From: Associate State Director
Subject: Use and Care of Government Vehicles

Program Area: Fleet Management

Purpose: As Federal employees, we have a responsibility to ensure that the BLM fleet is operated in a safe and efficient manner and to be cognizant of the public's perception of how we are using our fleet. This Instruction Memorandum reiterates, in part, the existing Interior and BLM policy regarding the use and care of government owned/leased motor vehicles and equipment.

Policy/Action: Government owned/leased vehicles (GOV) are for official use only.

Official use of a Government vehicle is that form of transportation authorized by your supervisor and provided for the purposes of performing an assignment of duties only within the scope of Federal employment.

Unofficial/unauthorized use of GOV's include, but are not limited to, the following situations:

- Transporting unofficial passengers, including family members or other passengers in "ride-along" status.
- Transporting animals, other than Law Enforcement K-9 and/or other BLM owned or sponsored animal programs as approved by the State Director.
- Using a GOV to drive to meal breaks or other trips while off-duty, in non-travel status, or local travel, all of which have not been previously authorized by the supervisor.
- Operating a GOV without proper training for the class of vehicle provided or without a valid operator's license/certification.
- Although not unofficial/unauthorized use of the vehicle; eating and drinking while driving contributes to distracted driving and is strongly discouraged.

Standards

Safety: The following vehicle safety guidelines must be followed by every vehicle operator:

- Employees and passengers in government-provided vehicles, rentals or privately owned vehicles are required by law to use seat belts.
- Employees are not permitted to use a cell phone unless using a hands-free device, while operating a Government vehicle or a personally-owned vehicle while on official travel.
- Employees are not permitted to read or respond to e-mails or text messages while operating a Government vehicle or a personally-owned vehicle while on official travel. This policy also applies to use of PDAs and other similar hand-held electronic devices.
- Employees are prohibited from smoking, consuming alcohol, narcotics or other intoxicants in government-provided vehicles or heavy equipment.
- Employees will not exceed 8 hours of driving time (behind the wheel) during a 16-hour duty period. Breaks of 15 minutes are recommended every two (2) hours when driving continuously. At least eight (8) consecutive hours of rest without duty are required prior to each duty period requiring driving.

Accidents: Federal employees, volunteers, and contractors operating government-provided vehicles/equipment must exercise every precaution to prevent accidents. All accidents or incidents that result in vehicle or equipment damage, employee injury and/or any situation(s) that involve vehicle damage or injury to members of the public (including private or commercial organizations, contractors and cooperators) must be reported to your immediate supervisor within 1 work day. These occurrences also must be recorded by the supervisor in the Safety Management Information System (SMIS): <http://www.smis.doi.gov>. The circumstances of the accident/incident involving property loss or damage will determine the need for referral to the Wyoming State Office Survey Board for further investigation.

Driver Licenses: Each Federal employee, including temporary staff, volunteers, or contractors using BLM-provided vehicles, is required to carry a valid operator's license or heavy equipment certification for the appropriate class of vehicle or equipment. Current out-of-state licenses will be recognized and honored for employees on extended detail or who reside in an adjoining state and work in Wyoming. In addition to a valid operator's license, each Federal employee operating a government-provided vehicle/equipment is required to have a valid U.S. Government or Agency Identification card in their possession.

Training: All employees must participate in a Defensive Driving training course every three (3) years. OSHA requires that heavy equipment operators undergo certification training every four (4) years. Managers and Supervisors must ensure that funding is made available to provide for this training.

Travel/Property Protection: Employees should exercise sound judgment in the use of the GOV while in travel status. Equipment should be removed from the vehicle or placed in a covered bin or area to prevent and/or discourage vandalism or theft. The need for after-hours use of the GOV also should be carefully considered. If there are questions about what is appropriate, the situation should be discussed with the supervisor.

Vehicle Cleanliness: Employees are responsible for ensuring that all trash is removed from the vehicle after being driven. If a vehicle needs cleaning prior to use, ensure that the transportation specialist in the appropriate office is notified. Employees using a vehicle are responsible for filling the gasoline tank prior to returning it to the pool.

Vehicle Inspections: Employees should perform a basic pre-trip inspection prior to operating the vehicle. The inspection should include oil/coolant levels, tire pressure/wear and visual inspections for vehicle damage. Failure to perform these checks (mirrors, horn, windshield wipers, seatbelts, and ensure proper working vehicle lights) may lead to serious safety problems, and/or cause personal or property damage.

Vehicle Reports: Operators are responsible for entering the information associated with their trip on BLM Form 1520-42, (Vehicle Utilization Record). This form is enclosed in the vehicle book which is issued with each fleet vehicle at check-out. An entry noting the mileage and number of gallons of fuel should be entered each time the vehicle is fueled. At the end of the trip circle the days driven, enter the total number of miles driven, and the charge codes to be used for that trip, including the Cost Center, Functional Area and WBS where necessary. The cost of any repairs should also be entered on BLM Form 1520-40, and all receipts should be enclosed in the pouch provided in the vehicle book.

Remember, for many of us, use of Government vehicles is a necessity in order to accomplish our work. Government drivers must use and care for Government vehicles in a safe and appropriate manner to ensure personal safety and allow work to be accomplished successfully.

Timeframe: Immediate.

Budget Impact: Vehicle repairs, caused by accidents, are funded by project funds.

Background: Vehicle operators entrusted with motor vehicles are responsible for the proper care, operation, maintenance and protection of that vehicle. Vehicle operators are expected to operate a Government vehicle with at least the same degree of care and diligence that they would exercise with their personal vehicle.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: Manuals are not affected nor changed. The information in this Instruction Memorandum references the following: DOI Motor Vehicle Management Handbook, BLM Manual 1525, BLM Handbook G-1525-1.

Coordination: This IM was coordinated with the Deputy State Director, Support Services, the State Safety Manager, Asset Manager and the Business Manager.

Contact: Questions regarding this Instruction Memorandum should be directed to Johnny Chavez, State Asset Manager, or Janet Edmonds, Business Manager.

Signed by:
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