

# **New Mexico Institute of Mining & Technology**



## **Fleet Safety Program**

New Mexico Tech is morally committed to providing safe working conditions, complying with all safety and traffic laws and ordinances. Accident prevention is always the first order of business on any day and will take precedence over expediency or short cuts.

New Mexico Tech will maintain a fleet safety program conforming to the best practices for public company organizations. The program will include qualification, training and supervision of drivers and employees, establishment of safe practices and rules, planned inspection and maintenance of vehicles, reporting, investigation and review of accidents.

The cooperation of all employees is expected, not only from supervisors, but also from all employees. Only through all our cooperative efforts can a safety program be effective.

### **SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Responsibility of the New Mexico Tech fleet is a shared function between every driver, supervisor, manager and department head.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Function</b>
<b>Drivers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check and maintain their vehicles</li><li>• Follow specific department rules and State driving regulations</li><li>• Drive defensively and courteously</li></ul>
<b>Driver's Immediate Supervisor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Investigate fleet accidents</li><li>• Assure drivers receive orientation and training</li><li>• Conduct driver safety meetings</li><li>• Conduct driver orientation and training</li><li>• Consider safety performance during driver performance reviews</li></ul>
<b>Department Managers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider fleet loss control in scheduling work</li><li>• Support fleet loss control activities including driver training</li><li>• Participate in accident reviews and follow through with corrective measures</li></ul>
<b>Safety Director</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collect, analyze and distribute information on accidents</li><li>• Recommend corrective action following accident reviews</li><li>• Develop an accident control plan</li><li>• Assure appropriate inspection and maintenance, repair and replacement of vehicles</li><li>• Monitor progress of vehicle safety plan</li></ul>

Key safety responsibilities and accountabilities are the duty of each driver for all driving positions, supervisors of drivers and department heads. Each driver, supervisor and manager will be provided with a copy of their job description, and their vehicle safety responsibilities will be discussed during new employee orientation. Each driver's, supervisor's and manager's performance of fleet safety responsibilities will be included in formal and informal performance appraisals.

## **NEGLIGENT ENTRUSTMENT**

We recognize negligent entrustment as the liability that is incurred when the University allows an employee or another person to use a vehicle knowing or having reason to know that the other person, in using the vehicle, creates a risk of harm to others.

Elements of negligent entrustment include:

1. The entrustee is incompetent, inexperienced or reckless.
2. Entrustor knew, or had reason to know, the entrustee's condition.
3. Entrustment of the vehicle by New Mexico Tech to each driver.
4. Entrustment created risk to someone and entrustor had a duty to that person.
5. The negligence of the entrustee was the proximate cause of the harm to the injured person.

## **DRIVER TRAINING AND RULES**

### **Driver Rules**

The establishment of basic safe driving rules provides a basis for employee-driver conduct. Basic rules for safe driving are established by each state, and can be different than ours in New Mexico.

New Mexico Tech has an employee discipline policy for intentional or unintentional non-compliance with vehicle safety guidelines, rules and procedures. This includes progressive discipline steps, such as warnings, written reprimands, suspension or time off without pay and termination of employment. This policy is incorporated into our existing employee handbook.

General: Regardless of any other considerations, we will not take chances. Doing your work safely is more important than doing your work on time.

Reporting to Work: Report to work promptly. Leave adequate time to check the vehicle, leave on time and avoid unnecessary speed on the road. Any driver suffering from illness or fatigue should work with their supervisor to evaluate whether they will be permitted to operate a state vehicle. Drivers becoming ill or unduly fatigued on the road should stop at the nearest safe place and notify their supervisor and request relief.

State and Federal Law: Employees must operate University vehicles according to the laws, ordinances and regulations of the city, county and state they are driving through. This applies to fleet vehicles as well as rental vehicles.

Speed: Speed shall never be faster than posted speed limits, road, traffic, weather and light conditions. At night and when fog or other conditions limit visibility, speed will be reduced accordingly. Posted speeds are for passenger cars in good condition. Reduce speed for heavier vehicles and adverse conditions. Keep your cruising speed steady and make changes in speed or direction gradually. Keep pace with the flow of traffic.

### **Defensive Driving**

Defensive driving is driving to prevent accidents in spite of the incorrect actions of others and adverse conditions – “National Safety Council”

A good defensive driver should *never* have a preventable accident.

Seat Belts: Wear your seat belt and require other occupants of the vehicle to buckle up.

### Right of Way

- Let the other driver go first. Never use the size of your vehicle to assert your right of way.
- Keep to the right on divided highways and one-way streets except when overtaking slow-moving vehicles or when getting into position to make a left turn.
- Approach intersections and driveways with caution.
- Signal lane changes clearly.
- Change lanes for turns well in advance of intersections. Avoid swinging wide or short when turning.

### Following Distance

- Use the “Two Second Rule” for determining following distance – allow a space cushion equivalent to the distance that it takes your vehicle to travel two seconds. Heavier vehicles, all trucks and bad weather require a four to six second following distance.
- Discourage “tailgaters” by allowing and encouraging them to pass.

### Emergencies

- Get completely off the traveled roadway for an emergency stop. Avoid curves, hills or where the view may be obstructed.
- If your vehicle is stopped or unattended on the shoulder of the highway:
- Set the parking brake to prevent movement.
- Use four-way flashers. University drivers that travel outside of the Socorro area will be provided with reflective triangles, which should be set up near the vehicle and at about 100 feet to warn approaching traffic.

### Vehicle Accidents

- Stop immediately
- Take precautions to prevent further accidents
- Render reasonable assistance to injured persons
- Exchange names, addresses and license information
- Report the accident to the driver's supervisor

Complete an "On the Spot" Accident Report, within twenty-four hours of the accident. Get as much information as possible including:

- Witness information
- Property owner information
- Other vehicle license plate number, driver's name, license number
- Other vehicle's insurance carrier
- Description of the accident
- Provide a copy of any police or insurance report

## **ACCIDENT REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION**

### **A. Written Policy**

New Mexico Tech has a written procedure demonstrating all steps to be taken in the case of an accident. Accidents will be defined as:

"Any incident in which a university vehicle is involved (whether in motion, temporarily stopped, parked, or being unloaded or loaded) resulting in personal injury and/or property damage, regardless of who was hurt, what property was damaged, or who was responsible."

At the scene instructions:

- Call for help, police and/or medical assistance
- Protect the scene from additional vehicle collision
- Provide reasonable assistance to any injured persons
- Fill out an "on the spot" accident report

Provide one copy of the accident report to your immediate supervisor, one to the Human Resources Director and one to the Safety Director. All incidents will be reviewed, and where warranted, investigated further to determine proximate cause.

### **B. State Requirements for Reporting and Recording Accidents**

Accidents involving University vehicles typically fall under the jurisdiction of a State's reporting requirements. Typically, reportable accidents involve:

- The death of a human being

- Bodily injury to a person who, as a result of the injury, immediately receives medical treatment away from the scene of the accident; or
- A pre-determined minimum damage amount for all property involved in the accident: (the minimal property damage amount is specified by each state).

## VEHICLE SAFETY AND MAINTENANCE

Preventive maintenance of all university vehicles is mandatory. Vehicle defects can be a contributing factor in automobile accidents. Drivers will be responsible to identify these defects and deficiencies through daily visual inspections.

A **Vehicle Condition Report Form** can be found in ALL University vehicles, to create a mechanism for reporting problematic vehicle conditions. This form was created to provide the driver a mechanism to document potential problems. (See Appendix).

Key check areas that every driver should consider are:

<b>General Condition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body, doors, windows</li> <li>• Leaks</li> <li>• Exhaust</li> <li>• Suspension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headlights, tail lights</li> <li>• Signal, brake lights</li> <li>• Tires, wheels, spare</li> <li>• Emergency equipment</li> </ul>
<b>Engine</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fluid levels</li> <li>• Belts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Battery</li> </ul>
<b>Behind the Wheel</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clutch</li> <li>• Heater/defroster</li> <li>• Steering wheel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service brake</li> <li>• Parking, emergency brake</li> <li>• Seat Belts</li> </ul>

## Vehicle Condition Report Procedure

All University drivers must:

1. Assure that the vehicle is in safe operating condition at the beginning of the day.
2. Report defects or deficiencies to supervisor and vehicle maintenance staff.
3. Observe any defects or deficiencies that may develop throughout the day.
4. Complete a **Vehicle Condition Report** when deficiencies are noted.

The University Facilities Management Lube-Shop mechanic will:

1. Conduct safety inspections and provide preventative maintenance for ALL University vehicles.
2. Review any vehicle condition report, inspect the vehicle and determine if the vehicle should be sent to the Facilities Management garage. The mechanic may declare a vehicle "*out of service*" until repairs can be accomplished. A copy of the vehicle report indicating the repairs have been completed will be maintained in a Vehicle History Folder.
3. Establish vehicle inspection and maintenance procedures that indicate what should be inspected, who should inspect it, and the criteria that determines if the deficiency or defect is acceptable, needs adjustment, repair or replacement.
4. Follow vehicle manufacturer's service interval recommendations as a starting point for developing inspection procedures for your vehicles. Modify the inspection intervals using data from the past performance of similar vehicles operating under similar conditions.
5. Establish a record system to report problems, control cost and assist in future decisions on vehicle specifications, maintenance scheduling and staffing.

The Facilities Management Lube Shop has established a record system, which includes:

- Vehicle History Folder

Each vehicle will have its own performance folder. The folder should identify the vehicle and its major specifications for ready reference. Service and repair should be recorded chronologically including dates, repair order numbers, mileage and nature of service. This folder will help spotlight repeat maintenance and might aid in diagnosis of vehicle problems. These files will reside at the Facilities Management Quick Lube shop.

- Repair Orders

Repair orders provide instructions for maintenance work and provides space for listing parts, labor and costs. Copies will be routed to accounting for cost control and retained in the vehicle history folder.

The Safety Director will coordinate with risk management to analyze the vehicle maintenance program at frequent intervals to adjust procedures to adapt to changing conditions. Costs comparisons from one period to another, check on unscheduled shop visits, work being done in outside shops, excessive tire wear, repeated wear of components, excess fuel consumption and breakdowns.

These analyses will help determine whether the current maintenance budget is adequate, if the shop has adequate tools, or if the mechanics need in-service training. This data may also pinpoint changes that should be made in vehicle specifications.

## **FLEET SAFETY MEETINGS**

Driver errors are the leading contributing factor in fleet accidents. Even well-trained drivers need to maintain a high level of safety awareness to avoid accidents. Fleet safety meetings can help the fleet supervisor and drivers maintain that high level of safety awareness. In-service training or mini-training programs are another way to help drivers “keep their edge” and avoid accidents. These meetings will be coordinated by the Safety Director through each supervisor to communicate accident prevention information on a regular basis.

Drivers will sign a roster of attendance. Driver participation and discussion should be encouraged and Facilities Management Administration will act on driver suggestions made during these meetings.

At a minimum, the following topics will be addressed in safety meetings:

- Discussion of recent accidents and near misses, stressing prevention
- Review of new laws, regulation and University policies
- Safe driving practices, driving courtesy and general driving safety
- Care and maintenance of the vehicle
- Problems involved with driving, e.g. reaction time, fatigue, stopping distance
- Record keeping requirements
- Driving on campus

## **Auditing the Program**

Procedures for the fleet safety program will be audited periodically to ensure the program is accomplishing its objectives.

The audit program will provide an objective measurement of performance against program standards. These audits on accident history can assist us to pinpoint:

- Vehicle accident trends
- Departments or areas with worse-than-average accident records
- Discover which basic accident types and causes are most prevalent
- Average and aggregate accident costs

The results of the Fleet Safety audit will be used to compare our accident record with other Universities comparable to our size. This information is provided by the National Safety Council “Accident Facts”.