

TO: ALL COUNTY PERSONNEL
FROM: VERDENIA C. BAKER
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
PREPARED BY: RISK MANAGEMENT / LOSS CONTROL
SUBJECT: HEAVY EQUIPMENT, OFF-ROAD VEHICLES, POWERED INDUSTRIAL TRUCKS, AND WATERCRAFT (COUNTY EQUIPMENT)
PPM #: CW-O-083

ISSUE DATE
August 1, 2024

EFFECTIVE DATE
August 1, 2024

PURPOSE:

To minimize the risk for County employees and volunteers who operate heavy equipment, off-road vehicles, powered industrial trucks, and watercraft; and to provide guidance for those who supervise those employees and volunteers.

UPDATES:

Future updates to this PPM are the responsibility of the Director of Risk Management.

AUTHORITY:

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 1910.178 - Powered Industrial Trucks, as may be amended

DEFINITIONS:

County Equipment - For purposes of this PPM, the term County Equipment includes heavy equipment, off-road vehicles, powered industrial truck, and watercraft, as defined below.

Heavy Equipment - This includes, but is not limited to, bulldozers, backhoes, front end loaders, bobcats, skid loaders, mowers, and track hoes.

Off-Road Vehicles - Any County-owned or County-leased motorized vehicle that is not used on public roadways. This includes, but is not limited to, golf carts, all-terrain vehicles (ATV's), utility

type vehicles (UTV's) and rugged terrain vehicles RTV's. Off-road equipment may be powered by gasoline, electric motor or diesel.

Powered Industrial Truck - This includes, but is not limited to, a fork lift, pallet jack, tractor, platform lift truck, motorized hand truck or other specialized industrial truck powered by electric motor or internal combustion engine.

Watercraft - Any County-owned or County-leased motorized vehicle used for water transportation for work purposes, including, but not limited to, boats, wave runners/jet skis.

POLICY:

To ensure the safe use of all County-owned and operated heavy equipment, off-road vehicles, powered industrial trucks, and watercraft.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. Department/Division Directors:

1. Ensure that all supervisors comply with the procedures set forth in this policy.
2. Ensure that proper disciplinary action is taken for employees who have violated the conditions of this PPM. All disciplinary actions will be handled between the Department and Human Resources (HR).
3. Ensure that all County Equipment is used in the proper manner.
4. Ensure that the New Employee Requisition Form provided to HR specifically includes all County Equipment that would potentially be used by the new employee.
5. Ensure that all accidents/incidents are reported to Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and thoroughly investigated by a supervisor in a timely manner.

B. Supervisors:

1. Ensure that all operators of County Equipment are properly trained and road-tested, (where applicable) for the type(s) of County Equipment they operate. This training must be documented, and in some cases may be provided by Risk Management. **(See Section III of this PPM).**
2. Ensure that all drivers or operators participate in driver training programs as required by Risk Management. **(See Section III of this PPM).**
3. Provide training materials and safety meetings to employees as requested by Risk Management. **(See Section III of this PPM).**

4. Ensure that all accidents/incidents are thoroughly investigated and correctly reported. (Each investigation must be performed by a direct supervisor, or higher level supervisor).
5. Periodically review the operating rules/regulations and County Equipment operation manuals with all employees.
6. Inform all new employees and volunteers of the operating rules/regulations, and equipment manuals.
7. Maintain records of the operator's completed training / tests and approval forms for all County Equipment operated within their respective departments and divisions.

C. Employees:

1. Comply with all operating procedures, rules, and regulations.
2. Report all accidents/incidents to your supervisor and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as soon as possible. For incidents requiring immediate medical care call 911.
3. Operate only County Equipment for which they have been trained and authorized to use.

D. Occupational Health Clinic:

1. Conduct pre-employment physicals for all persons.
2. As required, conduct periodic medical evaluations for employees operating certain types of County Equipment.

E. Emergency Operations Center (EOC):

1. Upon notification of a serious accident or incident, notify all appropriate agencies and personnel.
2. Contact all applicable emergency authorities in situations where the involved party is unable to contact 911.
3. Contact appropriate supervisor(s) of employee involved in accidents or incidents for investigative purposes
4. E-mail notification to Risk Management or enter accident information directly into PeopleSoft system.

F. Risk Management /Loss Control:

1. Coordinate operator training programs and safety meetings to reinforce safety procedures for all supervisors and operators.
2. Develop and maintain operator rules, safety regulations and requirements.
3. Monitor all aspects of this PPM for conformance and consistency.
4. Review accident records for trending purposes.
5. Respond to serious accidents and incidents that involve extensive property damage.

G. Volunteers:

1. Fire Rescue Volunteers must:
 - a. Have a valid driver's license.
 - b. Receive appropriate training for the operation of all County Equipment they will operate.
 - c. Successfully pass a pre-instruction safety and competence evaluation conducted by the designated department representative. **The most current assessment form can be found on the PBC intranet site at Forms\Risk Management.**
2. All County Volunteers, not including Fire Rescue, must:
 - a. Have a valid driver's license.
 - b. Only operate Golf Cars and/or UTVs.
 - c. Receive appropriate training for the operation of all County Equipment they will operate.
 - d. Successfully pass a pre-instruction safety and competence evaluation conducted by the designated department representative. **The most current assessment form can be found on the PBC intranet site at Forms\Risk Management.**

PROCEDURES:

I. **Standards**

A. Qualifications:

1. Employees, whether newly hired or incumbents (whether full-time, part-time, or during an internship) will only be qualified to operate County Equipment if they:
 - a. Engage in job duties which require the operation of the specific County Equipment.
 - b. Successfully pass a pre-instruction safety and competence evaluation conducted by their direct supervisor or designee. (A signed copy of the evaluation will be furnished to Employee Safety/Loss Control). **For the most current form refer to PBC intranet site at Forms\Risk Management.**
 - c. Satisfy the requirements of any periodic physical examination required by the Occupational Health Clinic.
 - d. Hold a valid Florida driver's license (e.g. class E) **OR** be at least 17 years old (for golf cart use) or 18 years old (for all other County Equipment).

B. Accident / Incident Reporting:

1. All accidents / incidents involving County Equipment shall be reported to the appropriate supervisor and incidents shall be investigated by the supervisor and a report forwarded to Risk Management or entered into the PeopleSoft system.
2. Based on the investigation, the supervisor will determine if the employee should receive additional training/instruction in the safe operation of the County Equipment and whether the employee should be authorized to continue to operate the equipment.
3. If the incident was serious (e.g. significant damage to County Equipment or injuries received as a result of the incident) reinstatement of authorization to operate the County Equipment will require the approval of the Department/Division Head and Risk Management.
4. Should the employee suffer any injuries, a supervisor accident/injury report must be completed and forwarded to Employee Safety/Loss Control or entered into the PeopleSoft system for follow-up as soon as possible.

II. Operator Rules:

County Equipment operators will be required to observe safe operating procedures at all times. County Equipment operators shall exercise the following:

A. Walk Around Inspection:

1. Prior to County Equipment use, the operator will conduct a thorough walk around inspection. The inspection should include checking for exterior damage, inoperable lights, loose hardware, unsafe tire conditions or any other hazardous conditions which may create an unsafe situation with the County Equipment in operation.
2. The operator shall ensure all County Equipment that fits into the category of 3/4 ton or larger and ALL watercraft shall be equipped with a 5 lb. ABC rated fire extinguisher, securely fastened and easily accessible to the operator. Departments will be responsible for ensuring that the fire extinguishers are purchased, inspected, and properly placed on the County Equipment.
3. Any deficiencies should be noted and corrected prior to the operation of the County Equipment. Deficiencies should be reported to the immediate supervisor. It will be the supervisor and the County Equipment coordinator's responsibility to ensure that appropriate action is taken to correct problems involving County Equipment.

B. County Equipment Use:

1. All County-owned or County-leased County Equipment shall be used for County purposes only.
2. No County Equipment is to be left unattended with motor running/key left in the ignition unless deemed protocol by the manufacturer's recommendations.
3. All County Equipment should be locked when not in use.
4. Trailers attached to County Equipment are to be fastened securely to hitches. Safety pins in pintel locks must be used. Safety chains must be crossed under the hitch and securely fastened before moving the vehicle.
5. All items to be transported in/on a trailer, which may move during transport, must be properly secured. Any loose materials must be covered so as to prevent any materials from falling out/off of County Equipment.
6. No County Equipment shall be used beyond the capacity of its recommended usage. County Equipment must use the right lane of travel except when a left turn is required. Right-of-way must be given to all other motor vehicles. Headlights must be turned on at all times when driving on the street/highways. Triangular, orange-colored "slow moving" vehicle signs must prominently be displayed on the rear of the County Equipment. Off-road vehicles are restricted from all roadways.
7. All watercraft shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer and U.S. Coast Guard recommendations (e.g. weight capacity of persons, motor and gear).
8. Pushing or pulling County Equipment with another vehicle/County Equipment is prohibited unless the action is necessary to minimize a dangerous situation. In the

event of an emergency, the employee shall contact his/her immediate supervisor to determine if the County Equipment should be pulled using a chain or pull strap. Whenever possible, Fleet Management should be contacted for recommendations.

9. Backing up County Equipment without a clear view of the area shall be done only with the assistance of another County employee as a guide. The individual shall guide the County Equipment back using appropriate hand signals and/or voice signals. If the operator is alone, the operator must get out of the County Equipment and inspect the area behind before backing up. Strict caution is to be observed.

C. All Operators of County Equipment:

1. All County Equipment operators shall wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as recommended by the Equipment manufacturer.
2. If equipped, the operator shall wear seatbelts at ALL times when the County Equipment is in motion or running.

D. Accident Reporting:

1. Report **ALL** accidents/incidents to EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC) as soon as possible, regardless of property damage/injuries as soon as possible.

III. Training:

A. Heavy equipment and powered industrial trucks:

1. Heavy equipment and powered industrial truck operators are evaluated initially by employee's supervisor or other designated individuals within the employee's Department. This initial assessment allows each employee to "practice" and demonstrate his/her skill level to determine if he/she has the ability and basic knowledge to operate the heavy equipment and powered industrial truck safely. A written evaluation of the employee's performance shall be completed and forwarded to Risk Management. **The most current assessment form can be found on the PBC intranet site at Forms\Risk Management.**
2. Employees shall attend formal training at three (3) year intervals.
3. Forklift assessments require final evaluation by Risk Management or its designee.
4. Risk Management will provide additional specific skills-based training for each type of County Equipment operated by County employees.

B. Off-road Vehicles:

1. The supervisor (or designee) is responsible for all aspects of training the employees and volunteers with utilizing the off-road vehicles.
2. Risk Management will provide training materials to help facilitate the training.
3. Golf carts and UTVs, ATV's and RTV's are not to block pedestrian pathways or walkways.
4. Golf carts and UTV's, ATV's, RTV's are not to be overloaded, i.e. carrying more passengers than seating provided or surpassing recommended carrying or load capacity.
5. No standing is allowed while the off-road vehicle is in motion.

C. Watercraft:

1. All new employees who operate watercraft on navigable waterways for Palm Beach County will be required to attend a U.S. Coast Guard Safe Boating Course (or equivalent) within six (6) months of hire. Existing employees will also be required to take the course or its equivalent at three (3) year intervals.
2. Risk Management will arrange Safe Boating training for employees upon request.
3. Wave Runners/Jet Skis
 - a. Supervisors shall ensure all persons who operate these types of watercraft are trained and able to successfully operate this type of watercraft.
 - b. Risk Management shall provide training materials to help facilitate the training.


VERDENIA C. BAKER

Supersession History:

1. PPM # CW-O-083, effective 05/15/2008
2. PPM # CW-O-083, effective 03/07/2013
3. PPM # CW-O-083, effective 07/10/2019