

GERMAN TOWNSHIP FIRE-RESCUE

PROFESSIONAL VOLUNTEERS FAITHFULLY SERVING

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ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Standard Operation Guidance

APPLICATION: All volunteer, part time full time employees and guests.

07/10/08

To establish a policy for use of the Internet and the Department's electronic communication systems for all staff including volunteers, part time full time employees and guests. This policy establishes minimum standards.

All users must follow this Standard Operational Guidance document.

1. Department-provided computer systems that allow access to the Internet and electronic communication systems are the property of the Department and are provided to facilitate the effective and efficient conduct of Department business. Users are permitted access to the Internet and electronic communication systems to assist in the performance of their FD assigned jobs. This policy includes the use of personal computers that use the Department provided internet provider.
2. Personal use means use that is not job-related. In general, incidental and occasional personal use of the Department's Internet access or electronic communication systems is permitted; however, personal use is prohibited if it:
 - interferes with the user's productivity or work performance, or with any other employee's productivity or work performance;
 - adversely affects the efficient operation of the computer system;
3. No user should have any expectation of privacy in any message, file, image or data created, sent, retrieved or received by use of the Department's equipment and/or access. The Department has a right to monitor any and all aspects of their computer systems including, but not limited to, sites, instant messaging systems, chat groups, or news groups visited by Department users, material downloaded or uploaded by Department users, and e-mail sent or received by Department users. Such monitoring may occur at any time, without notice, and without the user's permission.
 - In addition, electronic records may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and, therefore, available for public distribution.

BROTHER FIRST - DUTY ALWAYS

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Certain activities are **prohibited** when using the Internet or electronic communications. These include, but are not limited to:

- accessing, downloading, printing or storing information with sexually explicit content as prohibited by law
- downloading or transmitting fraudulent, threatening, obscene, intimidating, defamatory, harassing, discriminatory, or other-wise unlawful messages or images;
- installing or downloading computer software, programs, or executable files contrary to policy;
- uploading or downloading copyrighted materials or proprietary Department information contrary to policy;
- uploading or downloading access-restricted Department information contrary to policy or in violation of Department policy;
- sending e-mail using another's identity, an assumed name, or anonymously;
- permitting a non-user to use for purposes of communicating the message of some third party individual or organization;
- any other activities designated as prohibited by the Department.

The distribution of electronic communications is difficult to control and routing mistakes can easily occur. Copies of electronic communications can be forwarded without the sender's knowledge or permission to unintended recipients. Therefore, electronic communications should be drafted and sent with at least the same level of care, professional judgment and discretion as paper documents.

The conduct of computer users who access the Internet or send e-mail containing information relating to the Department may be perceived as reflecting on the character and professionalism of the Department. When engaging in such conduct, whether for personal or official purposes, members are expected to do so in a responsible and professional manner.

All users are responsible for exercising appropriate care to protect the Department's computer systems against the introduction of viruses. When using the Department's Internet access or electronic communications, equipment and capability, individuals must:

- use the Internet or electronic communication systems only in accordance with Department policy;
- maintain the conditions of security (including safeguarding of passwords) under which they are granted access to such systems;
- check with the appropriate staff prior to downloading or accessing a file or document if the source of the file or other circumstances raises doubts about its safety.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

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