**Driving Guidelines for Crews, Engine and Overhead Dispatches for MN Resources**

**Requirements for Operating Vehicle**

* Employees must have a valid Driver’s License for the type of vehicle being driven.
* Defensive driving within last 3 years is required.
* For AD employees that meet the previously stated requirements, Dispatch will issue a letter in lieu of the operator’s card to drive USFS vehicles.
* MNICS agency employees can operate each other’s vehicles provided the operator meets the current operating guidelines and training requirements of their own Agency.
* When the tribes provide a tribal vehicle, they need to have their own employees driving for insurance proposes. No other fed or State employee can drive it without being on their insurance policy.

**Driving**

* Obey all traffic regulations.
* Drivers cannot use cell phones while driving. This includes vehicles equipped with hands free devices.
* Drive the most direct, safest route home.
  + Utilize the freeway system when possible if it is the safest most direct route.
  + Do not adjust routes to for personal reasons.
* Caravanning is not always a safe mode of group travel. Rendezvous at predetermined meeting places is often a better choice. If caravanning is utilized, all must remember the slowest vehicle must determine travel speed.
* Keep dispatch informed on planned route when and where you quit for the day.

**Managing Fatigue**

* Avoid driving at night, risks increase with nighttime driving. Every effort should be taken not to travel between hours of 2200 and 0500.
* During mobilization and demobilization travel, a driver should drive only if they have at least 8 consecutive hours off before beginning a shift.
* When possible, breaks should be taken at least every two hours, or as soon as possible after the two hour period as safety concerns will allow.
* A minimum ½ hour lunch break is required. No driving is allowed during lunch breaks.
* USFS policy limits duty hours of duty to 12 hours per day except in emergencies. Interagency dispatches involving USFS personnel will need to follow this policy. Driving back from a fire is not an emergency.
* Do not exceed the 16 hour duty day without prior approval.
* No driver will drive more than 10 hours within a duty day.

**Accountability**

* An employee of the same agency will be assigned to be accountable for each incident deployed vehicle.
* Check daily for any damage to the vehicle. The incident is responsible for any damages caused by the incident or traveling to and from the incident. Work with finance section to obtain paperwork to authorize the repairs.
* **Fleet cards can only be used by employees of agency owning the vehicle.**
* Fleet cards can only be used for fuel, minor maintenance or emergency repairs. Coordinate any major repair or maintenance with home unit including purchasing multiple tires.
* DO NOT use fleet cards for fuel or supplies that are not needed for the safe operation of the vehicle.
* Fleet cards cannot be used for food, refreshments or any personal items.
* Mileage should be charged to the incident. Coordinate with fleet manager.
* “Treat the vehicle better than you would your own personal vehicle.”