FIRE DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON TWP
DISTRICT 1
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GLOUCESTER COUNTY N.J.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT
TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON
GLOUCESTER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

Board of Fire Commissioners
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FIRE DEPARTMENT POLICY # 34-06

ELECTRONIC HARDWARE AND COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear direction and procedures regarding the use of fire department computers, fax machines, copiers, E-mail, and the Internet.

This policy applies to all personnel of the Washington Township Fire District including employees, volunteers and any other personnel utilizing our electronic equipment.

It shall be the policy of the Washington Township Fire District to recognize that efficient and effective use of computers, fax machines, copiers, E-mail, and the Internet for business use is essential. Rapid access to information, and communication is critical to the operational function of the fire department. Computer equipment, fax machines, copiers, and other electronic devices have been provided to fire department facilities and to our personnel so that we can effectively conduct our business.

However, like any tool, computers and other electronic devices, and the related technologies are subject to misuse, and abuse. Therefore, it is the policy of the Washington Township Fire District that the use of Departmental computers, fax machines, copiers, and any other electronic devices will be restricted to lawful business related purposes only.

It is the policy of the Washington Township Fire District that all Department computers, fax machines, copiers, and all included programming, hardware, and software are the exclusive property of the Washington Township Fire District. There shall be no expectation of privacy concerning the use of District computers, other electronic devices, or any files, correspondence, E-mail, or any other thing contained therein. The District reserves the right to monitor and track the use of any District computer, fax machine, or copier, and to monitor, inspect, open, copy or delete any file, E-mail, correspondence, or downloaded document or graphic contained in any District property without notice.

It is further the policy of the Washington Township Fire District that procedures and regulations will be established governing the proper and lawful use of District computers, fax machines, copiers, E-mail, and the Internet, and that violators of this policy may face disciplinary action, up to, and including, termination of employment or membership.

PROCEDURES

ELECTRONIC HARDWARE (COMPUTERS, FAX MACHINES, COPIERS, ETC.)

1. All District computers, fax machines, copiers, any other electronic devices, and all programs, files, E-mails, and any other thing contained therein are the exclusive property of the Washington Township Fire District, and shall be used solely for fire department business purposes. Employees shall not utilize District computers, Fax machines, copiers, or any other electronic device for

personal use or for profit.

2. Any use of District computers, fax machines, copiers, any electronic devices, E-mail, or the Internet, which violates any law, court order, ordinance, or District rule, regulation, or policy is prohibited.
3. There is no expectation of privacy in any District computer, fax machine, copier, or any other property, or in any electronic file, E-mail, or any thing contained therein. The District reserves the right to monitor, open, inspect, copy, or delete any file, E-mail, or any other thing contained in any District computer, fax machine, copier, or other device without notice.
4. Employees and members of the department are prohibited from modifying, altering, adding to, or deleting programs, software, or hardware installed on any District computer, or other property. No personal software, or hardware or any type may be added to District computers, or other electronic devices without the express permission of the Board of Fire Commissioners, or their designee.
5. Electronic files and records shall be treated with the same security and confidentiality as any other fire department document. All fire department personnel are prohibited from accessing any District computer, file, or other record when they know, or should have known that they are not authorized to do so.
6. All electronic files and records composed, transmitted, or received via District computers are considered to be part of the District's official records and, as such, are subject to disclosure to law enforcement or other third parties, as necessary.

E-MAIL

1. Fire Department personnel shall utilize, treat, and store E-mail as any other department information or document.
2. No communication, information or other material should be transmitted by E-mail, or other electronic communication that would not be transmitted by written letter, or memo.
3. The District may, without notice, monitor, access, review, copy, or delete any E-mail sent, received, or stored on any District computer.
4. The use of E-mail or any electronic communication, including print, graphics, or sounds, that violates any law, District policy, rule, or regulation, or which is otherwise obscene, defamatory, discriminatory, or harassing is prohibited. Fire Department personnel who receive any electronic communication, which is a violation of this section, shall notify their supervisor immediately.

INTERNET

The Internet shall be used for fire department related purposes only. The Internet shall not be used for personal use, gain, or profit.

1. Data that is composed, transmitted, accessed, or received via the Internet on District computers must not contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating, disruptive, or illegal. Examples of unacceptable content may include, but are not limited to: sexual comments, content or images; racial slurs; comments, content or images that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any characteristic protected by law.
2. All Internet user activity and interactions generated on District computers are subject to monitoring, recording, and review by the District through Web Surveillance software. Employees have no right to privacy regarding access to, or use of, the Internet on District computers.

TELEVISION USE

1. The use of television equipment and its programming within fire district facilities shall be

controlled by the respective fire district supervisors except that no programming may contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating, disruptive, or illegal. Employees of the district are restricted to watch television during designated time periods such as during breaks, meal periods, training, exercise, or other special circumstances as authorized by the fire district supervisor in charge. Special circumstances may include but are not limited to; news of significant importance or fire service related programming and weather conditions.

PASSWORDS

1. Fire Department personnel shall not use the password, logon, or user ID of another for purpose of concealing their identity, access to, or use of District computers, any electronic device, E-mail, Internet use, or any other electronic transactions.
2. Fire Department personnel shall not use the password, logon, or user ID of another for purpose of creating a false belief, impression, or record that access to a District computer, electronic device, E-mail, Internet use, or any other electronic transaction was the act of another.

PENALTIES

1. All Washington Township Fire District policies, rules, and regulations apply with equal force regarding the use of District computers, fax machines, copiers, other electronic devices, E-mail, and the Internet. Fire Department personnel violating these procedures are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with SOP 7 and/or Employee Policy # 35, up to and including termination of employment or membership.
2. In addition to disciplinary action, employees violating these procedures are subject to any applicable civil and criminal penalties.

This policy was approved and adopted by the Board of Fire Commissioners on March 2, 2006, and shall take effect immediately. The policy shall also supercede any directives, memorandums, or other previously issued documents concerning ELECTRONIC HARDWARE AND COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT.

By:

Edwin L. Etschman, III, Chairman

Attest:

Charles Zemski, Secretary