

GREEN VEHICLE POLICY

Background

In 2004, Dawson Creek completed a baseline study on its municipal energy consumption. One of the study's recommendations was the creation of a green vehicle policy that would guide vehicle purchasing decisions and operating practice in order to help reduce energy consumption. An overview of the different components and options for a green vehicle policy was prepared and presented to Dawson Creek in February, 2006. The policy that follows reflects the goals and direction that Dawson Creek chose from these options. For background information on each section, please see the *Dawson Creek Green Vehicle Policy Working Paper*.

Rationale

- Gasoline and diesel fuels used for transportation produce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that contribute to climate change, and local air emissions (Criteria Air Contaminants – CACs) that degrade local air quality. This policy will help to reduce vehicle emissions.
- New vehicles will be an ongoing expense in Dawson Creek. This policy will ensure that life cycle costs are considered for new vehicle purchases and that vehicle efficiencies are maximized.
- Many of the policy options described here can be adapted and expanded to the community level. This policy provides a starting point to engage on other transportation issues throughout the municipality.

Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of this policy are:

- To reduce emissions from the municipal vehicle fleet to levels that are 20% below 2004 levels by 2016 by:
 - Reducing idling
 - Reducing single occupancy trips
 - Purchasing more efficient vehicles and fuels
 - Right-sizing vehicles
- To consider the life cycle costs of municipal vehicle operations when purchasing vehicles.
- To maximize vehicle efficiency.
- To provide a framework for lessening the environmental impact of vehicle operations that can be expanded to the larger community.

Guidelines

1. Purchasing

1.1. Right-sizing

Vehicles should be purchased according to the average or usual anticipated use of the vehicle. Occasional vehicle needs that exceed the capacity of the vehicle purchased should be met through vehicle sharing or renting. The following use requirements should be considered when purchasing a vehicle:

- engine size
- vehicle weight
- average carrying capacity
- average passenger capacity
- average terrain

These use requirements should accompany and form part of any recommendation made to the Chief Administrative Officer and Chief Financial Officer under the Purchase of Capital Equipment Policy.

1.2. Life cycle cost

Life cycle costs should be considered for all vehicle purchases. Life cycle costs should include: capital costs, maintenance costs, fuel costs, and resale costs.

2. Fuel Choice

2.1. Fuel choice

The lowest GHG emission fuel possible should be purchased for all vehicles in the fleet. Consideration of fuels should include:

- purchasing low emission fuel for the whole fleet (i.e. low-sulphur gasoline or biodiesel)
- purchasing vehicles that run on alternative fuel sources

3. Operating

3.1. Idling

Idling should be reduced among all municipal vehicles where possible. The following guidelines should be followed by all municipal vehicle operators:

- Reduce warm-up idling (no more than 30 seconds as long as windows are clear)
- It takes more gas to idle for more than 10 seconds than it does to restart your vehicle. If stopped for more than 10 seconds, vehicles should be turned off, except in the following circumstances:
 - In traffic
 - In the course of performing a specific duty that requires that the vehicle be left running
 - If the temperature is below -10C
 - If doing so would compromise human safety or the mechanical integrity of the vehicle

3.2. Vehicle sharing

Single occupancy vehicle trips should be minimized. Vehicles should be shared between departments to ensure maximum efficiency for vehicle use.

3.3. Driver education

Driving procedures to increase the efficiency of vehicle operations, including anti-idling, should be included in driver training programs that municipal staff are required to take.

4. Maintenance and monitoring

4.1. Maintenance

Maintenance on municipal vehicles should continue to ensure that preventative maintenance continues to maximize the efficiency of all vehicle operations.

4.2. Monitoring

All vehicles should be monitored to track fuel consumption, fuel costs, mileage, and maintenance costs.

5. Evaluation

5.1. Monitoring objectives

The objectives in this policy should be measured at regular intervals to ensure that the policy is effectively moving Dawson Creek towards its goals.

5.2. Policy evaluation

This policy should undergo regular evaluation to ensure that it is enabling Dawson Creek to move towards its goals.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL:
DATE: May 29, 2006

