




DIVISION OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

DIRECTIVE

NUMBER: 03-19

DATE: December 10, 2003

TO: All DFRS Personnel
FROM: Chief Tom Carr 
SUBJECT: Electronic Mail (e-mail) Usage

The County e-mail system is a valuable tool which supports DFRS business in many ways. In order to be most effective this system **must** be used by DFRS personnel. Each County e-mail account **must** be maintained to receive e-mail messages at all times. All employees are **required to read** their DFRS e-mail messages each day they are at work and supervisors are required to provide time and resources for employees to read and respond to DFRS e-mail messages. All employees **must regularly delete** unnecessary e-mail messages from their *Inbox* and *Sent messages* folders to ensure that they have sufficient storage space to receive and send new e-mail messages.

All e-mails sent via the County e-mail system must have a title in the subject line. When an e-mail message requests a receipt the reader must click yes.

The County e-mail system provides opportunities for communicating with large numbers of staff in an efficient way; however, when the content of such messages is not of interest or is unnecessary for the majority of recipients, then a significant loss in productivity results from staff reading and purging such messages. Therefore, an originator of a group e-mail must exercise care in determining the recipients. For e-mail messages to large numbers of personnel, or to all fire and rescue e-mail users, the following guidelines apply: Determine the appropriate group of employees to receive the message. If the event is of interest to only a restricted number of staff, send the e-mail to those personnel only. Announcements for non-work-related external activities must not be sent to large groups except for sponsored employee associations and groups such as IAFF Local 1664, the Montgomery County Career Fire and Rescue Officers Association, or the Division.

Records needed to support program functions must be retained, managed, and accessible in existing paper filing systems outside the e-mail system in accordance with DFRS Policy and Procedure No. 1, entitled Polices and Procedures.

Some examples of personal issues relating to work which may be appropriate for e-mail are death, or birth announcements concerning a DFRS employee or family member. When sending these types of e-mails, the sender must determine who should receive the message and should not indiscriminately send messages to all employees.

Personal Event Notices and other types of communications must never include information regarding an illness, or any type of personal medical information.

Failure to follow any part of this Directive will result in appropriate disciplinary action.