	West Fargo Fire & Rescue Policy and Procedure			Authorized by: D. Fuller Fire Chief
	Subject: TECHNOLOGY			
	Section: ADMIN	Date Authorized: 8/5/2015	Date Reviewed: 11/1/2017	
	Number: 111			

The electronic communication system is owned by the City of West Fargo. Electronic communication includes, but is not limited to, e-mails, cell phones, and other social media. As a general rule, employees should use the electronic communication system for City of West Fargo purposes only. Personal use of the electronic communication system should be kept to a minimum.


In the event that employees leave and/or receive electronic communication messages of a personal nature on the City of West Fargo’s electronic communication system, employees are on notice that, for any legitimate business purpose, the City of West Fargo’s management reserves the right to access and disclose messages contained on and saved in the City of West Fargo’s electronic communication system.

Electronic communication messages also may be monitored to the extent necessary to ensure compliance with City of West Fargo policies. Employees of the City of West Fargo have no legitimate expectation of privacy in the City of West Fargo’s electronic communication system. The use of personal identification numbers (PIN numbers) or passwords by an employee to access the electronic communication system does not preclude the City of West Fargo from accessing electronic communication messages contained on and saved in the City of West Fargo’s electronic communication system. Unauthorized use of encryption technology to block access to any message is strictly prohibited and may be grounds for immediate termination.

Employees should use the same care in drafting electronic communication as they would for any other written communication. Employees should not say in an electronic communication anything which they could not commit to a written memorandum or repeat in an open meeting. All electronic communications may be subject to North Dakota open records laws.

The display or transmission of sexually explicit or pornographic images, messages, or cartoons, or any transmission or use of electronic communications that contain ethnic slurs, racial epithets, or anything that may be construed as harassing, threatening, or disparaging of others based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, political beliefs, or any other protected class status, is strictly prohibited. Employees also are prohibited from using the City of West Fargo’s electronic communication system for other unlawful, unethical, defamatory, or any tortuous activities

Employees should delete all unnecessary electronic communication messages. Employees should remember, however, that deleting an electronic communication does not necessarily destroy it, but merely marks it to be written over at a later date. The City of West Fargo also reserves the right to purge the electronic communication system on a routine basis, as part of the City of West Fargo’s standard document retention policy.

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Without the express direction of the City of West Fargo’s management to do so, an employee should not attempt to gain access to another employee’s electronic communication messages or to send messages from another employee’s terminal without the latter’s permission. In addition, no employee should alter, copy, or forward electronic communication messages to any other person or entity without express permission of the sender.

Violations of any portion of this policy will result in appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

COMPUTER SYSTEMS AND THE INTERNET


The computer system belongs to the West Fargo Fire Department. As a general rule, employees should use the computer system for business purposes only. Personal use of the computer system, including Internet access, should be kept to a minimum.

The West Fargo Fire Department’s management reserves the right to access and disclose documents, Internet logs, programs, and other files and information contained on and saved in the West Fargo Fire Department’s computer system. Such access and disclosure may be conducted for any legitimate business purposes, at the department’s discretion.

Employee use of the computer system also may be monitored to the extent necessary to ensure compliance with City of West Fargo and The West Fargo Fire Department’s policies. Employees of the West Fargo Fire Department have no legitimate expectation of privacy in the computer system. The use of personal identification numbers (PIN numbers) or passwords by the employee to access the computer system or to gain Internet access does not preclude the West Fargo Fire Department from accessing documents, programs, Internet logs, and files contained on and saved in the West Fargo Fire Department’s computer system. Unauthorized use of encryption technology to block access to any documents, programs, Internet logs, or files is strictly prohibited and may be grounds for immediate termination. Do not share passwords with anyone, unless otherwise directed to do so by the City IT Director.

The creation, display, transmission, receipt, or storage of sexually explicit or pornographic messages, images, or cartoons, or any documents, programs, or files that contain ethnic slurs, racial epithets, or anything that may be construed as harassing, threatening, or disparaging of others based on their race, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, or any other status protected by applicable federal or state law is strictly prohibited.

Employees also are prohibited from using the department’s computer system and/or the Internet for any unlawful, unethical, defamatory, or tortuous activities or for any personal gain.

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Any software or file downloaded into the City network or on any department computer becomes the property of the West Fargo Fire Department. Only software that has been licensed by the City of West Fargo or The West Fargo Fire Department or that has been authorized to conduct business is allowed on City of West Fargo servers and department computers (workstations and laptops). Hardware purchases must also follow the approved hardware list as maintained by the IT Director of the City of West Fargo. Before downloading or installing any software or electronic files whatsoever, employees must first have the approval of the Department Head who will inform the IT Director for final approval.

Without the express direction of West Fargo Fire Department’s management, no employee should attempt to gain access to another employee’s documents, programs, or a file without the latter’s permission.


Employees have a responsibility to use their Internet access in an informed and responsible way, conforming to network etiquette, customs, common sense, and courtesies. Violations of any portion of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and/or including termination.

MOBILE DEVICE POLICY

This policy applies to all West Fargo Fire Department employees who are required to hold department issued cell phones, as well as all West Fargo Fire Department employees with email accounts who use their personal “mobile devices” (full-feature mobile phones with mini keyboards and PC-like capability that support e-mail, texting, calendaring, and/or Internet functionality), iPads®, tablets or other mobile devices for City of West Fargo purposes. West Fargo Fire Department will not reimburse employees for the costs of using their personal mobile devices for City business.

Restrictions to Email Server: Employees with City of West Fargo email accounts may not synchronize their personal mobile devices to City of West Fargo’s email server without the approval of their Department Head. If granted permission, employees shall comply with the security guidelines set forth by the IT department. Additionally, employees shall authorize the city to install software that will enable City of West Fargo to locate and disable the mobile device in the event that it is lost or stolen. City of West Fargo expressly disclaims any obligation to either replace or repair the device or the data contained on it should the disabling software be used.

No Right of Privacy in Business Use:

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Employees who use mobile devices for business purposes and who are witnesses in any arbitration, litigation or regulatory investigation may be subject to any lawfully issued subpoena for City of West Fargo data (e.g., voicemail messages, text messages, emails, internet access) stored on the device.

Security: City of West Fargo employees who use any mobile devices to access City of West Fargo information over a cellular or internet connection are responsible for securing their devices to prevent sensitive data from being lost or compromised, viruses being spread, and other forms of abuse of City of West Fargo’s technology infrastructure. Therefore, if any mobile device is lost, stolen, or believed to be compromised, the incident must be reported to the IT department immediately.


SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This policy gives direction to West Fargo Fire Department employees and volunteers who represent the department through the use of social media sites.

Social media is any web based network used to share information between users. These sites are less formal than traditional media, such as print, television, and radio and allow for immediate, unfiltered, and spontaneous communication opportunities. Social media sites include, but are not limited to: Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr, Internet search sites, and Wikipedia. A Social Network or Social Networking refers to any interaction between a West Fargo Fire Department employee or volunteer and any social media site via-e-mail, text, or online interaction.

All social media sites established by a department employee or volunteer that is used to communicate sanctioned department information or to engage in discussion about department information, services or processes as a public display of West Fargo Fire Department information must be authorized by the Chief. This will help ensure that material posted for public view meets all communications standards and is consistent with the goals and branding of the West Fargo Fire Department. Once approval of the site, design, and main content is granted, the updating of files and minor content changes will not require such clearance. All official social media sites shall be branded with a West Fargo Fire Department logo.

In order to identify and maintain an accurate record of social media sites representing the West Fargo Fire Department, a social media form must be completed prior to the launch of any official site. This form is available at the City IT Department.

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Any official West Fargo Fire Department social media site may be accessed by the City IT Director or Department Head. This may be necessary to disseminate emergency information, make corrections, and update a site's profile or settings.

The advertisement of private businesses shall not be posted on any official West Fargo Fire Department social media site. This may include, but is not limited to: paid advertisements, unpaid advertisements for private businesses, and promotional information for non-City related events.


The West Fargo Fire Department website, www.westfargofire.com, shall continue to be the main source for West Fargo Fire Department information. Social media sites should introduce information and link to the West Fargo Fire Department web site for more complete details.

All visual mediums posted on official social media sites must have written permission by the copyright holder or creator of the image, video, or any other multimedia item.

No content is to be placed on official social media sites which would violate site policy or existing West Fargo Fire Department policies including sexual harassment, discrimination, or violence. No content shall be placed on official social media sites that is of a personal opinion or is not sanctioned by the West Fargo Fire Department.

Information posted to official social media sites must be factual and relevant to West Fargo Fire Department functions, services, or City-related events. Information should not include personal opinion or personal statements. It is the responsibility of each department to follow the West Fargo Fire Department Social Media Policy and be aware of any revisions or additions to the policy.

The West Fargo Fire Department cannot regulate the social media accounts of its members; however there are scenarios where the release of information, either purposefully or inadvertently, can cause adverse issues for the member, the department, and the City of West Fargo. Therefore, members are cautioned not to affiliate themselves with the department through their personal social media accounts. Examples include posting pictures of themselves in uniform, on scenes, or at the station. If a reasonable person can view a member's social media account and assume the member is a spokesperson for the department, any comment made on the account can reasonably be viewed as the official viewpoint of the fire department. Additionally, members are prohibited from making comments regarding operations of the fire department which are sensitive in nature, to include calls, on social media.

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DIGITAL
POLICY

MEDIA

Members of the department shall not take digital photographs of fire scenes without reason to do so and permission from a department officer. Acceptable reasons include operational purposes, training purposes, and documentation purposes such as investigations. Once a digital photograph is taken, that photograph becomes the property of the West Fargo Fire Department. All digital media will be turned over to the Fire Chief or his designated representative for assessment of applicability and to see that it does not violate United States Privacy Laws by depicting a person, directly or indirectly through an address, building, or vehicle identification plate, without that person's permission. If the picture meets this criterion, then a copy can be returned to the member. The original must be maintained on file per the Records Maintenance Policy (113).