

USDA/ARS Tifton Location Vehicle Fleet Management Directive

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I. Purpose

The objectives of this directive are: (a) to establish written procedures to promote and comply with the environmental objectives set forth by the President in Executive Order 13423, “Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management” and the environmental objectives of the USDA-ARS, and (b) to provide clear guidance to personnel at the USDA-ARS Tifton Location on managing the vehicle fleet for improved environmental and energy performance for the various units at the location.

II. Requirements of Executive Order 13423

Executive Order 13423, issued January 2007, requires that Federal Agencies shall:

“ensure that, if the agency operates a fleet of at least 20 motor vehicles, the agency, relative to agency baselines for fiscal year 2005, (i) reduces the fleet’s total consumption of petroleum products by 2 percent annually through the end of fiscal year 2015, (ii) increases the total fuel consumption that is non-petroleum-based by 10 percent annually, and (iii) uses plug-in hybrid (PIH) vehicles when PIH vehicles are commercially available at a cost reasonably comparable, on the basis of life-cycle cost, to non-PIH vehicles.”

This directive deals with meeting the above requirements through vehicle fleet management at the USDA-ARS Tifton Location. The Tifton Location will strive to meet the requirements by adopting practices for reducing fuel consumption and purchasing fuel efficient vehicles

III. Definitions

“Alternative fuel vehicle” means a dedicated, flexible-fuel, bi-fuel, or dual-fuel vehicle powered by alternative fuel as defined in section 301 of EPAAct 1992.

“Hybrid vehicle” combines features of internal combustion engines and electric motors. Unlike 100% electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles do not need to be plugged into an external source of electricity to be recharged. *Note: Hybrid electric vehicles currently do not qualify as alternate fuel vehicles under the Energy Policy Act of 1992, as most continue to use petroleum gasoline when not operating on electric power.*

“Non-petroleum based fuels,” as used in E.O.13423, means alternative fuels consistent with the definition presented in section 301 of the EPAAct 1992. These include, but are not limited to, methanol, ethanol, blends of 85% or more alcohol with gasoline, hydrogen, natural gas, biodiesel, etc.

IV. Responsibilities

- A. Location Personnel: It is the responsibility of location personnel to use available vehicles in the most fuel efficient manner and maintain vehicles to maximize fuel efficiency.
- B. Fund Holders: It is the responsibility of location fund holders to purchase the most fuel-efficient vehicles of the minimum size necessary to meet research requirements, purchase hybrid vehicles if available at a cost reasonably comparable, and purchase alternative fuel vehicles when alternative fuels become available in Tifton.
- C. Purchasing Agent: The location purchasing agent will make every effort to ensure compliance with Executive Order 13423 by purchasing hybrid and alternative fuel vehicles when available. The purchasing agent will also help in the collection of data on vehicle and vehicle fuel purchases.
- D. EMS Coordinator: The EMS Coordinator will collect, organize and report data on vehicle and fuel purchases annually. Data on the vehicle purchases and fuel consumption will help to ensure compliance with Executive Order 13423 and measure the effectiveness of location efforts to promote environmentally-friendly practices.

V. Procedures

A. Reducing Vehicle Consumption of Petroleum Products

The Tifton Location will strive to reduce fuel consumption by operating vehicles as fuel efficiently as possible. Location personnel will help reduce agency fuel consumption through these practices:

- Walk across campus instead of driving.
- Car pool on work-related travel.
- Use the most fuel-efficient vehicle available for daily activities and travel.
- Consolidate local trips.
- Use conference calls or virtual meetings in lieu of face-to-face meetings when appropriate.
- Follow vehicle manufacturers suggested maintenance procedures.
- Check vehicle tire pressure periodically. Under-inflated tires can easily reduce MPG by 2 or more.
- Avoid idling for long periods of time.
- Avoid sudden stops or bursts of speed.
- Avoid overfilling the tank, allowing for gasoline expansion.
- Report mechanical malfunctions promptly, i.e., shaking steering, rough engine idle, etc.
- Drive at reduced speeds, limiting maximum speeds to posted limits. By minimally reducing speed, employees will save gasoline and cut emissions. For each mile per hour over 55, fuel economy drops by about 1 percent. The drop-off increases at a greater rate over 65 mph.

For other tips on saving gas go to: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/consumer/17-tips.pdf>

B. Purchasing Fuel Efficient Vehicles

The Tifton Location will improve the fuel efficiency of the vehicle fleet by purchasing more fuel efficient vehicles.

- The Location will purchase motor vehicles that meet statutory fleet average fuel economy standards and the **minimum** body size, engine size, and optional equipment necessary to fulfill the needs of the program. The minimum fleet average fuel economy standards established for passenger automobiles and light trucks are 27.5 miles per gallon and 20.7 miles per gallon, respectively for 1999 and beyond.
- Hybrid vehicles will be purchased when available and cost-effective.
- Alternative fuel vehicles will be purchased when cost effective and alternative fuels become commercially available.

V. References

Executive Order 13423, “Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management,” dated January 24, 2007.

Instructions for Implementing Executive Order 13423, issued by the Office of the Federal Environmental Executive, dated March 29, 2007.

USDA, REE Manual 221.1M, “Personal Property, Motor Vehicle, and Aircraft Management”, dated August 3, 1999.

USDA Secretary’s Memorandum 5500-002, “Implementing Executive Order 13423 Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management,” dated September 17, 2007.