

# Computer, E-Mail, and Internet Usage

Carbon County recognizes that use of technology has many benefits for Carbon County and its employees. Computers, the Internet, and e-mail make communication more efficient and effective. Therefore, employees are encouraged to use these technologies appropriately. Unacceptable use of these things can place Carbon County and others at risk. This policy discusses acceptable usage of this technology. Carbon County intends to honor the policies set for below but reserves the right to change them at any time.

## Guidelines

The following guidelines have been established for using computers, the Internet, and e-mail in an appropriate, ethical and professional manner.

1. Carbon County maintains a computer network, an internet server, and an electronic mail system. This system is provided by Carbon County to assist in the conduct of its business. The entire system, including the computers and anything on them and generated on them or with them, is the property of Carbon County. The system is not the private property of any employee. This means that anything created on a computer, generated on a computer, received by a computer, or put on a computer using Carbon County's system is the property of the Carbon County.
2. The use of the system is reserved solely for Carbon County business.
3. Because the system is a Carbon County system, Carbon County is entitled to know any passwords placed on any documents, files, or programs within the system, including password placed on the documents, files, or programs by any employee.
4. Carbon County will on occasion supply lap top computer or hand-held devices to employees. These devices are also considered part of the system and are subject to the same rules, even if the devices are used at other places other than County property or on a different network.
5. Carbon County computers, including its internet servers and network, the internet, and e-mail access may not be used for transmitting, retrieving or storing any communications of a defamatory, discriminatory or harassing nature or materials that are obscene or X-rated. No messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual's race, age, disability, religion, national origin, physical attributes or sexual preference shall be transmitted. Harassment of any kind is prohibited.
6. Disparaging, abusive, profane, or offensive language; materials that would adversely or negatively reflect upon the Carbon County or be contrary to Carbon County's best interests; and any illegal activities—including piracy, hacking,

extortion, blackmail, copyright infringement, and unauthorized access to any computers on the Internet or e-mail—are forbidden.

7. Copyrighted materials belonging to entities other than Carbon County may not be transmitted by employees on the company's network. All employees obtaining access to other entities' or individual's materials must respect all copyrights and may not copy, retrieve, modify or forward copyrighted materials, except with permission or as a single copy to reference only. If you find something on the Internet that may be interesting to others, do not copy it to a network drive. Instead, give the URL (uniform resource locator or "address") to the person who may be interested in the information and have that person look at it on his/her own.
8. Do not use the system in a way that disrupts its use by others. This includes excessive dial-in usage, sending or receiving many large files and "spamming" (sending e-mail messages to thousands of users.)
9. The Internet is full of useful programs that can be downloaded, but some of them may contain computer viruses that can extensively damage our computers. Be sure to virus-check downloaded files immediately. Instructions on how to check for viruses are available through the IT Department. Also, many browser add-on packages (called "plug-ins") are available to download. There is no guarantee that these plug-ins will be compatible with other programs on the network and they may cause problems; therefore, please refrain from downloading them.
10. Each employee is responsible for the content of all text, audio or images that he/she places on Carbon County's computers or sends over Carbon County's internet and e-mail system. No e-mail or other electronic communications may be sent which hides the identity of the sender or represents the sender as someone else. Also, be aware that Carbon County's name is attached to all messages so use discretion in formulating messages.
11. E-mail is not guaranteed to be private or confidential. All electronic communications are Carbon County's property. Therefore, Carbon County reserves the right to examine, monitor and regulate e-mail messages, directories and files, as well as Internet usage. Also, the Internet is not secure so don't assume that others cannot read -- or possibly alter -- your messages.
12. Internal and external e-mail messages are considered county records and may be subject to discovery in the event of litigation. Be aware of this possibility when sending e-mail within and outside Carbon County. Additionally, do not dispose of or destroy such messages except in conformity with Carbon County's document retention policy.

## **Carbon County's Right to Monitor and Consequences**

All Carbon County-supplied technology, including computer systems and company-related work records, belong to Carbon County and not the employee. Carbon County routinely monitors usage patterns for its e-mail and Internet communications. Although encouraged to explore the vast resources available on the Internet, employees should use discretion in the sites that are accessed.

Since all the computer systems and software, as well as the e-mail and Internet connection, are Carbon County-owned, all Carbon County policies related to such property are in effect at all times. Any employee who abuses the privilege of Carbon County-facilitated access to e-mail or the Internet, may be denied access to the Internet and, if appropriate, be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## **Questions Regarding the Use of the Internet or E-mail**

If you have questions regarding the appropriate use of a computer, the Internet, or e-mail, contact the IT group or the Personnel Officer.