



Gaston County Safety Policy

Prepared By: Gaston County Human Resources Department

Safety Policy Version Control

Approval Date	Change Description
August 1, 2011	Original.
August 18, 2011	Delete 3.3.4; Delete "Exception" bullets under 10.4.1.
September 27, 2011	Add 10.2.6 and 10.5; add 5 th bullet statement under "Elements" in Appendix G.

Note Gaston County at its option, may change, delete, suspend, or discontinue parts or the policy in its entirety, at any time without prior notice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	STATEMENT OF POLICY	4
2	SAFETY COORDINATOR’S DUTIES	5
3	SAFETY COUNCIL AND DEPARTMENT SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES	6
3.1	PURPOSE OF THE SAFETY COUNCIL	6
3.2	DUTIES OF THE SAFETY COUNCIL	6
3.3	DUTIES OF SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES	7
4	SAFETY EDUCATION AND TRAINING	8
5	PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT PROGRAM	9
5.1	OSHA STANDARD 1910.133(A)	9
5.2	GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT	9
5.3	PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES	9
6	COUNTY MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVER DISQUALIFICATION RULES	11
6.1	APPLICABILITY	11
6.2	DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES	11
6.3	GASTON COUNTY VEHICLE USE POLICY	11
7	MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	13
8	POST-ACCIDENT DRUG TESTING	14
9	EMERGENCY ACTION RESPONSE PLAN	15
9.1	PURPOSE	15
9.2	RESPONSIBILITIES	15
9.3	EMPLOYEE ACCOUNTABILITY	16
10	FIRE SAFETY PLAN	17
10.1	PURPOSE	17
10.2	FIRE RESPONSIBILITIES	17
10.3	ELECTRICAL FIRES	17
10.4	PORTABLE HEATERS, FANS, AND COFFEE MAKERS	18
10.5	FIRE EXTINGUISHER INSPECTION CHECKLIST	18
11	HAZARD COMMUNICATION PLAN	19
11.1	PURPOSE	19
11.2	SAFETY COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES	19
11.3	DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES	19
	APPENDIX A: DEPARTMENTS/FACILITIES REQUIRING SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES	21
	APPENDIX B: GASTON COUNTY SAFETY COUNCIL MEMBERS	22
	APPENDIX C: GASTON COUNTY DEPARTMENT SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES	23
	APPENDIX D: WORKPLACE SAFETY AND SECURITY	25
	APPENDIX E: SAFETY INSPECTIONS	27
	APPENDIX F: HAZARD COMMUNICATION PLAN TEMPLATE	29
	APPENDIX G: EMERGENCY ACTION RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE	32

1 STATEMENT OF POLICY

- It is the policy of Gaston County to provide safe working conditions, personal protective equipment (PPE) as required, safe equipment, proper job instructions, adequate supervision and frequent review of working practices to assure that employees can perform their jobs safely and productively.
- Workplace accidents place an unnecessary financial burden on taxpayers. Most accidents can be prevented by training, common sense, and diligence from employees and supervisors. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each employee, and especially those in a supervisory capacity, to assure that work is planned, performed, and supervised with safety in mind, and that all necessary safety requirements are in place.
- It is the policy and intention of the County that a comprehensive safety program will be followed.
- In support and recognition of the importance of a vigorous safety program, the County Safety Coordinator, under the direction of the Director of Human Resources, is hereby directed to implement a comprehensive safety program in accordance with the Gaston County Safety Guidelines.
- Employee Responsibility
 - Each employee is responsible for following good, safe work habits and for complying with safety and health regulations. Safety and health are to be placed first in importance in the performance of work duties. The protection of employees and the public on County property is a shared responsibility of every employee. Employees are responsible for notifying their immediate Supervisors of violations or deficiencies in safe and healthful working conditions. This responsibility includes recommending corrective measures.¹
- Safety Incidents Notifications
 - Employees shall immediately notify their Supervisors of every injury or accident regardless of their scope or severity. Failure to follow required procedures, directives, policies, rules, supervisory orders, or safe work habits will result in corrective or disciplinary action up to and including discharge.²

¹ Gaston County Personnel Policy, 7.8.1, page 24, July 1, 2010.

² Gaston County Personnel Policy, 7.8.2, page 24, July 1, 2010.

2 SAFETY COORDINATOR'S DUTIES

- Shall be custodian of records pertaining to the Safety program.
 - Maintain outside professional contacts regarding safety issues, applicable regulations and issues through peers, conferences and seminars.
 - Contact appropriate local, state and federal offices for needed information and guidance on safety issues.
 - Monitor department compliance with applicable County safety policy plus local, state and federal laws.
 - Identify and analyze risks that could cause financial loss to the County.
 - Implement and monitor policies and procedures to reduce risk through inspections, training and enforcement of the County's Safety program.
 - As required will keep senior County leadership informed on safety issues.
 - Facilitate Safety Council meetings.
-

3. SAFETY COUNCIL AND DEPARTMENT SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES

3.1. Purpose of the Safety Council

3.1.1. The Safety Council is to focus on creating a safer working environment for all of the employees, on reducing injuries and illnesses, and on improving communication about safety throughout the organization. The Council will do this by:

- Focusing on promoting workplace safety through education with the purpose of preventing the personal and economic loss associated with injuries and health hazards.
- Serving as a conduit for delivering safety information to the entire workforce, and to provide a channel for feedback and suggestions from the employees.

3.2. Duties of the Council

3.2.1. In order to fulfill its purpose, the Safety Council will meet on a periodic basis.

3.2.2. Council membership will consist of employee representatives from the following departments/functions:

- County Police
 - GEMS
 - Sheriff's Office
 - DSS
 - Health
 - Library
 - Public Works
 - County Safety Coordinator
 - County Wellness/Workers Compensation Coordinator
- The Safety Coordinator must be notified when departments replace members of the Safety Council

3.2.3. The Council will document its activities and act as a fact finding body and report to the employer regarding:

- Assessing and controlling hazards
- Assessing safety training and awareness topics
- Communication with employees regarding safety committee activities
- Developing safety rules, policies and procedures
- Educating employees on safety related topics
- Evaluating the safety program on a regular basis
- Inspecting the workplace
- Keeping job specific training current
- Motivating employees to create a safety culture in the workplace

3.2.4 Reviewing incidents of workplace accidents, injuries and illnesses

- The County Attorney's office, Wellness/Workers' Comp Coordinator, and the Safety Coordinator will meet periodically to review incidents of workplace accidents, injuries and illnesses

3.3. Duties of Safety Representatives

- 3.3.1. Department and facility Safety Representatives serve as the primary points of contact between their fellow employees and the Safety Council.
- 3.3.2. They serve as the custodian for their department's Emergency Action Response Plans.
- 3.3.3. They are responsible for ensuring all employees assigned to their facilities are aware of and trained to execute Emergency Action Response Plans when necessary.
- 3.3.4. Safety Representatives (one primary and one alternate) are appointed by their department leadership.
- 3.3.5. Department leadership will notify the Safety Coordinator in writing (email or memo) when a change of Safety Representatives is made.
- 3.3.6. A complete list of the departments and facilities required to select Safety Representatives is included in Appendix A.
-

4. SAFETY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

4.1. In order to obtain the maximum degree of safety awareness, a continuous education and training program must be administered. The County may conduct Safety Training Sessions in the following areas:

- Defensive Driving
- Emergency Action Response
- Fire Protection
- Exposure Control
- First Aid
- Hearing Conservation
- Accident Prevention
- Ergonomics
- Hazard Communications
- Other Relevant Training

4.2. Training may consist of films, booklets, posters, signs, meetings, and individual contact. Training programs shall be conducted and/or coordinated by the Safety Coordinator in cooperation with the Department Director and the Director of Human Resources. Employees involved in an accident due to personal negligence may be required to attend the County's training, or off-site training at the employee's expense.

5. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT PROGRAM

5.1. OSHA Standard 1910.133 (A)

5.1.1. Protective equipment, including personal protective equipment for eyes, face, head, and extremities, protective clothing, respiratory devices and protective shields and barriers, shall be provided, used and maintained in a sanitary and reliable condition wherever it is necessary by reason of hazards or processes or environment, chemical hazards, radiological hazards, or mechanical irritants encountered in a manner capable of causing injury or impairment in the functions of any part of the body through absorption, inhalation or physical contact.

5.2. General Policy Statement

5.2.1. Gaston County, in compliance with State and Federal guidelines concerning personal protective equipment and for the protection of its employees, shall develop a PPE program, which shall operate under the guidelines contained herein.

5.3. Personal Protective Equipment Program Guidelines

5.3.1. This program shall apply to those employees exposed to hazards while on or off County property while engaged in County business within the scope of their prescribed duties.

5.3.2. The PPE program shall consist of the following elements:

- Educational program
 - Handouts, posters, etc. explaining the need and benefit of the PPE program
 - Educational training sessions for management, supervisors, and employees
 - Training in the proper use and care of issued PPE
- General Inspection Surveys
 - Compile data to develop engineering and administrative controls
 - Satisfy specific State and Federal requirements
 - Inspection surveys will be made by the Safety Coordinator

5.3.3. Engineering and Administrative Controls

- Engineering controls are any modifications to machinery guards, etc., in a work area or to the work area itself in order to eliminate hazards in a particular work area
- Administrative controls are those decisions by management which eliminate the hazard of a certain work area, such as purchase procedures, re-routing, etc

5.3.4. Personal Protective Equipment

- When engineering or administrative controls are not feasible, then PPE should be utilized.
- Before issuing PPE of any kind, employees should be instructed on the proper use and care of equipment.

- The supervisor of each employee shall be responsible for issuing and enforcing the wearing of PPE.
- Employees who fail to utilize PPE issued by the County in situations requiring such equipment shall receive disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- This policy includes machine guards, lockouts, safety switches, PPE, and seat belts in any vehicle being used for County business.

5.3.5. Documentation

- Records shall be maintained by the Safety Coordinator of County premises which require the use of engineering or administrative controls or PPE.
 - Records shall be maintained by the appropriate department of PPE issued to employees.
-

6. COUNTY MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVER DISQUALIFICATION RULES

6.1. Applicability

6.1.1. This policy applies to operators of County-owned motor vehicles and to employees who operate private motor vehicles to carry out County business. For purposes of this policy, references to County or County-owned vehicles apply to private vehicles used for County business.

6.2. Driver Responsibilities

6.2.1. County employees who drive a County vehicle are required to report convictions of moving violations to their supervisors, who will inform the Safety Coordinator. This report is required whether or not the offense occurred on personal or County time. Further, any suspension, revocation, cancellation of an operator's permit, or loss of qualification on an operator's permit must be reported to the appropriate supervisor and the Safety Coordinator. The report must be made in writing by the close of business (COB) on the day the conviction or loss of privilege occurs. The supervisor will forward these reports to the Safety Coordinator by COB on the following workday.

6.2.2. Under no circumstances will County vehicles be operated by anyone whose license is currently suspended, revoked, or cancelled. Nor will County vehicles be operated by anyone whose driving ability is impaired by any substance—legal or illegal. If an employee's license has been degraded as a result of legal or administrative action (i.e. loss of night driving privileges or loss of an endorsement on a commercial driver's license) the employee will report the change to their supervisor as outlined above. The Safety Coordinator and the employee's Department Director will recommend to the Director of Human resources whether an individual may continue to drive on County business.

6.2.3. As part of pre-employment screening, applicants for positions that routinely require operation of a motor vehicle will have their Motor Vehicle Records (MVR) reviewed prior to hiring. Excessive traffic violations may disqualify the prospective employee. Excessive violations may result in loss of driving privileges. Section 7.4 applies.

6.2.4. Safety equipment will be in good operating condition and will be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instruction and County policy.

6.3. Gaston County Vehicle Use Policy³

6.3.1. General Regulations

- All employees driving a County vehicle or private vehicle on County business shall drive in a courteous manner and remain knowledgeable of and comply with all Federal, State, and County motor vehicle laws and regulations.
- No employee shall operate a county vehicle or personal vehicle on County business while impaired.

³ Gaston County Personnel Policy, 16, page 53, July 1, 2010.

- Vehicles shall not be left unattended while the engine is running with the exception of public safety vehicles.
- No alcoholic beverages may be carried in County vehicles at any time except where law enforcement agencies may be required to transport evidence in criminal investigations.
- Smoking is not permitted in County vehicles.
- Firearms are not allowed in County vehicles unless required in the performance of job duties.
- Any employee whose job duties involve the operation of a vehicle has the responsibility to maintain a valid NC driver's license (or CDL if required) and is required to notify their supervisor if that driver's license is suspended or revoked.
- Personal trailers, including boats and recreational vehicles are not to be pulled with County Vehicles.
- Personal vehicles shall not be used to tow County-owned trailers.

6.3.2. Personal Use

- NCGS 14-247, "It shall be unlawful for any officer, agent, or employee of the State of North Carolina, or of any county or of any institution or agency of the State, to use for any private purpose whatsoever any motor vehicle of any type or description whatsoever belonging to the State, or to any county, or to any institution or agency of the State."

6.3.3. Commercial Driver's License (CDL)

- Employees who are required to obtain a CDL as part of their job will be allowed the opportunity to test for the CDL twice. Employees who are unable to obtain the CDL on their second test shall be considered unable to perform their essential job duties and shall be subject to discharge. Such persons will be eligible for re-hire for subsequent job openings only after they have obtained a CDL

7. MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

- 7.1.** All accidents involving a County vehicle must be reported to the employee's supervisor as soon as practicable. In no case should the notification be delayed more than 2 hours unless injury or other extenuating circumstances preclude notification. Drug/alcohol testing will be in accordance with Policy 14 of the Gaston County Personnel Policy Manual.
- 7.2.** Accidents involving a County vehicle that result in damage to private property or accidents occurring in public roads shall be investigated by a law enforcement officer. In the case of Sheriff's Office vehicles, accidents will be investigated by the NC Highway Patrol no matter where they occur.
- 7.3.** Verbal reports on the accident will be made to the County Attorney as soon as possible after the accident during normal working hours. The Department Director will submit a detailed report, including the accident report, to the County Attorney within 48 hours of the accident.
- 7.4.** If there is an injury during normal work hours, Supervisors will notify the Employee Wellness/Workers Compensation Coordinator as soon as possible. If the injury occurs during after hours, Supervisors are to notify the on-call nurse.
- 7.5.** If there is a death, Supervisors will notify the Employee Wellness/Workers Compensation Coordinator immediately, regardless of when the death occurs.
- 7.6.** Employees who are involved in an at-fault accident are subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- 7.7.** Driver Refresher Training
 - 7.7.1.** County employees involved in a preventable motor vehicle accident, while operating a County vehicle, may be required to take a driver refresher course. The course will be scheduled by the department (in coordination with the Safety Coordinator) and conducted as necessary. Failure to satisfactorily complete the course may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
 - 7.7.2.** If an employee continually demonstrates poor driving habits, the Department Director will counsel the employee and recommend a course of action in order to correct the problem. The plan of action should be submitted to the Director of Human Resources. If the employee does not adhere to the director's recommendation, the appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken up to and including dismissal.

8. POST-ACCIDENT DRUG TESTING

- 8.1.** In the event of an auto accident while an employee is on County business that involves damage to a vehicle (county, personal, or other person's car) of over two thousand dollars (\$2,000) employees will be required to immediately undergo a drug and/or alcohol test, unless the accident investigation clearly indicates that the accident was a result of unavoidable circumstances (e.g. deer runs in front of vehicle, boulder rolls off hill, etc.). In the event of an auto accident involving bodily injury (requiring medical treatment other than first aid), employees will be required to undergo a drug and/or alcohol test. Notwithstanding the monetary thresholds depicted herein, one can be involved in an accident and must take a drug test if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the individual might be impaired.⁴
- 8.2.** The supervisor shall call the Employee Wellness/Workers Compensation Coordinator to notify of the accident. During normal work hours (8am to 4pm), the employee will report to Human Resources and receive the appropriate paperwork. The employee will then proceed to Caromont Occupational Medicine. If drug testing is required during after hours, the employee will report to Gaston Memorial Hospital. Supervisors must accompany employees for all post-accident drug testing.
- 8.3.** If an employee who is required by the County to be tested refuses to consent to such test or submits an adulterated or fraudulent sample, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, including discharge.⁵
-

⁴ Gaston County Personnel Policy Manual, Policy 14.5, July 1, 2011.

⁵ Gaston County Personnel Policy Manual, Policy 14.8, July 1, 2011.

9. EMERGENCY ACTION RESPONSE PLAN

9.1. Purpose

9.1.1. Gaston County has instituted an Emergency Action Response Plan (EARP) process to insure employee safety from fire and other emergencies. The purpose of the EARP is to outline actions and procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency. Example of emergencies are:

- Fire
- Bomb threat
- Threats from other employees, relatives, or clients.⁶
- Natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, or severe weather

9.2. Responsibilities

9.2.1. Department Directors

- A specific emergency plan for each building or facility must be prepared under the direction of the Department Director (or designee) with assistance from the Safety Coordinator. (See Appendix G of this policy for a sample EARP.)

9.2.2. Supervisors

- Ensure that those under their supervision are familiar with the plan for the building, particularly the recommended exit routes and how to report an emergency.
- Render assistance to the person in charge during an emergency, as required.
- Maintain familiarity with the shutdown procedures, if applicable, for all equipment used by those under their supervision.
- Know the location and use of all safety equipment on their floor or area of responsibility. (Only for employees trained on the equipment.)
- Keep employees from reentering an evacuated area until reentry is deemed safe and is permitted by appropriate emergency personnel.

9.2.3. Employees

- All employees must be familiar with the EARP pertaining to their work center.
- Employees not involved in the emergency must stay away from the scene and follow the instructions of authorized safety personnel.
- Employees must not reenter an area that they have evacuated until notified that it is safe to return.

9.2.4. Safety Representatives

- A primary and alternate safety representative must be appointed for each department and/or facility listed in Appendix C of this Policy.

⁶ Gaston County Personnel Policy Manual, Policy 19.3 and 19.4, July 1, 2011.

- The safety representatives have specific responsibilities, under the guidance of their department director, for the preparation, updating, and implantation of the EARP for their area of responsibility.
- All EARPs relating to building evacuation must include:
 - A minimum evacuation distance of 500 feet from the building.
 - Designated employee recovery points with aerial view of location(s).
- Ensures that all personnel assigned are trained and familiar with the applicable EARP.
- Performs a facility sweep to ensure all employees have exited.
- Performs an employee accountability check at the appointed employee recovery point(s). (See 9.3 below.)
- See Policy 3.3 of this Manual for more details.

9.3. Employee Accountability

- 9.3.1. Each safety representative will conduct head-counts once evacuation has been completed. If any employee is missing, this should be immediately reported to the on-scene lead authority or emergency rescue personnel. Any reentry for search and rescue purposes should be handled only by trained and properly equipped outside emergency personnel.
 - 9.3.2. Appropriate personnel are to be advised of any employees with disabilities who may require assistance. All personnel are also advised of hazardous areas to avoid in the event of an emergency. Hazardous areas would normally include any operations where flammable paints, solvents, or fuels are utilized or stored.
 - 9.3.3. No personnel are to reenter a facility until the all-clear notice is given by the on-scene lead authority or emergency rescue personnel.
-

10. FIRE SAFETY PLAN

10.1. Purpose

10.1.1. Policy and planning for fire safety at Gaston County Government takes into account the special fire hazards for specific operating areas, the protection of high-value property, and the safety of employees.

- Fire safety includes keeping work and storage areas clean, with papers, files, and other combustible materials picked up and stored properly. Hallways must be kept clear of furniture, equipment and/or other items that could impede egress during an emergency.

10.2. Fire Responsibilities

10.2.1. Each department and/or facility must maintain a current Fire Plan. This plan can be included as part of the EARP. Department directors are responsible for keeping their departments safe from fire.

10.2.2. The department director, who best knows the day-to-day nature of their operations, is responsible for notifying the Safety Coordinator of operations that change the degree of fire risk and will therefore require a change in the planned fire protection provisions.

10.2.3. Department Directors, with assistance from the Safety Coordinator, must ensure that their personnel are properly instructed regarding potential fire hazards involved in their work and around their workplaces, the proper precautions to minimize fires, and the procedures in case of fire.

10.2.4. Employees must conduct their operations in such a way as to minimize the possibility of fire. This means applying rules such as keeping combustibles separated from ignition sources, being careful about smoking, and avoiding needless accumulations of combustible materials.

10.2.5. Employees must immediately report fires and/or smoke to the Fire Department (call 911). Potential fire hazards should be reported to your supervisor or the Safety Coordinator.

10.2.6. Department directors or immediate area supervisors shall appoint an employee to conduct monthly inspections of all fire extinguishers in their area or responsibility (OSHA Regulation 29 CFR 1910.157(e)(2)). The employee shall use the checklist listed in 10.5.1.

10.3. Electrical Fires

10.3.1. Electrical fires may occur in wiring, electrical switches, motors, electric distribution panels, transformers, HVAC equipment, light fixtures, office equipment, and numerous other devices that are electrically powered. When an electrical fire occurs, de-energize the circuit. By cutting the power to the circuit, the cause of the fire is stopped. Never use water on an electrical fire because of the danger of electrocution. If you do try to put out an electrical fire, always use an extinguisher that is approved for electrical fires. Check the label on the extinguisher to confirm that it is approved for use on electrical fires before you use it.

10.4. Portable Heaters, Fans, and Coffee Makers

10.4.1. Portable space heaters represent a potential fire hazard and are **not** authorized for use inside Gaston County Government buildings.

10.4.2. Portable fans are permitted in the workplace. If used, they must adhere to the following guidelines:

- The fan must be UL approved. Equipment shall be used or installed in accordance with instructions in the list or label (can't use if labeled "household use").
- The fan must be constructed of plastic—including the clip if the item is so equipped. No metal parts, other than those used in the motor, are permitted.
- The fan may not be plugged into an extension cord, but may be plugged into an approved power strip with circuit breaker. Extension cords may not be used in place of permanent wiring.
- Fans must be unplugged at the end of the work day.

10.4.3. The following practices should be carried out when operating personal coffee makers:

- Do not place the appliance on unstable or readily combustible materials
- Maintain a clearance of at least 12 inches between the appliance and combustible materials
- Ensure that the appliance is approved by either Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., or Factory Mutual Research Corporation
- Connect the appliance directly to the proper electrical outlet using only the cord with which it was originally equipped. Do not use extension cords in lieu of permanent wiring. Never use adaptors or alter the plug, if it has 3 prongs, for use in a 2-prong receptacle.

10.5. Fire Extinguisher Inspection Checklist

10.5.1. The following checklist will be used by an assigned employee during the monthly inspection of all fire extinguishers with the area of responsibility:

- Confirm the extinguisher is visible, unobstructed, and in its designated location.
- Verify the locking pin is intact and the tamper seal is unbroken. Examine the extinguisher for obvious physical damage, corrosion, leakage, or clogged nozzle.
- Confirm the pressure gauge or indicator is in the operable range or position, and lift the extinguisher to ensure it is still full.
- Make sure the operating instructions on the nameplate are legible and facing outward.
- Check the last professional service date on the tag. (A licensed fire extinguisher maintenance contractor must have inspected the extinguisher within the past 12 months.)
- Initial and date the back of the tag.

11. HAZARD COMMUNICATION PLAN

11.1. Purpose

- 11.1.1. A Hazard Communication Plan (HCP) ensures that the hazards of all produced or incorporated chemicals are evaluated and the information concerning these hazards is transmitted to both employers and employees.
- 11.1.2. The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) mandates the evaluation of hazardous chemicals present in a workplace and requires training of employees regarding the hazardous chemicals and related prevention and protective measures for routine and non-routine tasks. (See Appendix F of this policy for a sample HCP.)

11.2. Safety Coordinator Responsibilities

- 11.2.1. Regarding the HCP program, the responsibilities of the County Safety Coordinator include:
 - Assisting individual department safety representatives in identifying hazardous chemicals in the workplace.
 - Providing HCP template to each department required to have a plan. (See Appendix F of this Policy Manual for the template.)
 - Maintaining copies of all HCPs.

11.3. Department Responsibilities

- 11.3.1. Department managers have the overall responsibility to provide and enforce the HCP. They will:
 - Appoint a member of their organization as the coordinator for their HCP.
 - Identify and inventory all hazardous chemicals and list on a Hazardous Chemical List (HCL)
 - Acquire Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for each hazardous chemical listed on the HCL.
 - Labeling of all hazardous chemicals with chemical name, hazards and warnings and the manufacturer's or importer's name and address, with reference to the appropriate MSDS.
 - Training of all employees about the hazardous chemicals in the workplace and of the Hazard Communication Plan.
- 11.3.2. Prior to an assignment, each employee who works with or is potentially exposed to hazardous chemicals will receive training on the Hazard Communication Standard and the specific use of applicable hazardous chemicals by qualified personnel. Prior to the introduction of a new hazardous material or updated hazard, each employee will be trained concerning specific use or handling procedures. Training will emphasize the following elements:
 - A summary of the Hazard Communication Standard and Hazard Communication Plan.

- Hazardous chemical properties, including visual appearance and odor and methods that can be used to detect the presence or release of hazardous chemicals.
- Physical and health hazards of the chemicals in the work area (including signs and symptoms of exposure) and any medical conditions known to be aggravated by exposure to the chemical.
- Procedures to protect against hazards, including:
 - Personal protective equipment required.
 - Proper use and maintenance.
 - Work practices or methods to assure proper use and handling of chemicals.
 - Emergency response procedures.
- Work procedures to follow to assure protection when cleaning hazardous chemicals and leaks.
- Location of MSDS, interpretation of their contents and labeling information, as well as instructions for employees in how to obtain and use appropriate hazard information.
- Explanation of the labeling system and instructions for preparing secondary container labels.

11.3.3. Training Documentation

- Employee training will be documented and monitored for use in identifying training needs.
- Retraining is required when a chemical hazard changes or when a new hazard is introduced into the workplace. It will also be company policy to include hazard communications into regularly scheduled staff meeting agendas.
- The training program will be assessed by obtaining input from employees regarding training they have received and their suggestions for improvement.

APPENDIX A
DEPARTMENTS AND FACILITIES REQUIRING SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES

<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>FACILITY</u>
ACCESS	Citizens Resource Center
Animal Control	Visitors Center
Art & History	GEMS Bldg
County Police	Court House
Elections	Admin Building 3rd Floor
Health	Admin Building 2nd Floor
Library	Admin Building 1st Floor
Public Works	Admin Building Basement
Sheriff & Jail Annex	
DSS	



APPENDIX B
GASTON COUNTY SAFETY COUNCIL MEMBERS
(as of March 1, 2011)

DEPARTMENT		SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE	PHONE
County Police	Primary	Mark Stewart	
	Alternate	Suzanne Mauney-Smith	
GEMS	Primary	Jeff Hicks	(704) 866-3214
	Alternate	Steve Skipper	(704) 866-3218
Sheriff's Office	Primary	Capt. Scott Phillips	(704) 862-7697
	Alternate	Capt. Wes Golden	(704) 869-6835
DSS	Primary	Cynthia Carr	(704) 862-7893
	Alternate	Karen Calhoun (temporary)	(704) 862-7884
Health	Primary	Ronnie Whisnant	(704) 853-5223
	Alternate	Preston Long	(704) 853-5223
Library	Primary	Carol McDonald	(704) 868-2164
	Alternate	Laurel Hicks	(704) 868-2167
Public Works	Primary	Dan Ziehm	(704) 862-6795
	Alternate	Steve Wilkins	(704) 862-7356
Safety Coordinator		Chuck Starr	(704) 866-3157
Wellness/Workers Comp Coordinator.		Jamie Tyler	(704) 866-3166

**APPENDIX C
GASTON COUNTY DEPARTMENT SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES
(as of March 1, 2011)**

DEPARTMENT		SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE	PHONE
ACCESS	Primary	Margaret Taylor	(704) 866-3207
	Alternate	Melvin Burris	(704) 866-3206
Animal Control	Primary	Steve Rector	(704) 922-8677
	Alternate	Bobby Maxwell	(704) 922-8677
Art & History	Primary	Jeff Pruett	(704) 922-7681
	Alternate	Stephanie Haiar	(704) 922-7681
County Police	Primary	Mark Stewart	
	Alternate	Suzanne Mauney-Smith	
Telecommunications	Primary	Chris Gay	
	Alternate		
<u>CITIZENS RESOURCE CENTER</u>	Primary	Cathy Hart	(704) 922-2162
Cooperative Ext. Service	Alternate	David Fogarty	(704) 922-2130
Natural Resources			
Recreation & Grounds			
Senior Center			
<u>VISITORS CENTER</u>	Primary	Marc Bolick	(704) 825-4046
Economic Development	Alternate	Debbie Peritz	(704) 825-4044
Travel & Tourism			
Elections	Primary	Mary Jane Garver	(704) 852-6007
	Alternate	Kinyata Adams	(704) 852-6006
<u>GEMS Bldg</u>	Primary	Jeff Hicks	(704) 866-3214
Emergency Management	Alternate	Steve Skipper	(704) 866-3218
Fire Marshal			
GEMS			
Health	Primary	Ronnie Whisnant	(704) 853-5223
	Alternate	Preston Long	(704) 853-5223

Gaston County Safety Policy

DEPARTMENT		SAFETY REPRESENTATIVE	PHONE
Library	Primary	Carol McDonald	(704) 868-2164
	Alternate	Laurel Hicks	(704) 868-2167
<u>COURT HOUSE</u>	Primary	Todd Ward	(704) 869-7337
Public Information/ROD	Alternate	Karen Smith	(704) 862-7686
Public Works	Primary	Dan Ziehm	(704) 862-6795
	Alternate	Steve Wilkins	(704) 862-7356
Fleet Management	Primary	Steve Ertzberger	(704) 868-2149
	Alternate	Sam Kaylor	(704) 868-2149
Solid Waste	Primary		
	Alternate		
Sheriff & Jail Annex	Primary	Capt. Scott Phillips	(704) 862-7697
	Alternate	Capt. Wes Golden	(704) 869-6835
Social Services (DSS)	Primary	Cynthia Carr	(704) 862-7893
	Alternate	Karen Calhoun (temporary)	(704) 862-7884
<u>ADMIN BUILDING 3rd FLOOR</u>	Primary	Eric Johnson	(704) 866-3101
Board of Commissioners	Alternate	Bryant Morehead	(704) 866-3038
Budget & Purchasing			
County Attorney			
County Manager			
Human Resources			
<u>ADMIN BUILDING 2nd FLOOR</u>	Primary	Ron Smith (Planning)	(704) 866-3072
Finance	Alternate	Steve Baucom (Tax)	(704) 866-5844
Planning			
Tax			
<u>ADMIN BUILDING 1st FLOOR</u>	Primary	Brian Sciba (Bldg Insp)	(704) 866-3970
Building Inspections	Alternate	Debbie Yoder (Tax)	(704) 866-4839
Tax			
<u>ADMIN BUILDING BASEMENT</u>	Primary	Brandon Jackson	(704) 866-3117
Information Technology	Alternate	Joe Will	(704) 866-3114
Print Shop			

APPENDIX D
WORKPLACE SAFETY AND SECURITY
(Gaston County Personnel Policy 19: Workplace Violence)

19 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Gaston County is committed to providing a workplace that is safe, secure and free of harassment, threats, intimidation and violence for all employees. To ensure a safe workplace and to reduce the risk of violence, all employees should review and understand the provisions of this Workplace Violence Policy. Consistent with this Policy, threats or acts of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment, and/or coercion which involve or affects employees on county property or during work will not be tolerated.

19.1 Definitions

19.1.1 Threat or Threatening

The expression of intent to cause physical or mental harm that is sufficiently severe, offensive, or intimidating to alter the conditions of employment, or to create a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment for anyone within the workplace. Intent to carry out the threat or the ability to carry out such threat is irrelevant.

19.1.2 Workplace

Any location where an employee performs any work-related duty. This includes, but is not limited to, the buildings and surrounding perimeters, including parking lots, field locations, alternative work locations, and travel to and from work assignments.

19.1.3 Workplace Violence

Includes, but is not limited to, intimidation, bullying, stalking, threats, physical attack or property damage and includes acts of violence committed by any individual against any other individual or group within the workplace.

19.2 Prohibited Conduct

The following list of behaviors, while not all inclusive, is intended to provide examples of prohibited conduct:

- aggressive or hostile behavior that creates an objective reasonable fear of injury to another person or subjects another individual to emotional distress;
- intentionally damaging County property or property of another employee;
- threatening to harm an individual or his or her family, friends, associates or their property (assault);
- hitting or shoving an individual (battery);
- making harassing or threatening telephone calls or electronic communications;
- intimidating or attempting to coerce an employee to engage in wrongful or illegal acts;
- stalking another individual

As described in this policy, such behavior is inappropriate and will not be tolerated by Gaston County and is subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

19.3 Reporting

While Gaston County employees are not expected to be skilled at identifying potentially dangerous persons, employees are expected to exercise good judgment and to inform the Human Resources Director or a supervisor up the employee's chain of command if any individual within the workplace exhibits signs of potentially dangerous or violent behavior. If the incident is in a building which is patrolled by a law enforcement officer, the law enforcement officer should be advised of the potential problem.

19.4 Imminent Harm

If there is fear of imminent bodily harm, all affected employees should attempt to enter a lockable room and contact a law enforcement officer.

APPENDIX E SAFETY INSPECTIONS

In some cases inspectors from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) may conduct inspections of Gaston County facilities/work centers. Rarely will these inspectors call in advance of their arrival for the inspections. Additionally, other safety personnel (as authorized by senior Gaston County management) may conduct mock-OSHA inspections. The following steps are a guide for ALL departments to follow in the event OSHA—or any other inspector—arrives at your location.

1. Confirm the visit is to inspect the SAMPLE facility.
2. If the OSHA inspector is there to visit you, **DO NOT REFUSE THEM ACCESS.**
3. Confirm Credentials (If they are not offered, ask to see them. All compliance officers carry US Department of Labor picture IDs.)
4. Notify them that you need to inform the Department Manager and/or appropriate management representative and Safety Coordinator. (Have them take a seat in the waiting area.)
 - a. Safety Coordinator's phone number is 704-866-3157.
 - b. Safety Coordinator will accompany the inspector and County management representative on the inspection.
5. Remember, anything you say is on the record so be accurate and tell the truth.
6. Limit personnel in the area to those who need to be there.
7. In the opening conference the Compliance Officer will inform the County Representatives of the nature of the inspection.
8. Definitions to be aware of:
 - **Imminent Danger** is a top priority and they will specifically look at the perceived threat.
 - **Catastrophes and Fatal Accident** (investigation of an incident causing 3 hospitalizations or 1 fatality).
 - **Employee Complaint** is generated by a specific complaint by an employee. The specific complaint will be investigated and that may be the limit of the visit. The employee may or may not be identified.
 - **Programmed Inspection** is a planned inspection and will be general in nature. A random inspection can take a similar format. This will usually be a general procedure and worksite inspection.
 - **Follow-up Inspection.** It is a check of previously cited violations to see if they were corrected.
9. Be polite and willing to show the Compliance Officer only what is asked for.
 - a. They will be specific in their request, be specific in your response.
 - b. If they ask to see a program, give them the program, not the book unless it is requested.
10. Prior to entering the production area:
 - a. Provide OSHA Compliance Officer with the Visitor Safety Brief.
 - b. Make sure you have a pad of paper and pen to take notes.
 - c. Issue the Compliance Officer a hardhat, hearing protection and safety glasses if required.
11. During the inspection:
 - a. Arrange for all personnel requested, to be readily available to the officer.
 - b. If a delay is necessary due to scheduling or distance, notify the appropriate management representative and they will make any necessary arrangements to comply with the officer(s) request.
 - c. If OSHA notes a problem, you write it down also.
 - d. If OSHA takes a picture, you take one from the same place.

- e. If OSHA asks a question you cannot answer find someone who can answer it correctly.
 - f. Fix any problems noted immediately. Maintenance should accompany tour.
 - g. Only demonstrate what you are asked to demonstrate.
 - h. Remember, anything you say is on the record so be accurate and tell the truth
12. Take good notes at the closing conference and inform County senior management immediately upon completion of the inspection.

**APPENDIX F
HAZARD COMMUNICATION PLAN TEMPLATE**

Hazard Communication Plan

Overview

The purpose of CFR, Title 29, Part 1910.1200, Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) is to ensure that the hazards of all produced or incorporated chemicals are evaluated and the information concerning these hazards is transmitted to both employers and employees.

The standard mandates the evaluation of hazardous chemicals present in a workplace and requires training of employees regarding the hazardous chemicals and related prevention and protective measures for routine and non-routine tasks.

The Hazard Communication Plan

- The Hazard Communication Plan (HCP) consists of four major components:
 1. Identification and inventory of all hazardous chemicals and listing on a Hazardous Chemical List (HCL).
 2. Acquisition of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for each hazardous chemical listed on the HCL.
 3. Labeling of all hazardous chemicals with chemical name, hazards and warnings and the manufacturer's or importer's name and address, with reference to the appropriate Material Safety Data Sheet.
 4. Training of all employees about the hazardous chemicals in the workplace and of the Hazard Communication Plan.
- The _____ (*person in charge*) is the coordinator for the Hazard Communication Plan.
- Copies of the Hazard Communication Standard and the Hazard Communication Plan will be maintained and available upon request.

Hazardous Chemicals List

- The _____ (*department*) will have responsibility for identifying and inventorying all hazardous chemicals.
- A current master list will be maintained at all times. New chemicals will be added as they are received and chemicals no longer inventories will be removed from the list as they are discarded. A formal inventory and updating of the list will be done annually.
- Each hazardous chemical must be cross-referenced to an appropriate Material Safety Data Sheet.
- The master HCL will be maintained in the _____ (*department name*). Partial lists may be maintained in the various departments where hazardous chemicals are used.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)

- The Hazard Communication Standard requires that MSDSs be available to all employees for each hazardous chemical identified and used. If the employer receives a chemical container labeled as a hazard, an MSDS is required.

- The _____ (*department name*) will be responsible for acquiring and maintaining updated versions of all MSDSs.
 - The MSDS will be written in English and will consist of all information listed on OSHA Form 174, including the specific chemical identity and common names.
 - All new procurements of hazardous chemicals should be evaluated and, whenever possible, the least hazardous substance will be purchased.
 - Training of all employees regarding any new or updated MSDS will be documented.
 - Purchase orders for hazardous chemicals should include a request for a current MSDS.
 - Hazardous chemicals should not be incorporated into any work process until an MSDS has been received and reviewed by employees exposed to the chemical.
- Accessibility of Material Safety Data Sheets.
 - A current MSDS library will be maintained in _____ (*department name*) for all hazardous chemicals identified and listed on the HCL.
 - The MSDSs will be readily available to all employees during each work shift.
 - If a new MSDS contains changes or new information, the old MSDS will be replaced with the new one in both the master file and the worksite file. Affected personnel will review updated or modified MSDSs.

Labels and Other Forms of Warning

- Containers of hazardous chemicals will be properly labeled with at least the following information:
 - Identify of the hazardous chemical;
 - Appropriate hazards and warnings (including target organ effect); and
 - Name and address of the manufacturer.
- ***Where the manufacturer's label provides this information, it shall be used in lieu of an in-house label.***
- The appropriate MSDS will be reviewed by _____ (*name or job title*) to verify the warning label.
- Unlabelled containers should not be used.
- Secondary containers used by several employees will be labeled.
 - A semi-permanent label with the following information will be used:
 - Identity of the hazardous chemical;
 - Appropriate hazards and warnings (including target organ effect); and
 - Name and address of the chemical manufacturer.
 - Use the secondary container only for the chemical identified on the label.
 - The secondary container will be emptied and washed as needed. The label will not be removed, but will remain in place for future uses.
- Alternate methods of labeling (signs, placards, batch tickets, process sheets and like written materials) may be used on individual stationary containers in lieu of affixed labels, provided the alternative method identifies the containers to which it applies and conveys the required information and is readily accessible to employees in their work area throughout the shift.

- All primary and secondary containers will be regularly checked and verified that labels have not been defaced or removed and the information contained on them is current.

Training and Communication

- Prior to an assignment, each employee who works with or is potentially exposed to hazardous chemicals will receive training on the Hazard Communication Standard and the specific use of applicable hazardous chemicals.
- Prior to the introduction of a new hazardous material or updated hazard, each employee will be trained concerning specific use or handling procedures.
- Training will emphasize the following elements:
 - A summary of the Hazard Communication Standard and Hazard Communication Plan;
 - Hazardous chemical properties, including visual appearance and odor and methods that can be used to detect the presence or release of hazardous chemicals.
 - Physical and health hazards of the chemicals in the work area (including signs and symptoms of exposure) and any medical conditions known to be aggravated by exposure to the chemical.
 - Procedures to protect against hazards, including:
 - Personal protective equipment required.
 - Proper use and maintenance.
 - Work practices or methods to assure proper use and handling of chemicals.
 - Emergency response procedures.
 - Work procedures to follow to assure protection when cleaning hazardous chemicals and leaks.
 - Location of MSDS, interpretation of their contents and labeling information, as well as instructions for employees in how to obtain and use appropriate hazard information.
 - Explanation of the labeling system and instructions for preparing secondary container labels.
- Employee training will be documented and monitored for use in identifying training needs.
 - Retraining is required when a chemical hazard changes or when a new hazard is introduced into the workplace. It will also be company policy to include hazard communications into regularly scheduled staff meeting agendas.
 - The training program will be assessed by obtaining input from employees regarding training they have received and their suggestions for improvement.

Non-Routine Tasks

- Maintenance or other supervisor contemplating undertaking a non-routine task, e.g., instrument repair and cleaning, will ensure that employees are informed of chemical hazards associated with the performance of these tasks and that appropriate protective measures are taken prior to the beginning of the task.
-

**APPENDIX G
EMERGENCY ACTION RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE**

Emergency Action Response Plan

Overview

These Emergency Action and Fire Prevention Plans are prepared in compliance with Code of Federal Regulation, Title 29, Part 1910.38, which covers those designated actions employers and employees must take to ensure employee safety during medical, fires and other emergencies and steps to take for the prevention of fires within the facility.

_____ (usually the department Safety Representative or Training Officer) is responsible for implementation, training and maintenance of these Plans.

These Plans shall be maintained at the facility and be made available for review by employees.

Elements

- Emergency escape route will be conspicuously posted and emergency exits clearly marked.
 - In the event of an emergency requiring the evacuation of the premises, evacuation instructions will be given via the _____ (means of instructing) by _____ (person making the decision).
- Procedures to account for all employees after emergency evacuation has been completed:
 - In the event of an evacuation, all employees will assemble as soon as practical in the _____ (location). (Attach a copy of the overhead photo of your evacuation locations as supplied by the County Safety Coordinator.)
 - Once all employees have congregated at the meeting place, there will be an accounting of employees, to ensure everyone has been evacuated.
- Preferred means of reporting fires and other emergencies:
 - Employees will be alerted to a fire by the activation of a Fire Alarm located in the facility.
 - In addition, 9-1-1 will be called to notify the Fire Department.
 - Any additional emergency numbers will be posted by each telephone.
- The employer shall advise each employee of his or her responsibility under the plan:
 - Initially when the plan is developed;
 - Whenever the employee's responsibilities or designated actions under the plan change; and
 - Whenever the plan is changed.

- The employer shall review with each employee upon initial assignment those parts of the plan which the employee must know to protect himself or herself in the event of an emergency, including alarm systems.
- The employer shall appoint an employee who will be responsible for conducting monthly fire extinguisher inspections. For (Name of Department or Work Area) that person is (Name of Employee with phone number) .

Fire Emergencies

- All employees shall be familiar with fire evacuation procedures.
- A floor plan identifying escape routes and locations of fire extinguishers will be placed conspicuously.
- _____ (*person's name*) will discuss fire evacuation procedures as frequently as necessary, but at least once per quarter.

If you discover a fire:

- Stay calm and above all do not jeopardize your personal safety.
- Activate the nearest fire alarm and alert employees in the immediate area about the fire.
- Call the fire department at 9-1-1 if applicable.
- Remove anyone in immediate danger.
- Confine the fire by closing windows and doors, as much as possible.

Evacuation due to Fire

- If the fire cannot be immediately contained, evacuate the facility. Consider the possibility of toxic fumes or explosions from burning materials and especially from compressed gas.
- Stay low when moving through smoke.
- When passing through an exit, move quickly away from the exit to avoid creating a bottleneck that slows the escape of others.
- If you are trapped inside a room, keep the doors closed and seal any cracks with wet towels, if possible.
 - Open a window for air and call for help. Do not break the glass unless absolutely necessary (outside smoke could be drawn into the room).
 - Do not panic or jump.
 - Close as many doors between you and the fire as possible.
- Do not reenter the building after you have exited, but proceed directly to the designated assembly area at _____ (*location*). (Attach a copy of the overhead photo of your evacuation locations as supplied by the County Safety Coordinator.)

- Follow the directions of the supervisors present and the emergency personnel at the scene.
- If someone is missing, do not attempt to reenter the building. Notify the firefighters or emergency personnel at the scene, and describe where the person was last seen.

Tornadoes

Tornadoes occur more frequently in the spring and early summer months, although they can occur at any time. Supervisors should pay close attention to weather reports during tornado “season” and be prepared to implement appropriate emergency procedures when notified by local authorities or the sounding of tornado sirens.

If you are inside:

- Proceed to a central hallway of the building, if possible.
- If there is no time, crouch under a desk or table, away from windows or glass dividers.
- Stay away from tall objects, such as file cabinets.

If you are outside:

- Seek cover in low lying depressions away from buildings, trees, telephones and electric lines.

Earthquakes

Although earthquakes do not often occur in many parts of the United States, than *can* occur anywhere. Employees should know the appropriate actions to take.

- Earthquakes strike without warning and may range in intensity from slight tremors to major shocks. They may last only a few seconds or several minutes. After a major earthquake, “aftershocks,” generally less violent, should be anticipated. The great majority of injuries experienced in earthquakes are the result of people being hit by falling objects. Therefore, it is extremely dangerous to rush outside immediately, where considerable falling debris may be encountered.

If you are inside:

- Stand in a doorway, or crouch under a desk or table, away from windows or glass dividers.
- Stay away from tall objects, such as file cabinets.

If you are outside:

- Stand away from buildings, trees, telephones and electric lines.

Hostile Work Environment

Hostile work situations may occur in the office environment. The first priority is to maintain safety of the employees and customers.

- Hostile work environments may occur suddenly or from an escalation of a person's behavior. Be aware of the demeanor of every individual who enters the office.
- Maintain calm while trying to de-escalate the situation. Where possible, keep a non-threatening item between you and the individual (the front counter). Avoid an argument or physical confrontation.
- Contact your supervisor as soon as possible, and request guidance.
- Back away from the situation, ensuring others in surrounding area are informed of the situation.
- Request law enforcement assistance if the situation becomes dangerous or apparent physical danger is present.
- In the case of a bomb threat, call 9-1-1 immediately. Stay on the line until safety personnel have been given the complete information of location, situation, verbal threat, and description of the person (if available).