



INTRODUCTION

Criteria Four of the Green Communities Program states that communities must purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles for municipal use whenever such vehicles are commercially available and practicable. The purpose behind this criterion is to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by municipal vehicles, which has a positive impact on the environment and saves the municipality money.

As background, the US Environmental Protection Agency's Green Vehicle Guide states that:

Vehicles with lower fuel economy create more carbon dioxide - the most prevalent greenhouse gas - than vehicles with higher fuel economy. Every gallon of gasoline your vehicle burns puts about 20 pounds of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere because air has weight and mass, and it takes a lot of it to burn a gallon of gasoline. One of the most important things you can do to reduce your contribution to global warming is to buy a vehicle with higher fuel economy. The difference between 25 miles per gallon and 20 miles per gallon can amount to the prevention of 10 tons of carbon dioxide over a vehicle's lifetime. Buying a more fuel efficient vehicle will also will help to reduce our nation's dependence on fossil fuels. And of course, you will save money by having to fuel up less often.

COMPLIANCE

To meet this criterion, municipalities need to adopt a written, Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy (by local official or body with authority to enact policies) that requires their departments and divisions to purchase only fuel efficient vehicles (**See Appendix A, model policy**). Both general government and school districts are required to enact a fuel efficient vehicle policy for a municipality to meet this requirement, and letters documenting adoption must be provided, signed by the appropriate municipal authorities as noted below. Letters from other municipal officials are not acceptable.

For the letters from the general government and school district:

- **General Government** – The general government must provide a letter from the Chief Executive Officer of the city or town stating that it has adopted the Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy.

The Chief Executive Officer is defined as the manager in any city having a manager and in any town having a city form of government, the Mayor in any other city, and the Board of Selectmen in any other town unless some other officer or body is designated to perform the functions of a Chief Executive Officer under the provisions of a local charter or laws having the force of a charter.

- **Public School Districts** - For a municipality to meet this requirement, its public school district must provide a letter from the School Superintendent stating that it has adopted the Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy. Please note that even if the school only has exempt vehicles, adoption of the Policy by the school must be provided in the event that the school does acquire non-exempt vehicles in the future.
- **Regional School Districts** – Regional School Districts are not required to be part of a municipality's Green Communities designation application. However, for regional school districts that wish to be part of a municipality's Green Communities designation (with approval by the municipality), the regional school district must also adopt the Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy and provide a letter from the Superintendent stating that it has adopted the Policy.

Sample adoption letters are provided in Appendices B and C.

In addition, the municipality is required to develop and maintain a vehicle inventory for all vehicles, both exempt and non-exempt. A plan for replacing non-exempt vehicles with vehicles that meet the fuel efficiency ratings below must also be developed and maintained. This inventory of all vehicles and replacement plan for non-exempt vehicles must include school vehicles. The fuel efficiency ratings are set to ensure that at least 5 or more automatic transmission models of mass production are available for sale in Massachusetts (all from affordable brands; no luxury brands). Based on 2010 EPA data, vehicles are to have a combined city and highway MPG no less than the following:

- 2 wheel drive car: 29 MPG
- 4 wheel drive car: 24 MPG
- 2 wheel drive small pick-up truck: 21 MPG
- 4 wheel drive small pick-up truck: 19 MPG
- 2 wheel drive standard pick-up truck: 17 MPG
- 4 wheel drive standard pick-up truck: 16 MPG
- 2 wheel drive sport utility vehicle: 21 MPG
- 4 wheel drive sport utility vehicle: 18 MPG

Hybrid or electric vehicles in these vehicle classes will meet these criteria

To inform your purchasing decisions, information on makes and models of vehicles including fuel economy comparisons can be found at: <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/>

***NOTE:** The EPA maintains a database on vehicle fuel efficiency that is updated occasionally throughout the year, as new models are released. As increasing numbers of fuel efficient vehicle models are released the

minimum combined MPG requirements of the Green Communities Act will be revised upwards. Thus, cities and towns must check for updates prior to ordering new vehicles.

In order to encourage efficient driving practices municipalities should implement a monitoring system to record miles driven, fuel consumption, etc. for each vehicle in every department. A monitoring system will help facilitate the municipality's reduction in aggregate energy consumption. If a municipality provides fuel for fleet vehicles it should consider using one of the universal fleet cards available on the market today that provide a monitoring system for tracking fuel use.

VEHICLE RECYCLING

Recycling of vehicles is only allowed if the replacement vehicle meets the fuel efficient criteria listed above. Please be advised that a recycled Ford Crown Victoria does not meet the MPG rating and therefore would not meet fuel efficient vehicle requirements. When a town is ready to retire a Crown Victoria police vehicle, fleet disposal companies can provide an attractive option.

EXEMPTIONS

Vehicles that are exempt from municipal Efficient Fleet Policies include heavy-duty vehicles defined as having a manufacturer's gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of more than 8,500 pounds. Examples include fire engines, ambulances, and some public works vehicles. In addition, police cruisers, passenger vans, and cargo vans are exempt from this criterion. However, municipalities must commit to purchasing fuel efficient cruisers, passenger vans, and cargo vans when they become commercially available. Police and fire department administrative vehicles **MUST** meet fuel efficient requirements.

Emergency Response vehicles that are under 8,500 pounds and for which there are fuel efficient models available are **NOT** exempt.

ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE

If a municipality has a vehicle fleet composed of only exempt vehicles (e.g. heavy-duty vehicles and/or police cruisers), it must propose alternative means of reducing vehicle fuel consumption in order to comply with this criterion. This could include having in place policies and programs that reduce vehicle fuel consumption such as: carpooling incentives for municipal employees; preferred parking for employees with hybrid vehicles; bicycle racks at municipal buildings; incentives to encourage employees to bike to work; or a bicycle sharing program for employees to travel within the municipality. Alternative compliance can also be provided through the Installation of electric vehicle charging stations. Use of alternative fuels such as biodiesel blends from B-5 to B-20 for heavy duty fleets are also encouraged as part of an alternative compliance plan.

A municipality must note that should it acquire non-exempt vehicles in the future, it is committed to purchasing non-exempt vehicles that meet the most recent guidance for Criteria 4 published by the MA Department of Energy Resources' Green Communities Division

A vehicle inventory of exempt vehicles must be provided.

APPLICABILITY

All communities seeking Green Communities designation must adopt a fuel efficient vehicle policy that reflects the most recent MPG criteria published in this Guidance. If a municipality has adopted a policy that reflects old mpg criteria it must have done so within the 6 months immediately preceding issuance of revised Guidance in order to qualify for credit under this criterion when it is applying for designation. All designated Green Communities must review their Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy on an annual basis and ensure that it reflects DOER's most recently published MPG minimums. The Annual Reporting required of Green Communities will include this information.

Future Financial Considerations

Contingency language regarding potential future budgetary constraints in Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policies will not be accepted. DOER recognizes that predicting and committing future budgets is difficult and will work with municipalities on a case-by-case basis should they encounter difficulty in complying with their Fuel Efficient Policy due to a budget issue in a particular budget-year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION**Website:**

www.mass.gov/energy/greencommunities

For fleet questions, contact

Stephen Russell, stephen.russell@state.ma.us

APPENDIX A

This model policy was prepared to assist cities and towns in developing a fuel efficient vehicle policy. This model policy is intended for illustration purposes, communities are free to utilize the format provided.

Municipality / School District	
FUEL EFFICIENT VEHICLE POLICY	
Effective Date	
Revisions	
Approval Date	
Effective Date	

DEFINITIONS

Combined city and highway MPG (EPA Combined fuel economy): Combined Fuel Economy means the fuel economy from driving a combination of 43% city and 57% highway miles and is calculated as follows:

$$=1/((0.43/City\ MPG)+(0.57/Highway\ MPG))$$

Drive System: The manner in which mechanical power is directly transmitted from the drive shaft to the wheels. The following codes are used in the drive field:

- AWD = All Wheel Drive: four-wheel drive automatically controlled by the vehicle powertrain system
- 4WD = 4-Wheel Drive: driver selectable four-wheel drive with 2-wheel drive option
- 2WD = 2-Wheel Drive

Heavy-duty vehicle: A vehicle with a manufacturer's gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of more than 8,500 pound

POLICY STATEMENT

In an effort to reduce the (city/town/school district/other local entity)'s fuel consumption and energy costs the (policy making body) hereby adopts a policy to purchase only fuel efficient vehicles to meet this goal.

PURPOSE

To establish a requirement that the (city/town/school district/other local entity) purchase only fuel efficient vehicles for municipal/school use whenever such vehicles are commercially available and practicable.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all divisions and departments of the (city/town/school district/other local entity)

GUIDELINES

All departments / divisions shall purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles for municipal use whenever such vehicles are commercially available and practicable.

The (city/town/school district/other local entity) will maintain an annual vehicle inventory for ALL vehicles and a plan for replacing any non-exempt vehicles with vehicles that meet, at a minimum, the fuel efficiency ratings contained in the most recent guidance for Criteria 4 published by the MA Department of Energy Resources' Green Communities Division.

This Green Communities' Guidance for Criteria 4 must be checked for updates prior to ordering replacement vehicles.

Exemptions

- Heavy-duty vehicles. Examples include fire-trucks, ambulances, and some public works trucks that meet the definition of Heavy-duty vehicle.
- Police cruisers, passenger vans and cargo vans are exempt from this criterion as fuel efficient models are not currently available. However, we commit to purchasing fuel efficient police cruisers, passenger vans and cargo vans when they become commercially available. Police and fire department administrative vehicles are NOT exempt and must meet fuel efficient requirements.

Inventory

The following information shall be included in a vehicle inventory list and said list shall be updated on an annual basis and provided to the Green Communities Division:

Model	Make	Model Year	Drive System: 2 WD, 4WD or AWD	Year/month Purchased	> 8500 pounds? (Y or N)	Exempt or non-exempt	MPG Rating	Vehicle Function

NOTE: Departments/Divisions may use EPA combined MPG estimates or actual combined MPG.

FUEL EFFICIENT VEHICLE REPLACEMENT PLAN

The (city/town/school district/other local entity) shall develop a plan to replace all non-exempt vehicles with fuel efficient vehicles as defined above. Said plan shall outline the process by which the (city/town/school district/other local entity) will replace vehicles, set goals for when the existing fleet will be replaced and review said plan on an annual basis. The Fuel Efficient Vehicle Replacement Plan will be provided as an attachment to this Policy.

QUESTIONS / ENFORCEMENT

All other inquiries should be directed to the department/division responsible for fleet management and/or fleet procurement. This policy is enforced by the Chief Administrative Officer and/or their designee(s)

Appendix B
Sample town adoption letter

Letter must be on Town Letterhead

MA Department of Energy Resources
Green Communities Division
100 Cambridge Street – Suite 1040
Boston, MA 02114

{date of letter}

At a public Board of Selectmen meeting held on [DATE], the Board of Selectmen voted to adopt the attached Fuel Efficiency Vehicle Policy.

Thank you.

Signature and Typed Name of Chair

Appendix C
Sample School Adoption Letter

Letter must be on School letterhead

MA Department of Energy Resources
Green Communities Division
100 Cambridge Street – Suite 1040
Boston, MA 02114

{date of letter}

Please be advised that the Public Schools of [Town] hereby adopted the attached Fuel Efficiency Vehicle Policy.

Thank you.

Signature and Typed Name of Superintendent of Schools