



**ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION NO. 8  
CITY OF BOWLING GREEN**

**ELECTRONIC MAIL (E-MAIL), INTERNET USE,  
WAN (WIDE AREA NETWORK) USE,  
AND OTHER ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

These Administrative Instructions set forth City policy for the use of electronic mail (e-mail), Internet access, and other electronic communications systems provided by the City of Bowling Green. E-mail, Internet access, and other electronic communication systems are provided so that employees can serve the citizens of Bowling Green effectively and efficiently.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

**APPLICABILITY:** The Information Technology (IT) Manager or his designee, shall oversee computer operations within the City organization, and as such, shall promulgate procedures for the acquisition of hardware and software products. Department and division heads shall confer with the Information Technology Manager before any software is installed on City computers. The provisions of this policy apply to all employees of the City of Bowling Green, including full-time, part-time, and temporary personnel. This policy does not apply to Utility Dept. SCADA hardware/software unless the data is carried over the WAN.

**USE OF E-MAIL:** The e-mail system, like all other City property, is to be used to conduct City business. The making and receiving of personal e-mail messages is discouraged, but when necessary, is to be kept to a minimum. Employees may not use City computers and internet access to conduct business for other agencies or companies or for themselves. All electronic communications generated by employees with City equipment or stored on City equipment are the property of the City of Bowling Green and, therefore, are not considered private.

**EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY:** The City imposes certain responsibilities and obligations on employees when using City equipment. The following serves as a guide for employees when using e-mail, the Internet, the WAN, or other electronic communications systems, such as facsimile machines:

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1. Employees are expected to maintain the confidentiality of City information when using the City's electronic communications systems to transmit messages. Employees should protect their individual user ID and passwords from unauthorized use.
2. No software/hardware will be installed on computer systems without prior approval of the Information Technology Manager or his/her designee. No modifications other than cosmetic (i.e. wallpaper, fonts) will be made to computer systems unless approved by the Information Technology Division.
3. Because security of electronic messages cannot be guaranteed, employees should be aware that making a message "confidential" or "private" in an electronic communication system must be done with the expectation that others may have access to all messages, including those marked as "confidential" or "private." Thus, in certain cases, e-mail may not be the proper means of communication.
4. To prevent a computer virus from damaging the City's network, no email attachments will be opened without first verifying the sender either by phone or e-mail. Prior to opening any e-mail attachment, the attachment will be scanned for viruses using the installed anti-virus program. Attachments received from persons with e-mail addresses ending in "@bgohio.org" are automatically filtered for viruses and are therefore exempt from this policy. If a virus or other network intrusion is detected or suspected contact the Information Technology Division immediately.
5. When using the City's computer system, employees are expected to demonstrate the same high standards that apply to other forms of City communication.
6. Employees who receive inappropriate messages from inside or outside the City have a responsibility to bring the messages to the attention of their supervisors.

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7. Messages that are no longer needed should be deleted from the system on a regular basis, but within the requirements established for destroying public records.
8. Although you will be able to send messages to your supervisor from an off-site location, the e-mail message in no way exempts you from the responsibility of contacting your supervisor according to established procedures or collective bargaining agreements

**SECURITY AND PRIVACY:** E-mail is only to be used by authorized persons. If you have not been issued an e-mail password, you may not use the City's e-mail system. Employees are not to use unauthorized codes, passwords, or other means to gain access to e-mail belonging to other employees. Employees shall not disclose their codes or passwords to others. Furthermore, all e-mail is subject to review and/or monitoring by management. Users should have no expectation of privacy with respect to materials and information created or transmitted or stored on these systems. Your use of the City's e-mail system grants consent to the City to review of any of the messages to or from you in the system, in printed form, or in any other medium.

**MONITORING OF ELECTRONIC MAIL AND INTERNET USE:**

Employees should not duplicate or download any software or materials that are copyrighted, patented, or trademarked. The internet should not be used for non-job related streaming media such as TV or radio. The City reserves the right to monitor any internet, WAN or e-mail messages. Electronic messages transmitted or received (whether current or deleted), information used or downloaded from the City's computer systems, the Internet, or other sources, may be subject to review and investigation. The City may override any applicable password, if necessary. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring performance of employees using e-mail or the Internet. Violations of City policies detected through such review and/or monitoring may lead to disciplinary action.

**PDA (Personal Digital Assistants):**

The use of City computers for synchronizing with PDAs will be examined on a case-by-case basis by the Information Technology Division (ITD).

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**BUSINESS RECORDS:** Business related e-mail messages are considered to be business records of the City. Accordingly, they are public information which may be used in administrative, judicial, or other proceedings. Furthermore, their destruction must be done within the parameters established for the destruction of public records. Once a message has been downloaded into a hardcopy format, then the message may be deleted from the computer's hard-drive. Outgoing messages, whether by mail, facsimile, e-mail, Internet transmission, or any other means must be accurate, appropriate, and work related.

Personal e-mail messages are not deemed to be business records and are not considered a public record. Personal e-mails are not subject to the Public Records Law of the State of Ohio.

Employees should not use the City's business address for receiving personal U. S. mail.

Personal use of the City's facsimile machines is permitted as long as the user pays for any billing received by the telephone company for this service.

**HARASSMENT:** Sending or downloading inappropriate, threatening, harassing, pornographic/sexual material, or offensive messages by way of the City's e-mail system, the Internet, or other electronic communications systems is prohibited.

**SOLICITATION:** City e-mail accounts shall not be used to solicit for non-City related business ventures, personal parties, social meetings, union meetings, charities, political causes, religious causes, or other matters not connected to the City's operation.

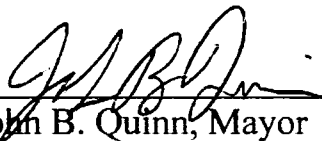
Employees may use City e-mail accounts for solicitation for charitable organizations with prior approval by the Municipal Administrator or his/her designee. Furthermore, such solicitation will be permitted based on whether or not the charitable organization(s) are true health and welfare charities. The City of Bowling Green will not permit the solicitation for organizations whose main purposes are to attempt to influence elections and/or to influence public policy.

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**DISCIPLINE:** Many City policies apply to the use of the electronic mail system and the Internet. For example, City policies, such as those concerning ethics, solicitation, sexual harassment, violence, reporting absences and the like, all apply. Employees who fail to comply with this electronic mail and Internet policy or who violate other City policies through the use of the e-mail system shall be subject to the disciplinary process.

  
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John B. Quinn, Mayor

4-5-05  
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Date