



## Department of Support Services Interoffice Communication

To "Service" the citizen's by "Supporting" all County departments through expert management of the internal operations infrastructure.

December 22, 2010

To: All Richland County Directors and Department Heads

Through: Mr. Tony McDonald, Assistant County Administrator *Tony McDonald*

From: John Hixon, Director, Department of Support Services

Subject: Addition and Replacement of Office Operational Support Equipment

Directors, Elected, and Appointed Officials,

### **Purpose of Policy -**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that each department's needs are best met with regard to the addition and/or replacement of equipment in your area of responsibility. We find ourselves having to increase budget levels each year for utility costs. It is very important that we all be conscientious stewards of our resources and aid in the reduction of utility consumption, associated costs, and the County's carbon footprint. We all are faced with tightening budgets and utility rates have increased every year in the recent past and are projected to continue this trend. Even though you may not be responsible for budgeting many of these costs yourselves, they do have a direct affect on resources available during the budget process and fiscal year operations.

Administration, in coordination with the Facilities and Grounds Division, has worked annually to identify funding to improve our aging infrastructure and reduce the negative impacts of energy consumption. These methods include major replacements of HVAC equipment and controls, updating plumbing fixtures, installing new technologies in all new and remodel construction projects with the highest efficiency equipment available, and utilizing grants to upgrade other major factors such as facility lighting. These methods have been successful in helping offset the continuing utility increases, but are unable offset the addition and use of non-essential standalone equipment.

### **Non-mission Essential Equipment -**

Direct costs can be controlled by the reduction of items that are not essential to the completion of our missions. These include individual appliances such as refrigerators, space heaters, toaster ovens, microwaves, coffeemakers, and other like items. These are not generally approved to be installed in any county facility for several reasons, not just power consumption concerns. Many of these items do not meet OSHA or County safety requirements for use in public facilities. These items are potential safety hazards and are not permitted on County property, especially in areas not designed or designated as break areas. Facilities and Risk Management are currently and will continue inspecting County facilities to identify and address these noncompliant items.

Areas that are presently set up and/or are planned as department facility break areas with appropriate existing refrigerators, microwaves and coffee makers may be deemed exempt from this policy to the extent

that they meet safety and health standards and are County approved as addressed in the Administrators Directive, item #8, dated September 16, 2010. These approved items shall only be replaced through attrition. All replacement equipment, whether appliances or typical office equipment, are to be "Energy Star" rated or like approved rating.

#### **Mission Essential Equipment Addition or Replacement -**

Before a decision can be made with relation to adding or upgrading any equipment, many factors must be considered. Many of our current facilities are at capacity for available main and emergency power. Providing the power, if available, and connections required to operate many of these devices requires extensive work and carries high installation costs as well as possible increased operating expenses.

Due to this issue, any additional equipment desired and/or replacement of major office equipment will need to be approved by the Facilities and Grounds Division for necessary space, clearances, safety considerations, and utility needs. Providing the specifications for the equipment to be reviewed will be the requesting department's responsibility. The requestor will need to demonstrate a positive impact or operating necessity for their specific department before the request will be reviewed. All associated costs will reside with the requesting department. Associated costs would include materials to install any additional power circuits, special outlets, water supply and or drainage, and changes to physical space to accommodate the equipment. These costs are normally multiple times the equipment purchase price and the funds to cover these costs must be transferred to Facilities before installation can begin. For any approved project, Facilities will provide a quote to the department for the actual material cost impact. This does not apply to items that you procure with support from the IT Department such as desktop PCs.

#### **Basic Information to Support this Policy Need -**

It is the perception that replacement equipment will consume less power than the older equipment we are currently using and that new devices can use the existing circuit for the equipment it is replacing. But this assumption is not accurate because we generally replace what we have with something "bigger and better." Due to new technology, dedicated power is normally required, creating the need to run a completely new/additional circuit from a source power distribution area. Even in the case of a "simple" copier replacement, Facilities generally has to create a new dedicated power circuit. When planning and budgeting for office equipment, this fact is generally not known and creates logistic and funding issues for the receiving department as well as the Facilities Division. The physical space must also be available to install the electrical distribution equipment as well as the operational equipment before moving forward.

Informing Facilities of your departments planning and technical information regarding equipment replacement or additions will allow us to better plan, make informed decisions, and provide you with improved customer service. Facilities can easily be contacted through its Maintenance Request e-mail address in your global address book.

Thank for your support as we strive to meet our goal of providing you the best service possible.