COUNTY OF TULARE
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION NO. 30
(Resolution No. 2006-0218)

SUBJECT: COUNTYWIDE VEHICLE ACQUISITION POLICY

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 12, 2006

This regulation has been approved by the Board of Supervisors.

To establish a policy governing the purchase of County vehicles that will increase fuel efficiency, lower emissions, and control costs. It is the intent of this policy to establish vehicle replacement criteria, limit the use of Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs) to work assignments where they are essential, and to encourage the purchase of both Alternative Fuel Vehicles (AFVs) and Hybrid technology (gasoline/electric) vehicles to increase their percentage of the total County vehicle fleet. It is the goal of this policy to realize cost savings through fuel conservation and the purchase of more economical vehicles and to protect the public health by lowering emissions.

BACKGROUND

In the past there has been no written County Administrative regulation concerning vehicle acquisition. It is the intent of this memo to provide a recommendation for such a policy.

Over the last two decades, oil consumption in the United States has increased steadily, rising 36% from 1980 to 2001 with the transportation sector being responsible for all of that increase. All other sectors actually declined by 19% over the past two decades. Legislation passed in 1987 required the manufacturing of more efficient appliances. As a result, household energy use has fallen because of power-efficient appliances, technology-smart homes, and tight new building codes. The average refrigerator uses one-third less power than it did 15 years ago. Alternatively, oil consumption in the transportation sector continues to increase at a staggering rate. A major reason for the large increase is the growing number of sport utility vehicles and other light duty trucks which are less fuel efficient than most cars, but which now account for more that one-half of all new vehicle sales. (Sources: Energy Information Administration, Department of Energy's Transportation Energy Data Book: The New York Times. June 20, 2004.)

As a public agency responsible for both the public health and the expenditure of public funds, we need to make decisions that protect air quality and conserve public funds. In the area of automobiles use, both of these goals can be achieved by purchasing the most fuel efficient, lowest-emission vehicles available. Many fuel-efficient vehicles are available today. In addition, Alternative Fuel Vehicles (AFVs) and Hybrid technology vehicles (gasoline/electric) are also available and gaining popularity. In 2005, AFV and Hybrid vehicles comprise about 6% of the County-owned fleet.

Over the past three years we have seen unleaded fuel prices raise steadily. In budget year 02/03 the average cost per gallon was $1.27 and it increased to $1.58 in 03/04 and $1.91 average per gallon through April of the 04/05 budget year and we anticipate even higher prices for 05/06 based on the current trend. This data was based on the actual County cost not industry averages.

The following policy is consistent with many other counties in the state of California.

<u>POLICY</u>

1. All vehicles purchased for the County of Tulare's fleet will be:

   a) the most fuel efficient and lowest emissions within the vehicle class/type,
   b) commercially available
   c) practical
   d) reasonably cost-competitive for the class/type of vehicle needed for the specific assignments. The acquisition of AFV or Hybrid fleet will be highly encouraged.

   The "most fuel efficient vehicles" are those with a fuel economy rating (combined average city and highway mileage) determined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that is within 10% of the highest rated vehicle meeting the criteria above.

2. If more that one vehicle model meets the criteria above or if fuel economy ratings have not been established for the candidate vehicles based on their Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) rating, preference will be given to the make and model that is certified to be in the most stringent emissions standard category. Currently in 2005, in order of decreasing stringency, these emission categories are: ZEV (Zero Emission Vehicles), AT PZEV (Advanced Technology Partial Zero Emission Vehicles), PZEV (Partial Zero Emission Vehicle), SULEV (Super Ultra Low Emission Vehicle), ULEV (Ultra Low Emission Vehicle), and LEV (Low Emission Vehicle).

3. Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs) will not be purchased unless justified based on a verified work assignment. Justifiable work assignments will include rough terrain/off road travel, passenger/cargo requirements, and/or trailer towing requirements based on a routine basis.

4. The Resource Management Agency will work with departments that operate County vehicles to identify wherever possible opportunities to replace fleet vehicles with lower emissions, more fuel-efficient vehicles.

5. The Resource Management Agency will set a goal to increase Alternative Fuel Vehicles (AFVs) and/or Hybrid vehicles (SULEV emission category) to at least 25% of the current eligible fleet by the 2015. The eligible fleet includes those vehicles with similar functionality to the AFV or Hybrid vehicles. The goal will be predicated on the availability of AFV or Hybrid vehicles and funding available. Due to their special needs, law enforcement vehicles will not be included in this AFV/Hybrid goal.

6. Departments that request other than a standard County vehicle, mid sized or

standard sedan, must provide justification by the Department Head of the requesting department and be approved by the County Administrative Officer.

Exceptions to this policy may be approved on a case-by-case basis, based on the intended use or application, vehicles specifications and/or over-riding cost considerations. Fuel economy and vehicle emissions shall be taken into account when selecting alternative vehicles.

7. The RMA, Transportation Branch will, on an ongoing basis, evaluate the most economical time to replace County vehicles. Factors to be used in evaluating replacement vehicles will include vehicle age, accumulated usage (mileage), condition, maintenance/cost history, and suitability of assignment. The age/mileage criteria to be used in evaluating County vehicles for replacement will be:

   Hybrids (SULEV) – 7 years / 100,000 miles

   Standard Sedan – 8 years / 120,000 miles

   Patrol Sedan – 4 years / 130,000 miles

   Patrol SUV – 5 years / 110,000 miles

   Light Trucks/Vans – 10 years / 120,000 miles
   (½ Ton – 1 Ton)

   Medium/Heavy Trucks – 10 years / 200,000 miles
   (25,000 GVW – 54,000 GVW)

   Construction/Specialty Equipment – To be determined on operational needs.

   Vehicles will continue to accumulate mileage during this yearlong replacement process adding an additional 8,000 to 30,000 miles depending on usage.

8. Additional and replacement vehicles and equipment to be acquired by County departments either through purchase, lease purchase, or donation must be appropriate for the intended use, within the approved budget, safe to operate, and cost efficient both to operate and maintain. The expected annual use of any vehicle should be in excess of 8,000 miles. Otherwise departments should consider having their employees drive their own vehicle per Administrative Resolution 95-0205 or renting a vehicle from Fleet Services. Replacement priority will be given to vehicles and/or equipment that are determined by the Resource Management Agency Equipment Superintendent to be unsafe, in the poorest condition, uneconomical to operate or maintain, or have the highest program need.

<u>Review Date</u>

This policy will be reviewed for continuance bi-annually.