

## Response to Questions on the FY 2013 Budget

**Request By:** Supervisor Cook

**Question:** How many take home vehicles are used by the Fire and Rescue Department? How many nights per year is each vehicle used for a reimbursable expense? What would be the cost savings, if any, if some or all of these vehicles were removed and replaced with a policy to pay mileage, at the federal rate, for reimbursable use of a personal vehicle?

**Response:** Twenty-nine vehicles are authorized for take home usage. Department records indicate these vehicles were used in excess of 900 evenings for reimbursable activities over a twelve month period.

The Fire and Rescue Department (FRD) tracks the number of occurrences take home vehicles are utilized for after-hours meetings, events and emergency responses, but associated mileage is not recorded. Therefore providing a dollar figure to quantify the savings, if the department removed the vehicles and reimbursed for miles traveled, is impossible to estimate given data limitations. Furthermore, the usage during regular business hours for work related meetings that qualify as a reimbursable activity is not tracked.

All twenty-nine take home vehicles are used in accordance with County policies and directly support the department's mission. Take home vehicles have been authorized for personnel who have emergency call-out supervisory responsibilities. Individuals with take home vehicles are required to monitor the radio while operating a take-home vehicle and carry equipment in order to take necessary action if required. This includes providing assistance to disabled motorists, assisting on high-priority calls, or when otherwise necessary or prudent to act even when off-duty. These personnel are on-call twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week, unless on scheduled leave.

Take-home vehicles are necessary to maintain an operational level of staff, ensuring senior and critical staff is available to respond to emergency fire and rescue incidents on a twenty-four hour basis.