

Truck and Transportation Procedures with the Horticultural Research Center
Effective 3/15/04

Historically there has been a truck pool at the HRC which has serviced the needs of the Plant and Soil Department and to a lesser extent the Animal Science Department in the last few years. Originally there was no charge for the use of vehicles. In the past ten or so years we have had a charge system in place which had a per mile fee with no per diem minimum. As a result, an individual could sign out a vehicle, drive to campus for the day and only accumulate a charge of around two dollars. Our charge system was very affordable for researchers, due to being subsidized by the general HRC budget. As time marched on our fleet has aged and mileage charges haven't come close to being able to replace vehicles in a systematic order. We are in the same position the general University Transportation System was in two years ago when it disbanded its vehicle pool—we are unable to economically maintain a fleet given our historical use of vehicles.

This last summer three of our vehicles had to be dropped from our fleet of road worthy vehicles. This has caused us to reexamine the whole structure and how its supported. There have been discussions between the Dean's office and users of vehicles and as a result the following mechanism has been developed. This takes into account the actual use and cost of vehicles as well as special needs of some individuals. We know individual research groups have been working on their own solutions and we are interested in any way we can act as a resource to solve individual transportation problems.

We will be keeping four pick-ups in our core system—this is the number that the staff of the Plant and Animal Facilities Department need to run day-to- day operations. Of these four trucks, two are $\frac{3}{4}$ ton trucks which are capable of hauling trailers. In situations, where a researcher needs an occasional truck to haul a trailer to a research site, one of our $\frac{3}{4}$ tons can be signed out in advance. If there is a research protocol which involves extended use of a tow vehicle, we will help facilitate a solution for this need.

Individuals needing vehicles for research protocols have several options.

1. Trucks can be rented from Thrifty Rental—they have the University of Vermont contract for vehicle rentals and have a UVM office. Their phone number is 656-8650. The current charge for a daily truck rental is \$49. They have a limited number of vehicles, so this will require planning ahead. Lease of a vehicle based on a six month rental is \$800 dollars a month.
2. It is hoped that several research groups can work together to purchase and share trucks. A basic $\frac{1}{2}$ ton truck is able to be purchased at a wholesale cost of around 14,000 dollars. Vehicles could be parked at the HRC or with permission of UVM Transportation, on campus. Researchers would need to be aware of insurance costs which are handled through Risk Management and maintenance options available. Currently we feel Jiffy Lube would be the most economical or another option would be the UVM AMR shop at the Fort. We would be glad to help with the purchase process and other details, if this option seems viable.

3. If Plant and Animal Biology Facility vehicles are used for towing, there will be a \$40 dollar per day and the current UVM per mile charge. If the vehicle is used for only a portion of the day the charge will be for the whole day. Other than trailer towing, the general needs of researchers and technicians will need to be met by other sources rather than use of one of our four core trucks.
4. Researchers also have the option of when they hire technicians to require they have a form of transportation and pay them compensation for vehicle use.
5. Two vehicles which are being retired from the road fleet will be kept at the HRC for in-house use only. This will be available for use on plots at the HRC on a first/come first/serve basis and will carry signage which reminds users these are not to be used off the premises. There will be no charge for these vehicles. These shared vehicles will be able to be signed out on the calendar in the shop.

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