

## **LOWER MACUNGIE FIRE DEPARTMENT SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Electronic Social Networking, or online discussion, are unique electronic structures that allow people to both express their individuality and meet people with similar interests. These structures include having established profiles, friends, blog posts, widgets, and usually something unique to that particular social networking website.

LMFD recognizes that while participating in online discussion can be used in a positive fashion for Department purposes, promotions, and information sharing, it is largely a personal activity. LMFD, therefore, regulates such activity to the extent that it impacts the Department, its members, or members of public who deal with the Department.

While representing LMFD at incidents or activities, members are prohibited from taking photographs, writing or posting of data, or otherwise contributing to: blogs, personal websites or web pages, list serves or mailing lists, social or other networking sites (including but not limited to, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Xanga, or Friendster); audio or video-sharing websites (including but not limited to, YouTube, Google Video, or Metacafe); or other user-generated electronic media, **UNLESS** such activity is approved by a LMFD Chief Officer. Members should also obtain approval from an LMFD Chief Officer before “sharing”, “tagging”, or otherwise proliferating through social media material that others have posted about the Department or its operations. LMFD members must remember that any electronic media, photos, and videos generated by any source at the scene of an emergency incident can later be obtained by law-enforcement or legal counsel and used as evidence for investigations and/or litigation proceedings.

With regard to activities outside of LMFD represented events, members should remember that information placed on any electronic medium, and data sent via other electronic methods (i.e. email and text messages) may become public. Specifically, members of the general public, other emergency service associates, and residents of Lower Macungie Township may use electronic media to obtain information about the Department and its activities. As such, Department members must consider the impression they create about themselves and the Department when they place information relating to or identifying the Department or its members on any electronic medium. The Department expects that all members will act responsibly and exercise good judgment and the highest degree of professionalism and confidentiality when communicating any information that concerns or identifies the Department or any of its members. If a LMFD member fails to act responsibly in that regard, the information that he or she communicates may have a harmful effect on the Department, its members, or others.

Accordingly, if Department members choose to blog or participate in other electronic media when they are not actively representing LMFD at an incident or event, they are required to observe the following guidelines:

1. When discussing the Department or its activities online, members must take care to follow the Department's SOGs and policies regarding personal conduct, harassment, and discrimination. Members shall not discuss the Department, its Officers, or members in a manner that is maliciously false, defames any individual or their reputation, or disparages the Department's services.
2. LMFD members may not disseminate any information about the Department, its members, or members of the general public who received emergency or non-emergency services from the Department that could be considered confidential, private, or personal. This includes business affairs discussed at Department meetings. Members should also not reproduce Department logos or graphics without the consent of the LMFD President or Vice-President.
3. LMFD members must respect all copyright laws. As a general rule, members should not distribute or incorporate material that they have retrieved or copied from another web site or publication, unless the usage of such material meets the legal definition of "fair use."

Members who fail to comply with this policy will be dealt with on a case by case basis and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Approved On: 10/30/2013