
POLICY TITLE: ELECTRONIC MAIL USE

POLICY NUMBER: 2023-02

VERSION NUMBER: 1

DATE APPROVED: JANUARY 4, 2023

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1.01 **Preamble**

The Rural Community of Fundy Shores provides electronic mail (e-mail) resources to its Council and employees to help them perform their administrative functions more efficiently. E-mail allows Council and employees to communicate with each other internally, via the Community's network and/or with external individuals, agencies, etc. via the Internet. The proper use of e-mail technology saves time and money, reduces administrative overhead, and improves service. However, the improper use of this e-mail technology may jeopardize system integrity, security, and service levels.

1.02 **Policy Statement**

The Rural Community of Fundy Shores wants to ensure the appropriate, cost effective, and efficient use and operation of its e-mail system. This policy addresses issues of proper e-mail etiquette, permissible use and prohibited use of electronic mail.

1.03 **Definition**

"User" – all persons authorized to access the Community's electronic mail service.

"Offensive materials" – includes, but is not limited to, pornography, hate literature or any material which contravenes the *New Brunswick Human Rights Act*.

"Executable file" – computer files which may be compiled, interpreted or otherwise understood by the computer or software application to execute certain automated commands or functions. These files typically contain extensions of .BAT, .EXE, .COM, .HLP, .DLL, .VBS, .BAS., .REG. Although files with the .DOC and .XLS extensions are capable of executing computer code, they are not considered "executable files" in this context (*however, caution must be exercised when opening files of .DOC and .XLS extension*). The definition of "executable files" will be updated from time to time.

1.04 **User's Role**

User's Guidelines

- (a) Users using Fundy Shores' e-mail accounts are acting as representatives of the Community. As such, users should act accordingly so as not to damage the reputation of the Local Government.

- (b) While e-mail is provided as a business tool to users, its reasonable, incidental use for personal purposes is acceptable. This use must not, however, detrimentally affect employee productivity, disrupt the system and/or harm the Community's reputation.
- (c) Users should consider the impact on the network when creating and using large, work-related distribution lists.

Appropriate E-mail Use/Étiquette

- (a) *Think before you send.* When composing an e-mail message be clear and polite, as you would in a face-to-face conversation or on the telephone.
- (b) *Be concise.* One of the many luxuries of e-mail is its ability to answer a question or communicate a thought in a quicker informal manner than a letter or phone call. Keeping e-mails short helps to keep e-mail more productive.
- (c) *Be case sensitive.* Capital letters are considered shouting in the "technology" world. Try to avoid sending a message that is typed all in capital letters.
- (d) *Sarcasm/humor.* Be cautious when using humor and sarcasm in e-mail. Different people have different perceptions of what is funny or appropriate.
- (e) *Email maintenance:* Maintain your e-mail account on a regular basis by deleting duplicate message 'threads' and by archiving messages that must be retained.
- (f) E-mail subject. Always include a subject line clearly stating the purpose of the e-mail.
- (g) *Spell Check.* Always use spell check.

Prohibited E-mail Use

- (a) Use of e-mail for commercial solicitation or for conducting or pursuing employee's own business interests.
- (b) Users shall not use Community's e-mail media in a fashion that promotes offensive materials; copyright infringements; an employee's personal political beliefs or personal business interests; or any unlawful activities.
- (c) Use of e-mail to distribute hoaxes, chain letters, or advertisements; and or to send rude, obscene or harassing messages.
- (d) Users must not send, forward and/or reply to large distribution lists concerning non-Community business.
- (e) Mass mailing of inappropriate information ("junk mail" or "Spam") is strictly prohibited. Junk mail or Spam is a mass communication that arrives unsolicited in your mailbox; this includes, but is not limited to: bulk-mailing of commercial advertising and information announcements. An example of junk mail or Spam (i.e. a notice sent to all users advertising a car for sale).
- (f) An attempt to read, delete, copy or modify the e-mail of other users without their consent.

- (g) Forgery or attempted forgery of e-mail. Examples of which include, but not limited to, sending a message while logged on as another user without the user's prior knowledge and consent, purposely concealing your identity to make the recipient of the message believe you are someone else, modifying the original content of an e-mail, etc.
- (h) No user may use e-mail to deliberately propagate computer viruses, worms, Trojan horses, and trap doors or program codes.
- (i) Email users shall not give the impression that they are representing, giving opinions or statements on behalf of the Community or any department thereof unless appropriately authorized.
- (j) No user may use e-mail knowingly to download or distribute pirated software and data.
- (k) Users are not permitted to access other e-mail providers through the Community's Internet unless written authorization is obtained from the CAO. Examples of other e-mail providers are, but not limited to, the following: Hotmail, Excite mail, Yahoo mail, etc.

1.05 **User's Responsibilities**

- (a) Users are responsible for any type of electronic computer records or messages created, sent, forwarded, replied to, transmitted, stored, held, copied, downloaded, displayed, viewed, read, or printed by one or several e-mail systems or services.
- (b) It is extremely easy to infect your computer system, and possibly the Community's computer system, with viruses even though all Local Government's computers are equipped with anti-virus software. Therefore, only accept files from people that you know and trust. It is EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED to open any e-mail attachment with executable files that comes from others you do not know or from an unknown source (See Section 2 of Policy for definition of executable file). If there is a need to open executable file(s), the Community's IT Consultant must be contacted for assistance and for scanning the executable files for viruses and/or opening the file(s) on a secure/quarantined system.
- (c) Users should be aware that e-mail messages are considered official records when created or received in the transaction of Local Government business. Users should ensure that valuable information is *retained/archived electronically or if necessary* within the paper filing system maintained by the Local Government.

1.06 **Fundy Shores's Role**

Fundy Shores' Guidelines

- (a) All e-mail and associated system resources are the property of the Fundy Shores. E-mail is subject to the same restrictions on its use, and the same review process, as is any other furnished resource provided for use by Council and employees. Its use and content may be monitored.
- (b) Alleged inappropriate use of e-mail will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and, when justifiable, may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Furthermore, the CAO or designate reserves the right to inspect any and all files stored in all areas of our network, including private areas, in order to assure compliance with this policy.

Fundy Shores' Responsibilities

- (a) Department Heads are responsible for ensuring that all employees that require e-mail access to perform their daily work related duties have signed an "E-mail Use Agreement" and that this signed agreement is placed in the employee's personnel file, and that work stations used to access e-mail have approved anti-virus software.

- (b) The CAO, and/or Department Heads (where applicable) are responsible for taking disciplinary action when this policy is contravened.

VERSION LOG

Version Number	Amendment Description	Approved By	Approval Date
1	N/A	Council	January 4, 2023

ANNOTATION FOR OFFICIAL POLICY BOOK

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of the Rural Community of Fundy Shores' Electronic Mail use Policy, which was adopted by Council at its duly convened meeting held 4th day of January, 2023.

Linda N. Sullivan Brown
CAO/Clerk - Treasurer
Rural Community of Fundy Shores

Date