

## **Policy No. 34/2009**

**Policy Title:** Internet and E-Mail Use

**Date Adopted:** April 14, 2009

**Policy Scope:** This "Internet and E-Mail Use" policy applies to all Town of Bentley officials, employees, volunteers, guests and third-parties (hereinafter referred to as the "Users") whose access to or use of internet and e-mail resources is provided by the Town or available through equipment owned or leased by the Town whether or not that access is during normal working hours and whether such access is from the Town's premises or elsewhere.

**Policy Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines governing the acceptable use of the Town's internet and e-mail resources.

By the Town establishing and maintaining compliance with this policy, the benefits of these communication tools can be realized while the risks and costs are mitigated. The objectives of this policy are to ensure that;

- The use of the Town's internet and e-mail resources is for the benefit of the Town
- Users understand that e-mail messages and documents are subject to the same laws, regulations, policies and other requirements as information communicated in other written forms and formats
- Disruptions to the Town's activities from inappropriate use of the Town's e-mail and internet services are avoided, and
- Users are provided guidelines describing their personal responsibilities regarding confidentiality, privacy and acceptable use of the Town's internet and e-mail as defined by this policy.

**Policy:****Principles of Acceptable Use:**

As with any resource provided by the Town, internet and e-mail resources should be dedicated to legitimate Town business activities and governed by rules of conduct. The use of internet and e-mail resources imposes certain responsibilities and obligations on all Users and is subject to the Town's policies and procedures and all provincial and federal laws.

Acceptable use must be legal and ethical. Acceptable use demonstrates respect for intellectual property, ownership of information, network system security mechanisms and individuals' rights to privacy and freedom from intimidation, harassment and unwarranted annoyance.

All internet and e-mail use shall;

- Respect and uphold the law, including provincial and federal laws and regulations and the laws of other jurisdictions,
- Comply with the Town's stated policies, procedures and standards,
- Be courteous and follow accepted standards of etiquette,
- Protect others' privacy and confidentiality
- Reflect responsible use of internet and e-mail resources
- Use information technology resources efficiently and productively

**Acceptable and Unacceptable Activities:**

Acceptable internet and e-mail activities are those that conform to the purpose and key principles of the Town and to each User's job duties and/or responsibilities.

The following list, although not exhaustive, provides examples of *unacceptable* uses;

- Engaging in any illegal activity or using the Town's resources for any illegal purpose
- Knowingly disseminating harassing, abusive, malicious, sexually explicit, threatening or illegal information, including jokes or cartoons
- Using the Town's resources for the purposes of downloading and/or viewing inappropriate or illegal photographs, pictures, images, videos or gambling sites.
- Using the Town's resources for purposes unrelated to the Town's business activities
- Using the Town's resources to send messages expressing controversial, potentially offensive and/or defamatory comments of individuals, businesses or groups including, but not limited to, religion, politics and social policies,
- Downloading or using the material, software or other intellectual property of others in violation of software licenses, copyright or trademark laws
- Disclosing any passwords or security means and methods adopted by the Town
- Downloading or using any software or programs not approved for use by the Town

Users may use the Town's internet and e-mail resources for incidental and occasional personal use, provided that such use is reasonable in duration, does not take place during normal work hours (excluding coffee and lunch breaks), does not result in increased costs to the Town and complies with this policy.

Users must recognize that electronic correspondence is not inherently private, that messages can be misdirected and that the Town takes no responsibility resulting from the

disclosure of private communications occurring over the Town's resources.

The Town retains the right to monitor any and all electronic communications and use of the internet to ensure the integrity of the system and compliance with this policy. Users are reminded that *ALL* documents, including electronic copies, may be subject to a court order and as such, disclosure may apply to a User's personal documents as well as any work-related documents.

Users are advised to remove themselves from internet and e-mail lists not dealing with work-related topics.

### **Privacy Considerations:**

Files in User's accounts and data on the network are regarded as personal, that is, the Town does not routinely monitor this information. *However*, the Town reserves the right to view or scan any file, e-mail or software stored on the Town's system or transmitted over the Town's networks and may do so periodically to verify that software and hardware are working correctly, to look for particular kinds of data or software (such as computer viruses or unauthorized software) or to audit the use of the Town's resources. *Potential violations of this policy that come to the Town's attention during these or other activities will be acted upon.*

### **Sanctions:**

Violations of this policy may subject Users to the loss of internet and e-mail privileges and may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Illegal acts involving the Town's internet and e-mail resources may also be subject the violators to prosecution by local, provincial and/or federal authorities. Suspected law violations may be referred to police agencies. The Town may seek legal action against any violators, including damages, indemnification and costs.

**User's Acknowledgement:**

All users of the Town's internet and e-mail resources must sign the following acknowledgement before permission is granted to access said resources;

I acknowledge that I have read, understand and agree to comply with this Internet and E-mail Use Policy as set forth above. I understand that failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination, as well as legal action against me to seek damages, indemnification and costs.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Policy No. 34/2009 adopted by Bentley Town Council, this 14<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2009.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Administrative Officer