



RURAL NORTH VACAVILLE WATER DISTRICT

POLICY TITLE: Electronic Communications
POLICY NUMBER: 3300
ADOPTED: 1.14.25
REVISIONS: None

3300.1 Introduction. The District recognizes that access to and use of the internet, email, and other electronic communications resources enhances its operations and contributes to its success as a local public agency. To this end, the District supports and provides interactive electronic communications services and facilities for telecommunications and mail. However, the misuses of these resources have the potential to harm the District's short and long-term success(es). Accordingly, the District Electronic Communications Policy establishes principles, rules, and procedures applying to all Board members, employees and contractors of the district (collectively referred to in this Policy as "Users") to specifically address issues particular to the use of electronic communications.

3300.2. Purpose. The purposes of this Policy are to:

- a. Establish policy on privacy, confidentiality, and security in electronic communications.
- b. Ensure that District electronic communications resources are used for purposes appropriate to the District's mission.
- c. Inform Users about the applicability of laws and District policies to electronic communications.
- d. Ensure that electronic communications resources are used in compliance with those laws and District policies; and
- e. Prevent disruptions to and misuse of District electronic communications resources, services, and activities.

3300.3. Scope. This Policy applies to:

- a. All electronic communications resources owned or managed by the District;
- b. All electronic communications resources provided by the District through contracts and other agreements with the District.
- c. All users and uses of District electronic communications resources; and
- d. All District electronic communications records in the possession of Users or other users of electronic communications resources provided by the District.

This Policy applies to the contents of electronic communications and to the electronic attachments and transactional information associated with such communications.

3300.4. Policy

- a. Use of any District electronic media system is not private, and users of these systems should not expect their communications to be private. Users should not have an expectation of personal privacy when using any form of District electronic communications or media. Users and certain contractors will be given an RNVWD.com email for all District communications. All Board members are required to have an official Rural North Vacaville Water District email address. RNVWD requires all Board members to use their designated RNVWD email address for all official communication, meaning it is mandatory for Board members to utilize their RNVWD email for District-related interactions and updates; this is considered the primary method of communication by and within the District. Board members shall not use personal accounts to conduct District business. District communication is not permitted by text, except in emergencies.
- b. Care must be exercised when staff communicates with Board members by email because of the ease of using the "Reply All" function may inadvertently result in a violation of the Brown Act. The Brown Act prohibits any discussion or deliberation by a majority of the members from outside of a noticed public meeting of a matter within the Board's subject-matter jurisdiction. Consequently, when staff send an email to most of the Board members, staff should send the email to themselves and blind copy the Board members. The Board members will then receive the email but the use of the "Reply All" will only send a response to the sender and not to the other members of the legislative body. Similarly, the "Reply All" function shall not be used to respond to any email communication that includes a majority of the Board members as recipients of the email and Board members shall not communicate with more than one other Board member.

3300.5 Rules Regarding Prohibited Use. Users should not use District email in an inappropriate manner. Prohibited use of the internet, electronic communication resources, and email includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Engaging in any profane, defamatory, harassing, illegal, discriminatory, or offensive conduct or any conduct that is otherwise inconsistent in any way with the District policies.
- b. Email used for non-business communications, including exchanges of jokes, stories, or antidotes is a prohibited practice and violates this Policy set.
- c. Distributing copyrighted materials.
- d. Users should keep in mind that they represent the District with their communication and shall distinguish opinion from District policy.
- e. District Board members must remember they cannot make decisions for the District as an individual when communicating with customers, clients or contractors.
- f. Use of another person's name or account is strictly prohibited.
- g. Using the District's email for personal social media, online shopping, and other similar online commercial activity.
- h. Users must respect all copyright and licensed agreements regarding software or publication they access from the internet. The District does not condone violations of copyright laws and licenses and Board member(s) contractor(s) will be personally liable for any fines or sanctions caused by the Board member's or contractor's license or copyright infringement.
- i. Transmittal of any material or communication in violation of any federal, state or local law, ordinance or regulation.
- j. Use of security code or password other than as authorized.
- k. Disclosing your username and password to anyone for any purpose.

3300.6 Additional Guidelines

- a. All email transmissions are District records and subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act, discovery proceedings in litigation or other legal processes. The District has the right to access and disclose all messages sent over its email system, and to monitor the use of the email system.
- b. Deleting an email message does not necessarily mean the message cannot be retrieved from the District's computer system. Backup copies of all documents, including email messages, that are produced, sent, and received on the District's computer system, can be retrieved.
- c. Email and any attachments are subject to the same ethical standards, and standards of good conduct, as are memos, letters, and other paper-based documents.
- d. Currently all District email sent is not encrypted. Unencrypted email is not a secure way of exchanging information or files. Accordingly, Users are cautioned against transmitting information in an email message that should not be written in a letter, memorandum, or document available to the public.
- e. Email, once transmitted, can be printed, forwarded, and disclosed by the receiving party without the consent of the sender. Use caution in addressing messages to ensure that messages are not inadvertently sent to the wrong person.
- f. It is advisable for all Users to remind customers, clients, and contractor(s) of security issues when sending confidential emails or documents to the District via email. If applicable, our customers, clients, or contractors should be reminded to implement a security policy and make sure they understand the ramifications of sending confidential information via email.