

Social Media Policy for the City of Wilson (As of August 2009)

Official sites for the City of Wilson through social media carry the same weight as the City's official website and must be treated with the same respect. In some cases, a social media site can add to the public's understanding of a department or specific project.

Before site is created:

Department head should make contact with the Public Affairs Office to discuss the need for creation of City site(s) such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, MySpace, blogs, etc. Department head and Public Affairs Manager must approve of need/use for social networking application.

Creation of the site:

Except for blogs, pages should be set up as non-profit organization, not as an individual.

Maintenance of site:

One department employee should 'own' authority of the site. He/she should check it often.

No photos, video or documents will be posted to site without approval of department head and/or Public Affairs Manager.

As a general rule, most comments from readers should be posted unless they are inflammatory, personal or Spam.

Department and/or the public affairs office reserve the right to terminate the site.

Before creating any external social media site representing City departments, administrator should agree to the following and sign his/her name.

Employee commitment:

Stick to your area of expertise: You're sharing information with a mass audience and it will be archived for years. You should take this role and its responsibilities seriously.

Be transparent: If you're dishonest or try to write anonymously, you'll lose readers and no one will pay attention. If you have a vested interest in a topic, say it up front.

Post links to news articles/research that will interest your readers: You'll do your readers a service, and generate links back to you.

Don't speculate: Don't repeat rumors. If you don't know it to be true don't say it.

Don't try to be first to share with the public: If you know of something that should be used in a news release, or on the City's other sites, contact the public affairs office.

Think About Consequences: You're sharing information publicly. Are you willing to back it up with your supervisor?

Do not argue with your readers: People will disagree with your perspective at some point. Clarify your position, if needed, but do not engage them in an argument.

Never, ever, address personnel issues: They are protected by law and you could end up in court.

In online social networks, the lines between public and private, personal and professional can become blurred. By identifying yourself as a City of Wilson employee, you are creating perceptions about your expertise.

Take care to ensure that you are always representing the interests of the City of Wilson in a professional manner.

Do not use City sites to raise money.

Add value to public dialogue on a broad range of issues. The City of Wilson's activities are increasingly focused on innovation. Let's share with the world the exciting services we provide.

Employee signature_____ Date _____