

MGIO SAFE DRIVING POLICY

The MGIO Council endorsed the following policy for all users of MGIO including staff, visiting observers and contractors. All new personnel that travel to MGIO are required to complete a safe mountain driving orientation session that can be completed on line and sign a statement that they understand their responsibility to drive safely on Swift Trail and the MGIO Access Road before they will be authorized to drive to the telescopes site. Completion of the safe mountain driving orientation is required of new employees to obtain an annual Mount Graham Red Squirrel Refugium Permit and the permit will not be issued until after the signed statement has been received. The orientation will include an introduction to MGIO policies and procedures and a Power Point presentation concerning mountain travel and driving skills required for safe operation on a high altitude mountain road. Individuals may printout materials included in the orientation. A "refresher" package will be made available so that each Observatory Director may require an individual to review the safe mountain driving information to continue driving privileges to a telescope site. Current staffs are encouraged to review the safe driving material.

The MGIO Base Camp Office will provide a "brass tag" sign in and out system for those persons assigned a permanent radio call sign. All personnel that are frequent visitors are required to use the brass tag sign in and out procedure. Visitors who do not have a "brass tag" assigned to them will sign in and obtain a radio and or keys as they have in the past at the podium register. In addition, the Office will provide a message board in the near vicinity that will include current safety information, hazardous road conditions, policy changes, weather information, radio communication information and general information regarding MGIO. In addition, more general driving and safety policy changes will be broadcast through the MGIO email exploder and road conditions through the MGIO text message alert system.

After dark travel is highly discouraged to and from the site and will be made only when absolutely required. For after dark travel, it is strongly recommended that a buddy system be used which may include a convoy of vehicles or a minimum of two people in one vehicle. For after dark travel, it is required: 1. A fully operational two-way radio and in contact with another local person for the entire time of the travel between the site and Base Camp. Each Observatory control room will have a two-way radio to assist with contact in after dark travel. 2. From November 15 to April 15, when the USFS closes Swift Trail to public travel, four wheel drive vehicles will have with properly sized snow chains available for all four wheels (with chains mounted to the tires if driving in snow). 3. A survival pack as defined in the Steward Observatory Safety Manual, Policy #42 will be available in each vehicle.

Penalties are under the control and direction of each Observatory Director for staff reporting to the assigned research facility and will include: 1. First infraction, a verbal warning and the individual must attend a driver's safety class. 2. Second infraction, a written warning including notation in the annual performance review. 3. Third infraction, revocation of driving privileges to the site for three months and placed on probation status. Any penalty will last for one year after the most recent incident. A significant and serious infraction may supersede the policy above and may result in loss of all driving privileges and subject the individual to other penalties up to and including discharge from employment.