A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...
A FLEET MANAGER

MEET KELLY REAGAN, FLEET ADMINISTRATOR
FOR THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, OHIO.

Reagan has worked in the fleet industry for 30+ years, and has served in his current role with the City of Columbus since 2007.

Recently, Reagan created quite the buzz in the fleet industry, after the City of Columbus was named the No. 1 Fleet among the 2016 Leading Fleets and Reagan himself was named the 2016 Public Sector Fleet Manager of the Year.

If anyone knows what it takes to be a great fleet manager, it's Reagan.

Would you like to peek into a typical day in the office for Reagan to see how he runs his award-winning fleet? You're in luck. Welcome to a day in the life of a fleet manager.

BEGINNING OF THE DAY

When Kelly Reagan arrives at work (typically between 7:00 and 7:30am), he greets his office's receptionist with a smile and a friendly hello before starting his day with shift reports and down sheets.

All supervisors on the floor provide reports daily for one another and management. These reports:

- Pass along information about special activities or concerns to the incoming supervisors
- Communicate related issues with any one division and/or customer that may have special circumstances
- Provide a snapshot of the shift’s activities
- Facilitate good overall communication within a 24/7 operation, given all of the varied shifts and different shop responsibilities

Attached to the “shift report” are “down sheets” reporting all units down, parts needed/positioned with estimated ‘ready’ dates.

Reagan also takes time to review and approve all legislation related to fleet, which includes all vehicle and equipment purchases. In accordance with the Mayor’s Executive Order (EO) 2013-01 fleet approves all incoming assets regardless of the financial instruments used to purchase said assets. This includes all grants and donated vehicles for the fleet. This process eliminates unwanted, aged or unfamiliar vehicles without the approval of the fleet division.

[Quick Fact] Reagan processes roughly 100-200 emails and about 15-20 phone calls per day
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SUBSCRIPTIONS

The fleet industry is always changing. Every day, new technologies and trends emerge, so it’s important for fleet managers to stay ahead of the curve. Reagan subscribes to many industry-related publications (“All I can get my hands on,” he says), including:

- Government Fleet Magazine
- Automotive Fleet
- Fleet Owner
- AssetWorks newsletter
- Governing
- Heavy Duty Trucking (HDT)
- Fleet Financials
- Business Fleet
- Green Fleet
- Waste Advantage
- Municipal Fleet
- American City & County
- FordFleet.com
- NGT.com
- Work Truck
- Fleet Management
- NTEA
- GTA
- NAFA publication
- MEMA monthly newsletter

HIS COWORKERS

“My coworkers are driven and have the ability to work without being micromanaged. They are empowered to run their areas of responsibility within the scope of their respective areas, always keeping management informed of daily anomalies.

Because we work in a dynamic environment, both technicians and supervisors often are required to make immediate decisions. All decisions are carefully measured and management is kept well-informed, so there are few surprises.”

HOW DOES ASSETWORKS SOFTWARE AFFECT REAGAN’S TYPICAL DAY?

“I have the pleasure of having a very competent Data Management Coordinator, Deb Bier, whose focus it is to work with AssetWorks on a daily basis. Bier handles system reporting, monthly billing, GPS technology and all CNG and petroleum stations every day.”
OPEN DOOR POLICY

Reagan and all managers in the fleet division maintain an open door policy, so any employee can come into their office unscheduled to discuss any concerns they may have. Because Reagan and his management team always try to mitigate any issues before employees feel like they’re at their “wit’s end”, they rarely experience grievances.

Reagan also spends a good amount of time in legislation approving all fleet expenditures. By doing this, Reagan has a greater understanding of what’s going on globally within fleet. “There are very few surprises in my division,” he said.

On a more personal note - He also spends time “walking & talking” to the employees on the floor hearing about concerns they may have as well as family issues, like where one’s son or daughter is headed to college in the next semester. I often hear about a sick parent, loved one or spouse and possible remedies, always expressing concern. I can always use more time on the floor with our fleet employees.

REAGAN’S PROUDEST ACCOMPLISHMENTS

When talking to Reagan, it becomes clear how proud he is of his employees. So it makes sense that his proudest accomplishments as fleet manager revolve around his employees and their successes.

Once upon a time, Reagan’s fleet did little to no promotions from within the organization, with almost all supervisors hired from the outside; however, within the last seven years, Reagan’s management team has changed that trend.

Now, the succession of his own employees into new positions within the organization is one of Reagan’s proudest accomplishments as fleet manager.

“Promotions within our rank and file provides hope for all employees so they can strive for greater opportunities,” said Reagan.

Reagan is also proud of his active training programs across the region.

“We encourage and promote training across the region for technicians,” Reagan explained, “Last year, we trained over 300 technicians through Municipal Equipment Maintenance Association Ohio (MEMA-OH) and have helped them shorten the learning curve for no less than 6 other entities entering an alternative fuels program.”
WHAT IS SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR JOB THAT MIGHT SURPRISE PEOPLE?

Reagan’s fleet has monthly lunches, where the management teams often serve the employees to show their appreciation.

An example of these lunches is the fleet’s annual celebration of ASE Blue Seal achievement and Leading Fleets placement. For this event, the management team purchases and prepares all the food, then serves the staff—after thanking them for their service and hard work, of course!

“We experience success through serving others,” said Reagan, “And the folks really love it!”

WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING A FLEET MANAGER?

When asked what his favorite part about being a fleet manager is, Reagan answered: networking with other fleet managers and learning from his peers’ experiences.

“I also like being the voice of our division,” Reagan continued, “I see it as my responsibility to tell the administration and others what a great job my folks do for our tax payers and our end-user divisions.”

END OF THE DAY

Before leaving the office for the night, Reagan shuts down his computer and makes sure his city iPhone is fully charged. Before heading home, Reagan also updates his “Things to Do” list for the next morning. Any items that weren't crossed off or accomplished from the previous day are automatically at the top of his list in the morning.

“It becomes sort of my diary for the day,” Reagan said.

Reagan’s diary becomes a permanent record in spiral bound notebooks going back many years, covering each day’s activities, calls, issues, resolutions and meetings.

UNWINDING AFTER A TOUGH DAY

“Once I am home, I enjoy a walk with the dog, grilling for dinner and/or some relaxation fishing with my son. I also have my wonderful wife of 35 years that wants to hear about my day. Those discussions often go well into the evening.”
REAGAN’S ADVICE TO FUTURE FLEET MANAGERS

As the 2016 Fleet Manager of the Year, Kelly Reagan knows a thing or two about what it takes to be not just a good fleet manager, but a great fleet manager.

“Great fleet managers will build teams with vision, commitment and devotion—not to one’s self, but in the best interest of the team and tax payers. Being a fleet manager is not always popular, but it does require us to be honest, transparent and embracers of change.”

REAGAN’S TIPS FOR BEING A SUCCESSFUL FLEET MANAGER

• Understand all your captured data points (yes- all of them!) and frame a story to drive your fleet forward
• Build a strong foundational replacement standard with input from user divisions
• Establish life cycles on assets building consensus with end user divisions
• Train, train, train your employees and provide exceptional customer service to end user divisions
• Build effective annual buy plans for replacements-earning “buy-in” from your end users
• Frame your story to your administration -in other words do not be afraid to ask for everything you need for others to get their jobs done. You become every user’s best advocate for replacement vehicles.
• Always enjoy your success by giving credit to your employees

WITH HIS EXCEPTIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS AND PASSION FOR HIS TEAM’S SUCCESS, KELLY REAGAN GIVES ALL FLEET MANAGERS SOMETHING TO STRIVE TOWARDS.