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*MIS - Dept*

CITY OF ROCHESTER HILLS

**M**anagement  
Information  
Systems

DATE: May 15, 2002

TO: Mayor, City Council, Directors

RE: FOIA and e-mail

I talked to John Staran on Monday, May 13, 2002 about a concern that MIS had about the Freedom of Information Act and it's affect on e-mail. If you remember, I mentioned this briefly at the budget issues meeting on Saturday May 11, 2002. Our concerns had to do with the feasibility and potential cost of maintaining, storing and retrieval of all e-mails. While John believes that e-mails can be subject to a FOIA request, he also stated that he did not think that we had to begin tracking and storing all e-mails at this time. The feeling was that they be treated as you would treat any letter or memo. If you feel that it is a document pertaining to city business then you should either print the e-mail and retain it as hardcopy or create an electronic file and store them on the network.

This certainly should be looked at when we put together the RFP and implement a document imaging and records management system. Hopefully by that time the state will have clarified the issue and created some guidelines to follow. In the meantime, we will not have to make any formal changes to our existing computer use policy. This is not a computer use issue, but more of a document retention issue.

In conclusion, if you are unsure about what to do, I would recommend that you save the e-mail and follow the same storage and retention schedule you do for other documents. This pertains to both internal and external e-mails. Please pass this information on to the rest of your department.

Thank you,

*Bob Grace*

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