

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Purpose and Scope

National Weather Service Environmental Manual (NWSM 50-5116) implements the elements of the National Weather Service (NWS) Environmental Compliance Program defined in the National Weather Service Policy Directive 50-51 ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE which superceded Weather Service Operations Manual (WSOM) Chapter A-46, Environmental Compliance Policy.

This manual was developed in accordance with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Commerce, NOAA and other Federal agency's environmental standards (e.g., Department of Transportation (DOT) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). In the absence of any published standards, guidance was developed to govern unique NWS activities.

### 2. Definitions

Designated Responsible Official - The Designated Responsible Official (DRO) at every NOAA facility is the senior NOAA official on-site. This official has authority over operations or activities which are subject to environmental statutes. The responsibility of the DROs is inherent in their position and need not be formally designated or ascribed.

Facility Environmental Coordinator - The Facility Environmental Coordinator (FEC) is responsible for ensuring the activities carried out at a facility are conducted in accordance with Federal, state and local environmental regulations.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) - a written agreement between two governmental organizations which defines each organization's responsibilities and duties.

Station Manager - the Station Manager shall be either the NWS Regional Director; Directors of Centers under National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) (Aviation Weather Center, NP6; Storm Prediction Center, NP7; and Tropical Prediction Center, NP8), Directors of the National Data Buoy Center (NDBC), National Weather Service Training Center (NWSTC), and Chiefs of National Reconditioning Center (NRC), Radar Operations Center (ROC); or Meteorologist-in-Charge (MIC), Hydrologist-in-Charge (HIC) or Official-in-Charge (OIC).

### 3. Acronyms Employed in this Section

AA - Assistant Administrator  
BMP - Best Management Practices

DAA	-	Deputy Assistant Administrator
DOC	-	Department of Commerce
DOT	-	Department of Transportation
DRO	-	Designated Responsible Official
EHS	-	Extremely Hazardous Substance
EPA	-	Environmental Protection Agency
FEC	-	Facility Environmental Coordinator
HIC	-	Hydrologist-in-Charge
HS	-	Hazardous Substance
MIC	-	Meteorologist-in-Charge
MOU	-	Memorandum of Understanding
NAO	-	NOAA Administrative Order
NCEP	-	National Center for Environmental Prediction
NWS	-	National Weather Service
OIC	-	Official-in-Charge
OSHA	-	Occupational Safety & Health Act - or - Occupational Safety & Health Administration
RECO	-	Regional Environmental Compliance Officer
WSOM	-	Weather Service Operations Manual

#### **4. Applicability**

These sections are applicable to NWS facilities, operations and personnel (e.g., employees, contractors, visitors) and will be implemented as directed by NWS PD 50-51. When NWS operations are conducted at another organization's site (e.g., Government agency, university) NWS environmental requirements and procedures shall be followed unless the hosting organization's requirements and procedures pre-empt as determined in the lease agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, etc.

#### **5. Manual Organization**

Each section of the manual consists of a table of contents, one-page summary (synopsis), a checklist, the full text of the program requirements and copies and/or sources of the references. The summary highlights the most important aspects of the program and may be used by Station Managers as an overview for program implementation. The checklist should be used initially to determine facility/work site compliance with the requirements of the section then at least annually or, as needed, to ensure for compliance.

There is a special note concerning these checklists. Each question on the checklist has three possible answers - YES, NO or NOT APPLICABLE (NA). Typically, three underlined spaces have been provided for the answer. For some questions, the underlined space has been replaced by an empty rectangle or "box." These boxes indicate that special action is required.

If the answer is placed in a box, the NWS Regional Environmental Coordinator or the NOAA Regional Environmental Compliance Officer (RECO) must be contacted as soon as possible.

The manual also includes a glossary which contains the definitions for keywords used in the manual and a list of acronyms used in the text.

## 6. NOAA Titles

In NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 216-17, NOAA Environmental Compliance Program uses certain terms to define personnel who have roles in environmental compliance matters. However, the same terms are not used by each Line Office within NOAA. There are two terms which have a direct application to NWS personnel:

### 6.1 Designated Responsible Official

The Designated Responsible Official (DRO) at every NOAA facility is the senior NOAA official on-site. This official has authority over operations or activities which are subject to environmental statutes. The responsibility of the DROs is inherent in their position and need not be formally designated or ascribed. For the NWS, the DRO could be: the Assistant Administrator (AA), the Deputy Assistant Administration (DAA), the Regional/Center/Office Director, the Meteorologist-in-Charge (MIC), Hydrologist-in-Charge (HIC) or Official-in-Charge (OIC).

According to NOAA, the DRO is assigned the following duties and responsibilities:

- a. Ensuring that facility operations and activities are conducted in compliance with environmental and occupational safety/health requirements.
- b. Ensure that all areas and operations of each workplace, including office operations, under the DRO jurisdiction, are locally inspected (i.e., assessed, surveyed, audit, etc.) at least annually.
- c. Ensuring that all environmental and occupational safety/health assessment or survey findings are corrected within the recommended abatement period.
- d. Ensuring that on-site personnel are aware of environmental and occupational safety/health requirements and are properly trained and equipped.
- e. Elevating environmental and/or occupational safety/health compliance issues to senior management with recommendations for resolution as necessary to ensure compliance.

## 6.2 Facility Environmental Coordinator

The Facility Environmental Coordinator (FEC) is responsible for ensuring the activities carried out at a facility are conducted in accordance with Federal, state and local environmental regulations. For the NWS, the FEC is identified as the Environmental Focal Point.

While at some NOAA facilities the FEC will also be responsible for compliance with occupational safety and health requirements, this role can be assigned to another employee.

## 7. References

A list of specific references to regulations, standards and guidelines used to implement the program is included at the end of each section. The following websites can be used to reference Federal regulatory citations referenced throughout this document.

These websites can be used for reference to any Title within the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

<http://www.access.gpo.gov/ecfr>

<http://www.firstgov.gov>

Specific reference to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations and program information:

<http://www.epa.gov> (click on “Laws, Regulations and Dockets” on left side of page).

Specific websites for the Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations and information:

<http://www.text-trieve.com/dotrspa/dotbody.asp>

<http://www.hazmat.dot.gov/rules.htm>

<http://www.hazmat.dot.gov/gydebook.htm>

In addition, Appendix A to this manual provides a summary of the laws that created the national environmental program as well as a cross reference to the regulations promulgated as a result of these laws.

Appendix B is a combination of the list of chemicals identified by the EPA as “hazardous substances” (HS) and their reportable quantities as published in 40 CFR 302.4 and the list of chemicals identified as “extremely hazardous substances” (EHS) and their threshold planning quantities as published in 40 CFR 355.

Appendix C is a listing of the State environmental department's websites.