

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-925  
DECEMBER 9, 2008**

**Operations and Services  
Hydrologic Services Program, NWSPD 10-9**

**GUIDELINES FOR WEATHER FORECAST OFFICE  
HYDROLOGIC SERVICE MANUALS**

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**NOTICE:** This publication is available at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/>

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**SUMMARY OF REVISIONS:** This directive supersedes NWS Instruction 10-925, “Guidelines for Weather Forecast Office Hydrologic Services Manuals,” dated September 4, 2003. The following revisions were made to this instruction:

- 1) Changes the first sentence of Section 2 from “A copy of...” to “An electronic copy of...”
- 2) Changes “hydrologic services manual” to “hydrologic service manual”
- 3) Per policies of the General Counsel for Weather Services, changes “customers” to “other users” in Section 3.3.

(Signed)  
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Date

**Guidelines for Weather Forecast Office Hydrologic Service Manuals**

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1. Introduction. The hydrologic service manual describes current hydrologic services of a weather forecast office (WFO) and is part of a station duty manual (SDM). For records retention purposes, out-of-date copies of a hydrologic service manual are kept for the same period as SDMs – 5 years.

2. Recipients. An electronic copy of a WFO’s hydrologic service manual will be made available to the following:

- a. Manager in charge of hydrologic services at regional headquarters,
- b. Hydrologist in Charge at each supporting river forecast center (RFC), and
- c. Meteorologist in Charge at each WFO providing primary and secondary backup support.

3. Manual Structure. As a minimum, the hydrologic service manual should include a title page with the name of the manual preparer, date of preparation, and date(s) of subsequent updates and information outlined in the following sections.

3.1 Section 1 - Hydrology Program Personnel. Provide a list of WFO personnel to contact when normal hydrologic procedures are insufficient for handling a hydrologic emergency. Include the service hydrologist or hydrology focal point and members of the WFO management team and/or other members of the office hydrology team. If the WFO does not have a service hydrologist, include the name and phone number of the service hydrologist from a nearby WFO who is designated to provide support for the office.

Also, describe procedures for contacting each RFC serving the WFO.

3.2 Section 2 - Description of Hydrologic Service Area. Provide a graphical and textual description of the WFO hydrologic service area (HSA), including:

- a. Maps of the HSA supplementing those available on the advanced weather interactive processing system (AWIPS);
- b. Description of differences (if any) between the HSA and WFO county warning area (CWA) boundaries;
- c. Physiographic description of the HSA, including important topographic features;
- d. Description of HSA climatology;
- e. Description of the nature of flood events in the HSA, including known seasonal variations;
- f. Description of the forecast points in the HSA and the type of service provided for each location (including AHPS products) – also designate whether each forecast point falls in the small-scale and large-scale category (see NWS Instruction 10-921, section 3.1.2);
- g. Summary of major historical flood events in the HSA.

3.3 Section 3 - Hydrologic Partners and Other Users. Provide a list of partners and other users along with contact names, telephone numbers, and addresses. Include instructions for emergency communications. Document the interest partners and other users have in particular - area(s), stream(s), or forecast point(s). Identify key personnel responsible for operational maintenance of stream gaging stations (e.g., U.S. Geological Survey and reservoir/dam operators), including numbers of portable phones (if any) where they can be reached in the field.

3.4 Section 4 - Hydrologic Forecast Operations. If the WFO produces site-specific hydrologic forecast products, briefly describe categories used, partner/user service requirements, sequential steps for forecast preparation, and hydrologic circumstances under which products are issued (e.g., during high waters only, seasonal, or year-round). Address the role of supporting RFC(s), including RFC forecast/guidance products used by the WFO, the WFO/RFC forecast coordination process, and exchanges of database updates between the offices.

3.5 Section 5 - Flood/Flash Flood Forecasting Operations. Briefly describe the steps to be followed in assessing the current hydrologic state of the HSA and in preparing flood/flash flood products. Document office-specific procedures used for verification of flood and flash flood events.

3.6 Section 6 - Appendices. Include a bibliography of publications pertaining to general hydrologic characteristics, rivers, and floods in the HSA. Include other material deemed appropriate for the manual as appendices.