

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE EASTERN REGION SUPPLEMENT 01-2005
APPLICABLE TO NWSI 10-2003
NWSI 10-2004
NWSI 10-1608
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***Operations and Services
Forensic Services, NWSPD, 10-20
Records Retention, NWSI 10-2003
Accident Notification, NWSI 10-2004
Performance, NWSPD, 10-16
Station Duty Manual, NWSI 10-1608***

FIELD OFFICE RECORD RETENTION REQUIREMENTS

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

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SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This instruction supersedes Regional Operations Manual Letter (ROML) E-01-92, "Record Keeping," filed with WSOM Chapters C-40, C-41, C-42, E-10, E-13 dated February 4, 1992.

<signed>

February 4, 2005

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Date

1. Overview.

The National Weather Service (NWS) records for accident investigations and litigation are retained and disposed of in accordance with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Records Disposition Handbook instructions, National Archives and Records Administrations' retention and disposition schedules (see http://www.ofa.noaa.gov/~ames/Records_Management/records_mgt.html), NWS Instruction 10-2004, Accident Notification, and this supplement. The NCDC accomplishes a significant portion of the NWS records retention function. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the NWS and the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Services (NESDIS) details the retention of NWS service products (see Appendix A NWS Instruction 10-2004).

2. Service Products.

Service products issued by Eastern Region (ER) offices are transmitted on the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS) or Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) communications to an NWS Gateway (NWSTG) server. The products are then electronically transferred to NCDC and ingested into the Hierarchal Data Storage System to meet a minimum five-year service records retention requirement. The NOAAPORT serves as the backup for the collection of service products in the extent of system failure or other disruption of the primary records transfer. A limited short-term records retention responsibility also resides at each ER field office: each field office will maintain a capability to (electronically) retrieve and print hard copies of their forecast products within the first 14 days of issuance (see NWS Instruction 10-2004).

3. Retention of Automated Observations Records and Weather Surveillance Radar-1988 Doppler (WSR-88D) Data.

ER offices should refer to NWSI 10-2003, Records Retention, for details.

4. Miscellaneous non-service product records.

Non-service product records commonly required in accident investigations/litigation and other documentation support activities and related retention requirements, are also described in NWS Instruction 10-2003. In addition, the following ER retention requirements are described below.

- a. Station Duty Manual (SDM)** – Every ER office will maintain a SDM. NWS offices will maintain a historical SDM file containing all superseded and/or canceled portions of the SDM and any canceled temporary operational instructions for a minimum of five years from the date of cancellation. Each page of the current SDM and the historical SDM file must be dated. SDM historical records may be archived electronically as long as a documented filing system is maintained and is easily accessed if requested. Electronic SDM changes must be archived after every update or change. See NWSI 10-1608, Station Duty Manual, for additional details.

b. Supplemental NWS regional directives - Hard copies of Regional Supplements must be filed and retained permanently at the Regional Headquarters. **The five year rule does not apply.** The originating office maintains the archive.

c. Record Keeping

Record keeping via the use of a log is mandatory at all times for Eastern Region offices. Information contained in the log may be used for the support of post-disaster investigations/assessments, and verification. Weather events for which entries in a log are especially important include, but are not limited to, Convective Severe Weather, Winter Storms, Flood and Flash Flood Episodes, Tropical Cyclones, Homeland Security/Civil Emergency.

Records (retained for 5 years) will include, but are not limited to:

Warning checklists used with times of distribution of information
Date and times of warnings that are manually read over NAWAS or other emergency networks
Action taken and time
Inter-office warning-related telephone conversations
Conversations with public safety officials
Significant observations received by phone
Service Complaints
Initials of person making phone calls

Special note: as described in section 2, field offices are required maintain a capability to (electronically) retrieve and print hard copies of watches, warnings and advisories within the first 14 days of issuance. **However, if any written notations are transcribed on printed hard copies, then the record retention time increases from 14 days to 5 years.**

d. Electronic logs – Operational electronic log files such as those generated from the Console Replacement System and well as shift leader logs will be kept for a minimum of

5 years.

- 6.** Appendix A of NWSI 1-803 contains additional documentation of basic records management.