

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE POLICY DIRECTIVE 50-11**  
**MAY 17, 2018**

***Safety and Environmental***  
**OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH**

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**OPR:** W/OF (D. R. Jones)  
**Type of Issuance:** Routine

**Certified by:** W/OPPSD (K. Cooley)

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**SUMMARY OF REVISIONS:** This directive supersedes National Weather Service (NWS) Policy Directive 50-11, *Occupational Safety and Health*, dated May 26, 2016. There are no content changes to this policy.

Changes made reflect the current status of reference documents.

References to NOAA Administrative Order 209-1, NOAA Safety Policy were changed to reflect the updated NOAA Administrative Order 209-1A, NOAA Occupational Safety and Health. The updated references were included in Attachment 1.

1. This policy directive defines the NWS Occupational Safety and Health program. This policy complies with Executive Order 12196 (Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees), sections 6 and 19 of the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act of 1970, Department of Commerce (DOC) Administrative Order 209-4 (Occupational Safety and Health Program), and NOAA Administrative Order 209-1A, NOAA Occupational Safety and Health Policy.

2. The objective of this policy is to ensure a safe and healthful work environment for all NWS employees and contractors.

3. This directive establishes the following authorities and responsibilities:

3.1 The Assistant Administrator (AA) for Weather Services is responsible for ensuring: the development and implementation of Occupational Safety and Health policies, procedures and training programs NWS-wide; that safety program responsibilities are incorporated into management performance criteria, and all personnel understand and carry out their safety responsibilities; that a safety officer is designated; that safety program requirements are integrated within NWS program planning and budgeting; that responsibilities defined in the NOAA Safety Policy and NOAA procedural requirements for incident reporting, investigating, and recordkeeping are met; and ensuring that a senior management level representative is appointed to the NOAA Executive Safety Council.

3.2 The NWS safety officer is the principal advisor to the AA on safety and health issues and is responsible for development, implementation, and administration of the NWS Occupational

Safety and Health program. These responsibilities, at a minimum, include: establishing procedures and directives outlining specific requirements, guidelines, and personnel responsibilities for safety and health compliance, including procedures for safety incident reporting and investigation; determining cost effective training requirements; planning and coordinating training courses; ensuring regional/center/office directors are aware of their responsibilities; ensuring the NWS Occupational Safety and Health program is implemented and evaluated on an annual basis; incorporating safety and health compliance requirements into operational procedures; disseminating technical information and providing technical guidelines and lessons learned; obtaining legal assistance from NOAA Office of General Counsel and other assistance as appropriate; interacting with NOAA safety and health compliance personnel, as required; preparing and submitting monthly reports related to status of safety incidents and annual safety action plans per NOAA Occupational Safety and Health Policy (NAO 209-1A) requirements.

3.3 Regional Directors, the National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) Director, and NWS Headquarters Office Directors have overall responsibility for implementation of the NWS Safety and Health program within their organizations and are responsible for: ensuring safety and health directives and procedures are established, implemented and maintained; ensuring safety incidents are investigated as required by NOAA safety policy and directives; ensuring personnel understand and carry out safety and health responsibilities; designating a safety officer; and providing leadership and support to the safety and health program.

3.4 Regional and NCEP safety officers will: ensure NWS Occupational Safety and Health procedures are implemented at field offices and NCEP-wide; develop and disseminate regional/NCEP-specific directives and guidelines, as necessary; plan and coordinate training of personnel; maintain an up-to-date list of subordinate organization safety focal points; provide technical advice and assistance; support and coordinate safety incident investigations that warrant investigation on national/regional level; and maintain and distribute DOC, NOAA, and NWS safety and health policies, procedures, and directives.

3.5 Meteorologists-in-Charge, Hydrologists-in-Charge, Officials-in-Charge, and NCEP Center Directors are responsible for day-to-day implementation of the NWS Occupational Safety and Health program and: ensuring staff, facilities and operations comply with NWS safety and health procedures, NOAA directives and applicable Federal, state, and local requirements; ensuring site-specific safety and health procedures are developed, as necessary, and implemented; designating and supporting safety focal points and safety observers, as necessary; implementing monthly workplace safety inspections, reporting safety incidents and conducting investigations as required by NOAA safety policy; ensuring employees with assigned safety roles understand and carry out their responsibilities; ensuring all site personnel are aware of safety and health requirements and are properly trained; and ensuring all Notices of Violation received from Federal, state, and/or local agencies having jurisdiction (as applicable) are reported to the Regional safety officer, the NWS safety officer and the NOAA Safety and Environmental Compliance Office within five (5) calendar days of receipt.

3.6 Safety focal points: assist with day-to-day implementation of the NWS Occupational Safety and Health program; assist with development, implementation and maintenance of safety

and health procedures; plan and coordinate the safety and health training of site personnel; and promote safety and health awareness among site personnel.

3.7 NWS employees with assigned safety and health responsibilities will have a statement included in their personal performance plans addressing these responsibilities.

3.8 All employees will comply with NWS safety and health policy and procedures and report safety and health hazards and incidents to their immediate supervisor and designated safety focal point.

4. Compliance with this policy will be measured by tracking the number of occupational incidents and safety compliance assessment findings. The ultimate goal is zero findings.

5. This policy directive is supported by the references listed in Attachment 1.

Signed  
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Louis W. Uccellini  
Assistant Administrator for Weather Services

May 3, 2018  
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Date

Attachment 1

**REFERENCES**

Executive Order 12196, Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees, February 1980.

OSH Act of 1970, Public Law 91-596, 91st Congress, S.2193, December 29, 1970.

Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1960, Basic Program Elements for Federal Employees, July 1995.

U.S. Department of Commerce Administrative Order 209-4, Occupational Safety and Health Program.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Occupational Safety and Health Manual.

NOAA Administrative Order 209-1A, NOAA Occupational Safety and Health Policy, September 19, 2016.

NWS Manual NWSM 50-1115, Occupational Safety and Health.