



Natural Resources Conservation Service
210 Walnut Street, Room 693
Des Moines, IA 50309-2180

February 14, 2013

IOWA INSTRUCTION 360-397 – HAZARDOUS WEATHER PROCEDURES

IA397.0 PURPOSE

This Iowa Instruction provides guidance for all NRCS employees to follow during hazardous weather conditions.

IA397.1 SCOPE

This instruction will be followed by all NRCS employees.

IA397.2 FILING INSTRUCTIONS

This Iowa Instruction will be posted on the Iowa NRCS Employee Website, which can be accessed at <http://www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/eDirectives.html> under the Iowa NRCS eDirectives System section.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jay T. Mar".

Jay T. Mar
State Conservationist

Attachment

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(IA Instruction 360-397 First Edition – February 2013)

Helping People Help the Land

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

IOWA INSTRUCTION 360-397 - HAZARDOUS WEATHER PROCEDURES

1. PURPOSE:

This Iowa Instruction provides guidance for all NRCS employees to follow during hazardous weather conditions.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Normally, employees are expected to be prepared to cope with inclement weather and difficult driving conditions. This is part of living in Iowa. However, on occasion, emergency situations arise which are beyond our control and result in offices being closed, delays in opening or early dismissal of employees.

3. PROCESS:

State Office. Employees stationed in the Neil Smith Federal Building may call 515-284-5188 to receive an automated building business status message. Employees should follow the guidance provided in the message. For instance, if the message states that the building is **closed**, then employees should not report to work. If the message states that the building **opening is delayed** (for public business) until 10:00 a.m., then employees should report to work as soon as safely possible, but no later than 10:00 a.m. The public notification will be followed-up with a call from your supervisor to ensure you are aware.

The State Conservationist (STC) has the option of delaying reporting time or closing the State Office (SO) even if the automated building business status message states that the federal building is open as normal.

If traveling conditions are unsafe, the STC or Acting STC will direct employees to delay reporting or not report at all. The STC will call each of the SO Leadership Team Members, who will in turn notify their employees of the STC's decision. The STC will also notify the Executive Assistant, the NRCS Distribution Center and the Regional Conservationist's Office. The STC will begin notification no later than 6:00 a.m. when a situation arises outside of normal business hours. It is important that all SO employees are aware of weather conditions and available to receive instruction from their supervisor. All employees should ensure that their supervisor has up-to-date contact information so that their supervisor is able to notify them in a timely manner.

As always, employee safety is paramount, and employees should not risk their wellbeing to report to work. If administrative leave is not granted by the STC, liberal approval of annual leave is expected under hazardous weather situations.

Area Office. The Assistant State Conservationists—Field Operations (ASTC-FO) will make decisions concerning area office closures for hazardous weather. If an ASTC-FO closes an area office or delays reporting, he/she will initiate telephone notifications to all area office staff. The ASTC-FO will also notify the Leadership Team and all area employees via email message.

Field Office. Field offices will follow the instructions in GM 360-415-A, Paragraph N, Excused Absence and the Iowa USDA Service Center Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan when making decisions concerning hazardous weather. District conservationists shall notify their area office and all field office employees if their field office is closed or opening late.

Approved By:

Date:



2/14/13

Jay T. Mar
State Conservationist
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