



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

January 29, 2014

IOWA INSTRUCTION 360-397 SECOND EDITION - 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 [S:\Service_Center\NRCS_statewide_shared\120_ADS\Bulletins and Manuals](S:\Service_Center\NRCS_statewide_shared\120_ADS\Bulletins_and_Manuals) under the Iowa NRCS eDirectives System section.

Jay T. Mar
State Conservationist

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(IA Instruction 360-397 Second Edition – January 2014)

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. The State Conservationist (STC) or Acting STC makes the decision about State Office closures. If travel 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 State Office (SO) Leadership Team Members, who will in turn notify their employees of the STC's decision. The STC will also notify the NRCS Distribution Center and the Regional Conservationist's Office. The STC will begin notification no later than 5:30 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.

In hazardous weather conditions, the Federal Executive Committee (FEC) decides whether to close the Neal Smith Federal Building to the public. The FEC provides an automated phone message to notify callers of the building status. State Office employees should not depend upon this phone message for information on the NRCS SO operating status, as the STC makes his/her decision independent of the FEC decision on building status for the public.

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 employees within the area 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 about closing offices early, delaying reporting, or not opening offices at all due to 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:



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