

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-925
APRIL 11, 2020**

**Operations and Services
Water Resources Services Program, NWSPD 10-9**

**GUIDELINES FOR WEATHER FORECAST OFFICE
WATER RESOURCES SERVICE MANUALS**

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 28, 2017. The following revisions were made to this instruction:

1. In title and throughout document, changed “Hydrologic” terminology to “Water Resources” to reflect services nomenclature.
2. In section 2, updated example of collaborative software where manual will be made available per NWS Instruction 10-1608 Section 2.3a.

STERN.ANDREW
.D.1382920348

Digitally signed by
STERN.ANDREW.D.138292034
Date: 2020.03.28 15:43:33
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Andrew D. Stern
Director
Analyze, Forecast and Support Office

3/28/2020
Date

Guidelines for Weather Forecast Office Water Resources Service Manuals

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1. Introduction. The water resources service manual describes current water resources services of a weather forecast office (WFO) and is part of a station duty manual (SDM) (see [NWS Instruction 10-1608, Station Duty Manual](#)). For records retention purposes, out-of-date copies of a water resources service manual are kept for the same period as SDMs, five (5) years.

2. Recipients. The water resources service manual will be made available using collaborative software (e.g., Google Site), office Intranet, or posted on the regional server to allow those offices who provide support and backup to have immediate access to office instructions and procedures. WFOs will also maintain an archived water resources service manual in a safe and readily accessible location where it would not be affected by a catastrophic communications or electronic systems failure. This ensures the document will be available to maintain Continuity of Operations capabilities and to protect the legal and financial rights of the Federal Government and of persons directly affected by NWS’s activities.

3. Manual Structure. As a minimum, the water resources 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 - Water Resources Program Personnel. Provide a list of WFO personnel to contact when normal water resources procedures are insufficient for handling a water resources emergency. Include the service hydrologist or hydrology focal point and members of the WFO management team and/or other members of the office water resources 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 Weather Forecast Office Water Resources Operations](#), section 3.1.1);
- g. Summary of major historical flood events in the HSA;
- h. Summary of non-flood related water resources interests (e.g. water supply) in the HSA, as appropriate.

3.3 Section 3 - Water Resources 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 - Water Resources Forecast Operations. For specific locations where the WFO provides water resources forecast services, briefly describe partner/user service requirements, sequential steps for forecast preparation, and 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.