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ARS □ CSREES □ ERS □ NASS
Bulletin

Title: ARS Facilities as Severe Weather Shelter

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Distribution: ARS Area Directors, Deputy Area Directors, and
Real Estate Warrant Officers

This bulletin provides policy and guidance on the use of ARS facilities by non-ARS personnel during severe weather.

A. INTRODUCTION

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) facilities can be made available to respond to immediate local emergencies. However, ARS facilities should not be viewed as primary shelter for all emergencies.

B. POLICY

It is ARS' policy that Area Offices, at the discretion of the Area Director (or his/her designee) and locations (at the discretion of the Location Coordinator, Center Director, or Research Leader or his/her designee) may, on a case-by-case basis, allow the temporary use of ARS buildings by non-ARS personnel to address local emergencies where there is little advance knowledge or lead time (i.e., tornado, thunderstorm), but only if those individuals do not have other alternatives for shelter.

C. GUIDELINES

ARS facilities should not be viewed as safe shelters when local authorities advise evacuation of the region. ARS facilities are not designed for such use. To utilize them for this purpose could put ARS and non-ARS personnel in extreme jeopardy in case of structural failure or collapse.

ARS may choose to close the facility allowing our employees to evacuate. ARS cannot be required to keep a facility open for the benefit of non-federal employees who choose not to evacuate.

PATRICK G. BARRY
Director
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