

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-925
JANUARY 5, 2011**

**Operations and Services
Hydrologic Services Program, NWSPD 10-9**

**GUIDELINES FOR WEATHER FORECAST OFFICE
HYDROLOGIC 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 December 9, 2008. The following revisions were made to this instruction:

- 1) Replaces the wording on recipients of the hydrologic service manual with text that closely parallels the wording in Section 2.3 (a) of [NWS Instruction 10-1608, Station Duty Manual](#).
- 2) Revises the start of the first sentence of Section 3.4 to: “For specific locations where the WFO provides hydrologic forecast services...”
- 3) Deletes the words “categories used” from the first sentence of Section 3.4

(Signed) December 21, 2010
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Guidelines for Weather Forecast Office Hydrologic Service Manuals

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1. **Introduction.** The hydrologic service manual describes current hydrologic 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 For records retention purposes, out-of-date copies of a hydrologic service manual are kept for the same period as SDMs – 5 years.

2. **Recipients.** The hydrologic service manual will be made available using collaborative software (e.g., SharePoint) or an office Intranet, and 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 hydrologic 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 capability and protects the legal and financial rights of the Government and persons directly affected by the NWS’s activities.

3. **Manual Structure.** As a minimum, the hydrologic 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 - Hydrology Program Personnel.** Provide a list of WFO personnel to contact when normal hydrologic procedures are insufficient for handling a hydrologic emergency. Include the service hydrologist or hydrology focal point and members of the WFO management team and/or other members of the office hydrology 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 Hydrologic Operations](#), section 3.1.2);
- g. Summary of major historical flood events in the HSA.

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