

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE EASTERN REGION SUPPLEMENT 02-2010
APPLICABLE TO NWSI 10-2204
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***Operations and Services
Readiness, NWSPD 10-22
Operational Reporting, NWSI 10-2204***

OFFICE DRILLS

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SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This Supplement supersedes ERS 16-2004, OFFICE DRILLS, dated May 22, 2007. This supplement contains the following revisions from that version:

- 1) The Supplement is now linked to Directive 10-22 (Readiness) rather than 10-18 (Service Outreach).
- 2) In Section 5, wording has been changed to more clearly explain relationships between the NWS and its customers / partners.
- 3) Section 5I was added to specify that test messages will be sent only on day shifts.
- 4) Section 7 has been changed to clarify the reporting of internal and external drills. It specifies who sends and receives these reports, the method of reporting them and when the reports are sent.
- 5) Appendix C (annual Internal WFO/RFC Drill completion checklist) has been added.
- 6) Appendix D (sample CWSU Convective Weather Drill) has been added.

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October 19, 2010

Christopher S. Strager
Director, NWS Eastern Region

Date

Office Drills

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Purpose. The purpose of this supplement is to establish guidelines and procedures for conducting and reporting office drills, as listed in Directive 10-2204.

1. Types of Drills. There are two main types of drills:

A. Internal. Internal drills should be tailored to the local area to increase employee familiarity with local geography, topography, communications systems, etc. Procedural changes, recurring problems and known limitations in local warning systems should be highlighted. The use of local forecast techniques and the latest software procedures should be emphasized.

B. External. As resources allow, NWS Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs) and River Forecast Centers (RFCs) should initiate and/or participate in community or statewide drills. Because of their impact upon the community, severe local storms, hurricane, flash flood and winter storms are good candidates for community drills. External drills should not be considered a substitute for internal drills, but rather an addition to them to enhance preparedness. External drills are largely a disaster preparedness activity and should be reported in accordance with Directive 10-1804. Statewide and external drills involving state level agencies will be coordinated with the appropriate state liaison office (SLO).

2. Scope of Drills. Variability in station programs and hazard frequency dictates the need for flexibility in the type and scope of office drills. The following guidelines will be followed:

A. Drills will be conducted for any program area where life or property is at risk, time is of the essence, and proficiency may deteriorate.

B. Drills should be designed to acquaint personnel with new or revised procedures, refresh them on existing procedures and to maintain basic proficiency.

C. WFOs/RFCs should also maintain proficiency in programs areas associated with service back-up.

3. Schedule of Internal Drills. All WFOs/RFCs will conduct the following types of drills where applicable at least once each year (Drills may be combined as appropriate):

Internal Station Drills	
A. Tornado/Severe Weather (Feb-Apr) *	H. Homeland Security/Civil Emergency
B. River/Flash Flood	I. Service Backup
C. Winter Weather (Sep-Nov)*	J. Communications Failure
D. Dam Break	K. Power Failure
E. Hurricane/Tropical Storm (May-Jul)*	L. Aircraft Accident
F. Coastal Flood	M. Notification to ERH
G. Hazardous Material	N. Other **

* Suggested times drills should be held.

**Local or special requirements dictate that WFOs/CWSUs/RFCs conduct additional types of drills not specified in this Supplement. Such drills will be reported in accordance with Section 6 and 7.

5. Prevention of Inadvertent Test Messages. **Offices will make every effort to prevent inadvertent test messages from being disseminated.** These messages have a detrimental impact on the relationship between the NWS and our customers and partners.

A. Offices must provide preventive measures to each drill participant before each drill. Software practice modes and the danger of sending out actual products during the actual drill exercise must be thoroughly briefed to the drill participant.

B. Drill questions containing instructions to “Compose and print” will emphasize the steps required to safely issue products during drills.

C. **“Compose and print” drills at WFOs will use the WES (or a PC running WES) that is not hooked up to the communications network, to avoid inadvertent product release.**

D. **Live tests** involving Severe Thunderstorm, Tornado and Flash Flood Warnings/ Watches **will be avoided unless pre-coordination occurs** with the SLO, emergency management and the media.

E. When composing test products, do not use exaggerated language.

F. Offices must ensure that drill participants include multiple “TEST wording” in all practice products and reemphasize compliance with NWS Directive 10-1701, including placement of “TEST” in multiple locations within all drill products. See Appendix A for an example template.

G. Drills that require the preparation of actual products should be done with two or more people present rather than be done individually. Two sets of eyes on test messages reduce the chance of inadvertent product release.

H. Drills should focus on the primary area of responsibility so that impacts on other offices are minimized. **SPECIFIC MENTION OF LARGE METROPOLITAN AREAS WILL BE AVOIDED.**

I. Test messages will be sent out only during day shifts Monday through Friday.*

6. Documentation. Each WFO/CWSU/RFC will maintain an on-station record of all drills performed for a period of 5 years. This record will include: date of drill, drill type, and the names of all personnel participating in the drill. Regional Office personnel will review this record during office visits.

Offices will retain file copies of the actual drill and supporting materials, until the next drill of the same type has been given.

7. Drill Reports. Internal office drills completed at WFOs/CWSUs/RFCs during the past fiscal year will be reported to ERH Scientific Services Division by the SOO/DOH (or CWSU MIC) via a checklist (Appendix C) attached to the annual science program accomplishment report. External drills done with partners during the past fiscal year will be reported annually by the WCM/SCH via the NOEES system (using the exercise / drill option for TYPE of activity on the long form) for use by ERH MSD, HSD and OCWWS.

* Evening Drills are permitted Monday through Friday by WFO Wilmington, OH only, to accommodate the State of Indiana Emergency Management's drill schedule.

Appendix A – Example “Test” product

Below is an example template for "TEST" products based on NWSI 10-1701.

MND HEADER BLOCK TEMPLATE & EXAMPLE (TEST MESSAGES)

The word TEST and an ellipsis begins the Product Type line, and an ellipsis and the word TEST follows the name of the product in the Product Type line.

- 1) Mass News Disseminator Broadcast Instruction Line
 - 2) Mass News Disseminator Product Type Line
 - 3) Issuing Office Line
 - 4) Issuance Date/Time Line
 - 5) Line Feed
 - 6) Headline
 - 7) Line Feed
 - 8) Body
-
- 1) BULLETIN - EAS ACTIVATION REQUESTED
 - 2) **TEST...TORNADO WARNING...TEST**
 - 3) NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WILMINGTON OHIO
 - 4) 500 PM EST WED JUN 1 2004
 - 5)
 - 6) **...TEST...TEST...TEST...A TEST TORNADO WARNING HAS BEEN ISSUED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ANNUAL SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK DRILL...TEST...TEST...TEST...**
 - 7)
 - 8) **TEST...TEST...TEST...THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN WILMINGTON HAS ISSUED A TEST TORNADO WARNING IN CONJUNCTION WITH ANNUAL SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK DRILL...I REPEAT...THIS IS A TEST MESSAGE.**

Liberal insert the word TEST within the body of the text. Please refer to NWSI 10-1701, Section 4.2.2.e and Section 4.2.2 Important Notes (2) for guidance.

Appendix B

Sample - Notification of ERH in Emergencies Drill

Please complete the attached “Notification of ERH in Emergencies Drill” by MM/DD/YY and return it to SOO/WCM/XXX. If you haven’t done so already, please read Section X.X of the Station Duty Manual prior to completing this drill and refer to the section, NWS ER Supplement 04-2004, NWSI 10-1603, and the on line version of the [Eastern Region Significant Event Notification Resource Page](#) (available through the online SDM) when answering these questions.

SECTION 1 - CRITERIA

Please indicate whether each of the following events would require your WFO/RFC to immediately notify ERH.

- Employee gets stuck in mud while driving truck through field. _____
- Kayaker drowns on a major River (no flooding) _____
- Kayaker drowns on a major River (flooding) _____
- Employee runs into moose on way to work and is admitted to hospital _____
- 88D crashes on clear weekday night at 1 am
(you’ve decided to wait for ET to arrive at 7am) _____
- Gasoline tanker truck slides off icy road and explodes _____
- School bus hits patch of black ice and rolls over.
Eight children injured _____
Two people washed off rocks and presumed
drowned while watching high surf from winter storm. _____
- Employee wearing bright orange hat bitten by dog (requiring
treatment) while taking snow survey. _____
- Lightning strikes and kills boater _____
- Elderly man found frozen to death after wandering out of care facility
on sub-zero night _____
- Ten people taken to hospital after multiple-vehicle pileup in fog _____
- Two people drown while pleasure boating _____

Hurricane Watch issued for all of New England and your office is the northernmost extent of the Watch area _____

Avalanche kills skier on Mt. Washington _____

Wildfire burns nine acres of grassland _____

Possible F3 Tornado with 20 min lead time and no deaths _____

Inadvertent release of a Special Weather Statement _____

SECTION 2 - HYDRO-METEOROLOGICAL EVENTS

For overnight hydrometeorological events, by what time does a report have to be filed with ERH?

For events that occur during normal business hours, are you required to send a text message to ERH?

Prior to sending a text message, what else are you required to do?

For notification purposes, what four items must be included in the text message?

For the text message, how many characters can be included in the text message?

What are the different methods that can be utilized to send a text message to ERH?

If you decide to send the text message via your NOAA e-mail account, who do you address the email to?

SECTION 3 – EQUIPMENT OUTAGES

What software do you use to enter information concerning an equipment outage prior to sending ERH a text message?

On the ER notification resource page, what does *after an Electronics Staff “first look”* mean if the outage occurs before or after normal business hours?

SECTION 4 - OTHER

In terms of notification, what do you need to do if you inadvertently send out a test product?

In terms of notification, what do you need to do if you are served a subpoena?

In terms of notification, what do you need to do if an office calls for an unscheduled service backup?

In terms of notification, what do you need to do if the State Police ask you to send out an Amber Alert?

APPENDIX C

INTERNAL WFO/RFC DRILL COMPLETION CHECKLIST

WFO/CWSU/RFC name _____ Date _____

Instructions: Place a checkmark next to all drills completed by all appropriate staff members during the past fiscal year (Oct 1 – Sep 30).

- 1) Tornado/Severe Weather _____
- 2) River/Flash Flood _____
- 3) Winter Weather _____
- 4) Dam Break _____
- 5) Hurricane/Tropical Storm * _____
- 6) Coastal Flood * _____
- 7) Hazardous Material _____
- 8) Homeland Security/Civil Emergency _____
- 9) Service Backup _____
- 10) Communications Failure _____
- 11) Power Failure _____
- 12) Aircraft Accident _____
- 13) Notification to ERH _____
- 14) Other ** _____ (Please identify drill type(s))

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

*Performed at coastal WFOs, their backup WFOs and ALY only
 **Locally required WFO/CWSU/RFC drills not specified in this supplement, e.g. Earthquake, Snowmelt, River Ice, Safe Boating, Fire Weather, Drought, etc.

APPENDIX D

CWSU Name: _____

CWSU CONVECTIVE WEATHER DRILL

(Please complete and place in MIC's mailbox by May 1st)

1. Charlie gate, located near Lucketts, VA is a very weather sensitive location for departures from the DC metros for PCT. True or False

2. What 2 new WSR-88D products are now available on WARP since it now receives digital rather than analog radar data??

3. Please write a CWA for the following scenario: at 11am EDT on May 10th a thunderstorm cluster 25nm in diameter has just developed near JYO and the 10,000ft winds are from 250 degrees at 28kts. The EET is 25,000ft and growing.

4. Looking at lapse rates and veering winds on ACARS soundings can give an idea of stability changes and chance of thunderstorm formation. True or False

5. Looking at developing CU cloud fields on visible satellite image(s) can give information on _____ and _____.

6. Please name a product on the FxConnect you use in your procedures or that you display for your met watch:

7. On BUFKIT when you have upward vertical motion near the Level of Free Convection you have a better chance for thunderstorm formation. True or False.

When the 0-6km bulk wind shear vector is parallel to a front or upper level winds there is a better chance for multi-cell thunderstorms forming _____ and _____.