

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

Notice SEM-43

For: State and County Offices

FSA Emergency Incident and Weather Related Reporting Requirements

Approved by: Deputy Administrator for Management



1 Overview

A Background

Effective and timely communication between the national office and state offices, during an emergency or as soon as practical, will enable the national office to gain situational awareness and provide necessary support to the impacted offices as needed. Incident reporting is also used to keep the Office of the Secretary, sub-cabinet members, and other department and agency leadership officials informed, updated, and advised on the status of FSA personnel and facilities.

B Purpose

This notice informs state and county offices of reporting requirements for the following:

- emergency incidents, and
- weather related events.

C Emergency Incident Reporting Point of Contacts

State offices must report emergency incidents to all of the following:

- FSA EPD by e-mail to **RA.DCWASHING3.FSA.EPD**,
- Robert Haughton, EPD Director, by e-mail to **robert.haughton@wdc.usda.gov**,
- Greg Diephouse, Deputy Administrator for Field Operations (DAFO), by e-mail to **gregory.diephouse@wdc.usda.gov**, and
- John Chott, Assistant to DAFO, by e-mail to **john.chott@wdc.usda.gov**.

Disposal Date

September 1, 2015
1-12-15

Distribution

State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

1 Overview (Continued)

D Definition of an Emergency Incident

An emergency incident means **any** incident that impacts or has the potential to adversely affect an FSA facility or personnel, such as:

- fire,
- flooding,
- power outages that result in a significant disruption in service, such as not able to service customers,
- office closures,
- robbery/theft,
- active shooter in the area,
- threats to employees or facilities,
- vandalism of property, and/or
- inclement weather that results in office closures, delayed opening, early closure, or disruption in service.

2 Emergency Incident Reporting Action

A State Office Action

State offices must provide situational awareness to the national office with timely reporting of any incident that may have a potential adverse impact to FSA facilities or personnel, such as vandalism of property, fire, power outages, robbery/theft, active shooter in the area, and/or threats to employees or facilities.

Reporting emergency incidents must:

- be done by e-mail,
- provide facts from reliable sources, such as:
 - the local news or the local radio station is reporting there is a silo on fire in the vicinity of county office A, or
 - local law enforcement has notified county office B there is an active shooter in the area and to lockdown the facility.

Important: Do **not** report word of mouth information about an incident.

2 Emergency Incident Reporting Action (Continued)

A State Office Action (Continued)

State offices must include the following information in their e-mail:

- the nature of the emergency/incident,
- the FSA offices impacted,
- the impact on FSA personnel; such as, employees not able to meet their work schedules, employees having to relocate to a different service center, or employees on leave because of disaster related activities,
- the impact on an FSA service center; such as, a service center is flooded, there is no electricity, the facility cannot open for business because of structural damage,
- the state or county office's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) has been activated, and
- the impact on FSA's mission and ability to serve the public.

The state office must forward all additional information as it becomes known. EPD will also contact the state office directly for follow-up information as necessary.

3 Weather Related Reporting Action

A County Office Action

Every year, unforeseen weather events (ice, snow, tornadoes, flash floods, etc.) occur that affect FSA state and county office operations, due to office closures, delays, or early dismissals.

The USDA operations center (OpsCenter) provides USDA leadership with a Daily Situational Summary Report, by 9:00 a.m. EST under these circumstances.

County offices must report office delayed openings, closures, or early dismissals to their state office in accordance with the weather reporting procedures established by the state office. County offices need to report this information as early as possible so it can be included in the state office report to EPD, which is required by 8:30 a.m. EST.

Important: If county offices are unable to meet the 8:30 a.m. EST deadline for reporting, the county office status report must be provided as soon possible to the state office regardless of the time.

3 Weather Related Reporting Action (Continued)

B State Office Action

The state office must report any office delayed openings, closures, or early dismissals and how many FSA employees are impacted. This information is to be provided to EPD by e-mail at **RA.DCWASHING3.FSA.EPD**. EPD will contact the state office directly if follow-up information is required.

Examples: The following offices are on a delayed opening today due to ice:

- county office A – two hour delay – opening at 10:00 a.m. There are 17 FSA employees affected.
- county office B – three hour delay – opening at 11:00 a.m. There are eight FSA employees affected.
- county office C is closed for the day due to snow. There are 12 FSA employees affected.
- county office E has a two hour early dismissal due to snow-closing at 2:30 p.m. There are 12 employees affected.

Delayed openings and closure status reporting must be provided by 8:30 a.m. EST, if possible, for inclusion in the USDA's Daily Situation Summary Report. If offices are unable to meet the 8:30 a.m. EST deadline, the office status reporting shall be reported as soon as the state office receives notifications of delayed openings, closures, or early releases. EPD will provide all the information received regarding an office's status to the USDA OpsCenter.