



10-Minute Supervisor Trainings

Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission

NOVEMBER 2013

CRISIS PLANS

As we all learned in October, sometimes forces outside of our control require conservation districts to be out of their regular operating space. These forces are not just governmental shutdowns, but could also be local events such as tornadoes, floods, or fires. It is important that each conservation district has a plan for what they will do when and if they are not able to get into the office.

Contact information:

Every member of the board should have working contact information for every other member of the board. Most supervisors are in the habit of relying on the district staff for this information, but if the district employees were personally affected by whatever crisis event is keeping the district office closed, they may not be available to gain this information.

In addition to the board supervisors being able to be in contact with one another, it is also important that DOC and NRCS also have multiple ways to get in touch with the district. Both partners may have important information to get to the district, and if the only contact information available is an email address that has to be retrieved inside the office, that information may not get to the district.

Each district should choose 2 people (at least 1 should be a board member) to serve as emergency contacts for the district. The contact information for these two people should be given to DOC and NRCS and should be used on all notices regarding the office being closed. The telephone numbers or email addresses provided should be able to be used outside of the district office (i.e., it can't be the district telephone number or a ky.nacdnet.net email address).



Things to take when leaving the office:

Assuming that the office closure is something that can be foreseen, the district might have the opportunity to take items before the office closure that will help the district run until the district office reopens. These things should include items such as the district checkbook, any district-owned equipment (computer, printer, etc.), financial documents, personnel folders, documentation on unpaid projects, etc. Each district should decide for itself what is necessary for the day to day operations.

Electronic backups:

Financial information and other irreplaceable documents should always have an electronic backup. These backups should be stored off-site so that they can be retrieved outside of the office and also so that, in the case of office destruction, they are still available. If the office staff chooses to backup to a flash drive or external hard drive, this item should be taken off-site and stored in a secure location. If the office staff chooses to backup to the cloud, there are many options available for free (examples include Dropbox, Google Drive, Bitcasa, etc.). All electronic media is only as secure as the password, so it's important to use good password selection. Passwords should be at least 8 characters, include numbers and letters, include special characters, use odd capitalization, and should not be kept in an easy to find location. This password should be known by the district employee and at least one supervisor.

Our office is closed. Now what?

1. Decide on a location for the office to be temporarily (during the federal government shutdown, many districts worked out of the cooperative extension office or the courthouse).
2. Let all board members, advisors, field rep, district conservationist, etc. know the plan for office operations.
3. Post a sign on the office door with new location information and the contact information discussed previously.
4. Let the community know the new location information. This might include a posting at the courthouse or at the local farm supply store. It should also include an announcement in the local newspaper. Postings should be placed in areas where they might be seen by your customers.