

AD HOC COMMITTEES

FEDERAL SHUTDOWN PROCEDURES

Committee was appointed to develop recommended procedures for Conservation Districts to discuss when developing policy for Conservation District if a Federal Shutdown should occur. A copy of this document available in this handbook. (See contents for page number)

NCDEA

The National Conservation District Employees Association (NCDEA) suggests that the following items be considered when Conservation Districts develop policies for their local district in the case of a Federal Shutdown. We know all items listed may not be applicable to each district.

- ❖ **Will the District Office stay open during a Federal Shutdown? Yes (see below) No**
(Decide if you need some policy or announcement that the district will be closed due to federal closure.

If a District plans to continue working these items may need to be considered when making a policy for each individual District

- ❖ **Location** that employees will be able to work
 - Home
 - Neighboring County
 - Local Courthouse
 - Stand-alone District office
 - Sister Agency Office in another building
 - If District pays rent in USDA co-located building, District will have authority to enter building to continue daily operations *only* if the District also pays utilities/phone for the rented area
 - Other
- ❖ **Materials** that employees will need to continue to do their job
 - **Finance**
 - Checkbooks
 - Deposit books
 - Financial Records
 - Safe Deposit Keys
 - Credit Cards
 - Active Cost Share Reports
 - Password Book is applicable
 - Materials for board meetings
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- **Office Supplies (Only Items that District has purchased)**
 - Copier paper
 - Pens
 - And supplies needs to complete job
- **Producers' folders** that are actively be worked on
(This does not include NRCS cost share programs)
 - Cost Share folders
 - Grant Materials
- **Educational materials** for school projects
 - Charts
 - Materials to complete educational projects
 - School programs
 - Field days
 - Eco Meets
 - Farm Safety Days, etc.
- **District Equipment** that can be removed from office
 - Laptop
 - Portable Copiers
 - Portable Printers
 - Scanners
 - GPS
 - Level
 - Transit
 - Measuring Wheel
 - Survey Equipment
 - Districts will have to provide their own access to the internet during a federal closure
- **Vehicle**
 - Since NRCS vehicles will not be available, District should make policy concerning reimbursement of mileage if employee is required to use personal vehicle
 - May consider a set monthly rate for District employee reimbursement for use of personal vehicle
 - Districts may use or purchase their own vehicle for use for field work or district related work

❖ **Communication to keep Districts and District Staff informed of federal activity & decisions**

➤ **Agreement**

- A written agreement with USDA
 - Time of notification to District of date of shutdown
 - Time allowed to remove items from office
 - Partner agencies communicate with District of federal shutdown activity
 - NRCS Representative should be appointed to communicate to the District Board and Staff of shutdown progress

➤ **Email (*No Federal Government servers/equipment may be used during the shutdown*)**

- District create their own email address since all NRCS email will not be accessible
- District appoint someone to let employees know when they may enter federal building again by email or phone calls
- Keep District website updated to keep clients informed

➤ **Phone Calls**

- District set up their own phone number for customers to call
- Put contact information for the District on radio and in local paper

➤ **District Property**

- District staff should contact Chairman of District Board with details of location of financial records, files, etc.

❖ **Backups**

- District should do backups of all District materials before shutdown of office
- Keep backups in another location during shutdown
- District may need to consider purchasing an external hard drive to save district files

❖ **District Projects**

- How does District's plan to complete active projects in a timely manner
- If NRCS personnel are not available to sign off on project, will appropriate District staff have NRCS delegated job approval authority?