

United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Wildlife Services Directive

WS 2.605
9/10/2021

WS SAFETY AND HEALTH PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE

To provide personnel with the requirements and responsibilities for the Wildlife Services (WS) Safety and Health (S&H) Program.

2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This Directive replaces WS Directive 2.605 WS Safety and Health Program, dated October 7, 2005, and WS Directive 2.601 Safety, dated October 7, 2005.

3. AUTHORITY

- a. Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (84 Stat. 1590 et seq., 29 U.S.C. 651 et seq.). Section 19 of the Act contains special provisions to assure safe and healthful working conditions for Federal employees. It is the responsibility of the head of each Federal agency to establish and maintain an effective and comprehensive occupational safety and health program which is consistent with the standards promulgated under section 6 of the Act.
- b. Executive Order 12196, Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees, issued February 26, 1980. This Executive Order prescribes additional responsibilities with which the heads of agencies shall operate their safety and health programs.

4. WS SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICY

- a. The WS Program will furnish to each employee a place of employment which is free from or protected against recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm. The WS Program will comply with all applicable standards of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).
- b. WS supervisors will promote and demonstrate a safe work environment and attitude among personnel. Supervisors will identify known hazards, including wildlife-borne diseases, in advance of work assignments. Supervisors will inform personnel of the identified hazards in the workplace, and provide personnel with adequate information, training, and personal protective equipment. Supervisors will ensure their personnel follow applicable directives and regulations.

- c. WS personnel will establish and maintain a work attitude and philosophy that elevates workplace safety and health to a high priority and will work cooperatively to promote a safe and healthy work environment. Personnel will comply with applicable standards, directives, and regulations, and will use safety equipment, personal protective equipment, and other devices and procedures provided or directed by the Program for their protection. Personnel are required to report unsafe and unhealthful working conditions, and injuries, accidents and illnesses stemming from workplace conditions to their supervisor.

5. WS SAFETY AND HEALTH PROGRAM

- a. The WS Safety and Health (S&H) Manager provides oversight of the WS S&H Program and serves as the primary point of contact between WS and the APHIS Safety, Health, and Environmental Protection Branch (SHEPB). The WS S&H Manager formulates WS specific safety and occupational health policy, guidance, and written procedures; and provides technical guidance to the WS Management Team (MT), State Directors, Program Coordinators, Project Leaders, and supervisors in identifying, evaluating, and integrating safety and health practices into WS activities.
- b. The State Director, Program Coordinator, and Field Station Leader will designate a Safety Coordinator to serve as the safety and health point of contact for their respective program or location. Safety Coordinators may be required to provide or coordinate safety training and information for the work unit personnel, conduct work site inspections and communicate with the Collateral Duty Safety and Health Officer (CDSHO) and the WS S&H Manager. The APHIS S&H Manual describes the responsibilities and training requirements for the Safety Coordinator.
- c. WS managers and supervisors have overall responsibility for the safety and health of personnel within their span of control. Managers and supervisors will address concerns made by subordinates and resolve justifiable concerns. Managers and supervisors will relay safety and health concerns to their Safety Coordinator, the WS S&H Committee, and to the WS S&H Manger as appropriate.
- d. WS personnel are responsible for advising their supervisor and Safety Coordinator about potential and actual workplace hazards or hazardous work conditions. WS personnel are encouraged to contact the Safety Coordinator regarding safety and health training opportunities, personal protective equipment, accident reporting, defensive driver training, and other pertinent subjects.
- e. The WS Eastern and Western Regional Directors and National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) Director will appoint one person to serve as their respective CDSHO. The CDSHO will serve as a member of the WS S&H Committee and will also serve as the liaison between their Safety Coordinators and the WS S&H Manager. The APHIS S&H Manual describes the responsibilities and training requirements for the CDSHO.

- f. The WS S&H Committee, in accordance with 29 CFR 1960, Basic Program Elements for Federal Employee Occupational Safety and Health Programs and Related Matters, is comprised of the CDSHOs and an additional representative from the Regions and NWRC, and a representative of both the WS Aviation Safety Program and the WS Deputy Administrator's Office. The WS S&H Manager and the WS MT Champion serve as advisors to the committee.

- g. The purpose of the WS S&H Committee is to provide leadership and guidance on issues of safety and health and advise the WS MT of the goals and outputs. The mission of WS S&H Committee is to promote, guide, support, monitor and assist in the execution of the Agency's safety and health policies and program within WS workplaces and organizational units.

5. SCOPE

This Directive is applicable to all WS personnel and all persons under the supervision of WS including official volunteers.

6. REFERENCES

- a. Public Law 91-596, Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970
- b. Executive Order 12196, Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees
- c. APHIS 4790 - APHIS Safety and Health Manual
- d. 29 CFR 1960, Basic Program Elements for Federal Employee Occupational Safety and Health Programs and Related Matters

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