



National Weather Service ends 2014 with a \$35 million carry-over in funds used to hire employees – Meanwhile the agency rolls the dice on mission critical functions due to understaffing

(January 16, 2015) As the front line emergency essential employees of the National Weather Service struggle with vacancies across the country, the agency is sitting on a healthy stack of carry over funds from FY 14. The two accounts from which virtually all NWS employees are funded, “Local Warnings and Forecasts” and “Central Forecast Guidance” have \$35,379,173 combined carry over funds from FY14. Meanwhile, the number of non-supervisory, non-managerial employees at the NWS fell from 3,877 to 3,495 between September 2010 and December 2014 - reflecting a 10 percent reduction in a predominately classified “emergency-essential” workforce.

“In 2013 the National Weather Service blamed the 10 percent reduction in staff on sequestration and the hiring freeze, in 2014 the agency claimed it was recovering and blamed the 10 percent reduction on Workforce Management,” said NWSEO Executive Vice President Bill Hopkins. “Meanwhile, we have forecasters scrambling to fill in the gaps on rotating shift work for the safety of the American public. Some have literally worked themselves sick with overtime. Hearing there is \$35 million in carry over funds while the trend of reducing the workforce continues is like hitting them in the stomach with a rock.”

NWSEO is reaching out to Congress and key stakeholders to keep them informed of the dire situation. Currently, there are 200 vacant meteorologist positions at Weather Forecast Offices, National Forecasting Centers (such as the National Hurricane Center in Miami and the Severe Storms Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma), and the Center Weather Service Units that the NWS operates at the 21 FAA Air Route Traffic Control Centers. All of these positions are classified as “emergency essential.”

According to the agency, the NWS processed more than 500 recruitment actions in FY 14, but nearly 80 percent of these recruitments were internal promotions. In short, more operational NWS employees retire each year than are being hired. As the National Academy of Public Administration wrote in 2013, “[i]n the last three years, the NWS has realized personnel losses at a greater rate than it has been hiring. If this trend continues, the NWS is in danger of losing a significant segment of the workforce and will not be able to renew itself at a sustainable rate. . .” NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, FORECAST FOR THE FUTURE: ASSURING THE CAPACITY OF THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE, 39 (2013).

NWSEO Negotiated Health and Wellness Rebate

If you started the year with a resolution to get healthy – make sure you also get reimbursed for your efforts. The NWSEO negotiated National Weather Service Health Club and Wellness Services Fees Reimbursement Program makes it easier to keep your health club costs low. Through the program, which is open to all NWS employees, you may receive up to \$300 per year as a health club

membership dues rebate. The rebate also covers certain weight loss and smoking cessation programs. In order to be eligible for the programs, it is important that the correct forms are submitted before the due dates.

[Form A](#) must be submitted between January 1, 2015 and February 28, 2015 to receive benefits for 2015.

[Form B](#) must be submitted between January 1, 2015 and February 28, 2015 for reimbursement for the year 2014.

Complete information on the [National Weather Service Health Club and Wellness Services Fees Reimbursement Program is available here](#).

Remember, this health club and wellness benefit is available to you solely because of the work of NWSEO. It is just one more way to demonstrate the strength and benefits your membership provides.

NWSEO Minimal Dues Increase is 22 Cents per Pay Period

Active NWSEO membership is the lifeblood of our professional organization. It is through the strength of our members that NWSEO has the ability to help save jobs and programs, and forward the life-saving mission of the National Weather Service.

NWSEO dues for 2015 are set at only one percent of your salary to a maximum per pay period amount of \$21.80. This new amount reflects a minimal increase in dues for 2015 at just 22 cents per pay period. The rate usually increases each year in accordance with the OPM salary rate increase for the rest of the United States. The rate is set by the convention, which tied the increase to the rest of the USA Cost of Living Adjustment.

If you pay by credit card, monthly dues for 2015 are \$47.23. Semi-annual dues for 2015 are \$283.40 and annual dues are \$566.80.

NWSEO is the only organization with the ability to lobby Congress and the Administration to preserve NWS jobs, promote better working conditions and career promotions for the NWS, and participate in collective bargaining. Thank you for your membership.

-NWSEO-

**No one cares more for National Weather Service employees than
National Weather Service employees.**

**No one works harder for National Weather Service employees than
National Weather Service employees.
We are NWSEO.**