

**Forest Service Handbook  
National Headquarters - Washington Office  
Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Handbook 6709.11 – Health and Safety Code Handbook  
Zero Code**

**Amendment:** 6709.11-2018-1

**Effective date:** December 03, 2018

**Duration:** This amendment is effective until superseded or removed.

**Approved by:** Robert Velasco II, Acting Deputy Chief, Business Operations

**Date approved:** November 28, 2018

**Responsible Staff:**

**Last Change:** 6709.11-2016-1 to 6709.11\_20

**Superseded Document(s):** Entire Handbook; 6709.11, Contents, Amendment 6709.11-99-1, December 01, 1999; 6709.11\_zero\_code, Amendment 6709.11-99-1, December 01, 1999; 6709.11\_10, Amendment 6709.11-2015-1, December 07, 2015; 6709.11\_20-24, Amendment 6709.11-2016-1, July 19, 2016; 6709.11\_25-27, Amendment 6709.11-99-1, December 01, 1999; 6709.11\_30, Amendment 6709.11-99-1, December 01, 1999; 6709.11\_40, Amendment 6709.11-99-1, December 01, 1999; 6709.11\_50, Amendment 6709.11-99-1, December 01, 1999; 6709.11\_60, Amendment 6709.11-99-1, December 01, 1999; 6709.11\_70, Amendment 6709.11-99-1, December 01, 1999; 6709.11, Glossary, Amendment 6709.11-99-1, December 01, 1999; 6709.11, Index, Amendment 6709.11-99-1, December 01, 1999

**Digest:** Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

**6709.11:** Revised Handbook in its entirety.

**12 - 13:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Motorized Vehicles and Specialized Equipment and recodes direction with revisions to FSM 7130.

**14:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Aviation and recodes direction with revisions to the 2016 National Aviation Safety Management System Guide.

**15:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Watercraft Safety and recodes direction with revisions to FSM 7130.

**22:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Resource Management.

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**22.3:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Recreation and recodes direction with revisions to FSM 2300.

**22.4:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Forest Management and recodes directions with revisions to FSM 2000.

**22.5:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Watershed and Air Management and recodes direction with revisions to FSM 2500.

**22.6:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Wildlife, Fish, and Sensitive Plant Management and recodes directions with revisions to FSM 2630.

**22.62:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Diving and recodes directions with revisions to FSH 4209.11.

**22.7:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Special Uses and recodes directions with revisions to FSM 2700.

**22.8:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Minerals and Geology and recodes directions with revisions to FSM 2800.

**23:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for State and Private Forestry.

**24:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Research.

**25.1:** Removes codes, captions, and direction and recodes directions with revisions to Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations.

**25.2:** Removes codes, captions, and direction on Smokejumping and recodes directions with revisions to Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations.

**25.3:** Removes codes, captions, and direction on Law Enforcement and recodes directions with revisions to FSH 5309.11.

**26:** Removes codes, captions, and direction on Management Services.

**27:** Removes codes, captions, and direction on Engineering and recodes directions with revisions to FSM 7000 Series Publications.

**36:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Electrical Standards and recodes direction with revisions to FSM 7600.

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**37:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Occupational Health and Environmental Controls and recodes directions with revisions to FSM 7400.

**38:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for General Environmental Controls and recodes direction with revisions to FSM 7400.

**44:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Heavy Equipment and recodes direction with revisions to EM 7130-2.

**45:** Removes codes, captions, and direction for Equipment Development and recodes direction with revisions to FSM 7120.

**70:** Changes chapter caption from “Job Hazard Analysis (Form FS-6700-7) and Personal Protective Equipment” to “Personal Protective Equipment, Glossary, and Index” and revises chapter in its entirety.

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The Health and Safety Code Handbook is the primary source of standards for safe and healthful workplace conditions, project inspections, operational procedures and practices in the Forest Service. In addition to the standards and regulations of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The primary audience for the Handbook includes first-line Supervisors, work leaders, and employees. The Handbook's direction applies to all Forest Service employees.

## 01 - Authority

1. Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (sec. 19 and 24), as amended (Title 29 United States Code, sections 668 and 673 (29 U.S.C. 668 and 673)). This regulation states each employee shall comply with occupational safety and health standards and all rules, regulations, and orders issued pursuant to this Act which are applicable to his own actions and conduct.

a. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1910 (29 CFR 1910). This regulation contains occupational safety and health standards which have been found to be national consensus standards or established Federal standards.

b. Occupational Safety and Health Standards, 29 Part 1926, Construction Standards (29 CFR 1926). This part sets forth the safety and health standards promulgated by the Secretary of Labor under section 107 of the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act.

c. Occupational Safety and Health Programs and Related Matters, 29 CFR Part 1960 (29 CFR 1960). Basic Program Elements for Federal Employee. This regulation contains special provisions to assure safe and healthful working conditions for Federal employees. Under this section, 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.

2. Executive Order 12196, February 26, 1980. Explains the required occupational safety and health programs for Federal employees.

3. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration safety regulations regarding Federal Motor Carriers are found in 49 CFR. Is responsible for regulating and providing safety oversight of commercial motor vehicles (CMVs).

4. National Fire Codes of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). This is a global nonprofit organization devoted to eliminating death, injury, property and economic loss due to fire, electrical and related hazards.

5. The Master Agreement between the Forest Service and National Federation of Federal Employees, Article 27, Safety and Health. Defines the elements required to create and maintain a safe and healthful workplace.

## **02 - Objective**

To ensure safe and healthful workplaces by instituting procedures and practices that help prevent accidents, injuries, and illnesses to Forest Service employees, cooperators, contractors, volunteers, and the visiting public.

## **04 - Responsibility**

### **04.1 - Line Officers**

Line Officers have the responsibility to provide for the health, safety, and training of employees. Line Officers provide professional leadership and guidance to employees. The appropriate Line Officer shall approve and review at least annually all completed risk assessments (RAs), to include job hazard analyses (JHAs) (sec. 05).

### **04.2 - First-line Supervisors**

First-line Supervisors are responsible for identifying job-related hazards and to eliminate potential causes of accidents, injuries, and illnesses at worksites to the best of their ability through the following:

1. Considering an employee's identified personal, physical, and mental condition when assigning duties.
2. Knowing the type of equipment being used and its limitations.
3. Conducting a RA with involved employees for each work project or activity where the risk of serious injury or significant property or equipment damage is highly likely (FSM 6719, form FS-6700-7 or equivalent). Employees may request a RA review with their supervisor at any time.
4. Eliminating or minimizing unnecessary risks by reviewing the work project or activity and by identifying, evaluating, correcting, and following up on recognized hazards.
5. Conducting "tailgate" safety and health sessions to emphasize precautions identified in RAs (sec. 05).
6. Making inquiries into all incidents, accidents, and injuries that are observed or reported; following through with the appropriate investigation procedures and corrective actions (FSM 6731); and ensuring that all threats, assaults, intimidation, or other like acts are reported immediately through appropriate offices.

### 04.3 - Work Leaders

It is the responsibility of work leaders to address the following:

1. Assist in the development of RAs.
2. Distribute and balance workloads among their crew members.
3. Provide new crew members with on-the-job training.
4. Ensure crew members engage in safe work practices.

### 04.4 - All Employees

All employees are responsible for the following:

1. Inform their Supervisor of any personal, physical, or mental conditions that could compromise the safety or health of the crew or themselves.
2. Comply with established safety and health procedures and practices.
3. Take the initiative for their own safety and health and that of their co-workers by pointing out unsafe conditions and unsafe work practices. Upon any findings immediately report any threats by persons against themselves or Forest Service facilities to their Supervisor and other Agency staff, such as Law Enforcement.

### 05 - Definitions

**First-line Supervisor.** Any employee responsible for the planning or implementing of project work activities of other employees.

**Risk Assessment (RA).** A systematic process to identify safety and health hazards in a work project or activity and to develop abatement actions for those hazards. A RA results in a document that outlines special procedural and personal protective equipment/clothing (PPE) requirements, qualifications, training, safety practices, and emergency evacuation procedures. RAs are subjective and must allow for some flexibility. Line Officers, Supervisors, and other employees may utilize the RA to justify specific PPE needs or variances for a particular work project or activity. The most common method of documenting RAs within the Forest Service is the use of the JHA (form FS-6700-7 or equivalent), but this is not the only risk-assessment tool available.

**Line Officer.** Any employee, from the Chief and Associate Chief to District Ranger, who carries out line authority.

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**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).** PPE includes, but is not limited to, protection for the eyes, head, and extremities; protective clothing; respiratory devices; and protective shields and barriers.

**Tailgate Safety and Health Session.** A documented discussion among First-line Supervisors, work leaders, and crew members concerning aspects of a work project or activity. These sessions take place before a new project or activity is begun, when changes are made (such as location, new crew members, or job responsibilities), or whenever employees believe such a session is needed. Topics often focus on the recognized hazards associated with the job and the methods to mitigate such hazards.

**Work Leaders.** Individuals involved in day-to-day field-crew supervision. Work leaders report crew progress and problems to the first-line supervisor.

## **08 - Accident Investigation And Reporting**

Every occupational illness and accident, including accidents involving property and equipment damage, regardless of how minor, warrants a review. The extent of such review must reflect the seriousness of the accident and Forest Service involvement.

### **08.1 - Fatalities, Serious Injuries, or Overnight Hospitalization of Employees, Enrollees, Cooperators, Contract Employees, or Private Citizens**

For accidents or incidents resulting in fatality, serious injury, or overnight hospitalization of three or more employees, cooperators, contract employees, or private citizens with direct Forest Service involvement, refer to FSM 6730 for required notifications and reviews.