

# NOVA SCOTIA AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

## Storm and Emergency Closure Policy/Procedures

January 2006

### **Policy**

The Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) falls within the **Storms or Hazardous Conditions Policy** of the Government of Nova Scotia. The following is intended to clarify the aforementioned policy's application at NSAC.

### **Storm and Emergency Closure Policy/Procedures**

The NSAC will be "closed" because of severe weather when normal operations are not possible and could pose a danger to students, staff and faculty while on campus, or large numbers are prevented from coming to campus or returning safely to their homes in Truro and surrounding areas.

For the NSAC to be "closed" means that classes are not held, meetings and other scheduled events are cancelled, and library and other non-essential areas are closed. Examinations are also cancelled and normally rescheduled to the first day after the published exam schedule. Deadlines for assignments and other submissions due on a "closed" day are postponed until the same hour on the next business day on which the NSAC is not "closed."

While employees are expected to make every effort to report for duty and remain at their work stations during normal working hours, they are encouraged to assess conditions in their local areas. If they determine that conditions prevent them from getting to or from their workplace in a safe and timely manner, they may decide to take time off.

### **Explanation**

If Truro and surrounding area is hit by severe weather this procedure describes how the decision will be made regarding closing the NSAC. NSAC will "close" on the authority of the Deputy Minister, as delegated to the NSAC President, NSAC Vice President Administration or NSAC Vice President Academic (or their designates).

The closure procedure also describes how a decision will be made if NSAC must close during the day, or for the evening, because of severe weather.

Deadlines for assignments, job applications and other requirements are postponed to the same time on the next business day.

The Public Relations Coordinator will ensure that staff and students are informed of this decision through various media (Cat Country 99.5 FM / Big Dog 100.9 FM, CBC Halifax 89.1 FM, Country 101.9 FM, Q104 FM, Sun FM, CBC Charlottetown 96.1 FM) and NSAC's e-mail system. Only the Public Relations Coordinator, President, Vice President Administration or Vice President Academic are authorized to alert Media to the NSAC's closing. Printed copies of the procedure are available on request from the Safety and Security Office located at 11 River Road, Dairy Building, NSAC.

### **Interpretation**

Authorized personnel named in this procedure may name a designate or alternate to take action on their behalf, according to the NSAC Emergency Response Plan. The Public Relations Coordinator will maintain a current list of individuals to be consulted or notified about closings, with telephone numbers. When a decision by the President is required and the President is not available, the decision shall be made by the Vice President Administration or the Vice President Academic.

### **Required Services**

Even with official closure of the institution, NSAC may be home to students or conference clients and is home to animals. With all of these groups, a level of service must be maintained for their care, and the protection of life and property.

Services listed below are required:

1. Safety and Security
2. Food Service (if residences occupied)
3. Central Heating Plant
4. Snow removal
5. Employees responsible for animal care
6. Emergency Repair and Maintenance

Services listed below may be required and will be notified if services on site are necessary:

1. Switchboard Operator
2. Health Services
3. Residence/Conference
4. Public Relations

### **Classes**

Classes will not be held during "closed" periods and assignment deadlines occurring on a closed day must be extended by at least 24 hours. Faculty members and academic departments do not have the authority to make exceptions to this rule.

## **Employees**

Employees are paid for time during which the NSAC is “closed”, regardless of whether they are at work or not.

Employees may make a personal decision to take time off when the NSAC remains open. In such circumstances, time lost by an employee as a result of absence due to storm or hazardous conditions may:

- (i) be made up by the employee at a time agreed upon between the employee and the employee’s immediate supervisor, or
- (ii) be charged to the employee’s accumulated vacation, unused holiday time, or accumulated overtime where such an entitlement exists, or
- (iii) be taken as leave without pay.

Faculty and teaching staff that decide to take time off when the NSAC is open must notify their Department Head and the Registrar’s Office of their absence and class/lab cancellations. If possible, it is also recommended that they e-mail their students directly of class cancellations.

## **Procedure**

It is the responsibility of the President/Vice President Administration or designate to begin the notification process once the decision to close is made. Every effort will be made to confirm a closing by 6:30 a.m. When the closing has been confirmed, closing of the NSAC is automatic and the following will be the process for communication of the closing:

1. The VP Administration will contact the Public Relations Coordinator who is responsible to do the following things:
  - a. Notify local radio stations and other pertinent media sources that classes are cancelled.
  - b. Notify switchboard (telecommunications) who will respond appropriately to all calls.
  - c. Place an email message to all NSAC/NSDAF staff and students on the NSAC campus.
  - d. Post a notice on the main page of the NSAC website.
2. The VP Administration will contact the Physical Plant Manager who will in turn:
  - a. Notify Safety and Security Coordinator
  - b. Notify the Grounds Coordinators
  - c. Notify the Crops, Ruminant, and Monogastric Coordinators

3. The VP Administration will notify the Dean of Student Services, who will in turn:
  - a. Notify Residence/Business Conference Coordinator
  - b. Notify the Food Staff Manager
4. The VP Administration will notify the Human Resources Consultant and the Financial Services Manager.

Individual staff, faculty members and students are responsible for checking the NSAC (nsac.ca) website, as well as local radio stations, during severe weather conditions, for notice of cancellations.

### **Daytime Closing**

The NSAC may “close” after classes and business hours have started for the day in extreme weather circumstances.

A decision to close during the day will be made by the President, Vice President Administration, or designate.

A decision to “close” during the day will specify whether the closing is “immediate” or at a stated hour. Unless otherwise specified the closing continues from that hour until the beginning of work on the next day. A class or examination that would continue past the specified closing hour is cancelled in its entirety. This will be communicated through the same process as in the “Procedure” section.

### **Closing Outside Normal Business Hours**

Any “closing” that involves the cancellation of evening classes will be determined during the working day according to the procedure described above.

If weather conditions justify closing the campus during late evening, so that any night shift staff are not required to come to work, the decision will be made by the President, Vice President Administration or designate in consultation with Safety and Security Coordinator who will notify the Public Relations Coordinator. The Public Relations Coordinator will initiate the appropriate communications procedure. Such a closing is effective until the next morning, by which time a decision will be made in the usual way about whether the NSAC should be closed for the day.

A message for Continuing Education students will be recorded on the Continuing Education main office phone (902-893-6666), when classes are cancelled due to severe weather conditions.

If weather conditions justify the closing of the campus on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, the President, Vice President Administration, or designate, in consultation with the Vice President

Academic and Safety & Security Coordinator will notify the Public Relations Coordinator, who will make such announcements as appropriate.

**Emergency Procedures to Assist Those Stranded on Campus**

1. As soon as a storm emergency situation has been declared, the Residence/Business Conference Coordinator will be notified by the Public Relations Coordinator.
2. The Residence/Business Conference Coordinator will:
  - a. require Dons and/or a group of RA’s to assist with this procedure.
  - b. communicate with Food Services to ensure all people stranded have food requirements met.
  - c. make available beds and temporary facilities to people stranded.
  - d. make available facilities for any stranded individual who has a particular health or physical problem.
3. Safety and Security personnel will check all buildings for stranded people and will advise them to communicate with the Residence/Business Conference Coordinator for assistance.
4. The Switchboard Operator will have information available as to the location for stranded people. Any particular problem should be directed to Residence/Business Conference Services @ 893-7519 or 893-6671.

**Other Situations**

This procedure can also be used if the NSAC must be “closed” for exceptional reasons unrelated to severe weather.

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Deputy Minister, NSDAF

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Date

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President, NSAC

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date