

# NEVADA-YUBA-PLACER LIGHTNING PLAN 2011



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## I. General

The purpose of the Lightning Plan is to facilitate the management of lightning caused fires within the Nevada-Yuba-Placer Unit. A two stage response is identified in the plan to meet different levels of hazard severity and lightning intensity. Activation Each Division will staff positions as needed to meet the present and expected size and/or complexity of their fires.

## II. Objectives

The purpose of the NEU Lightning Plan is to organize suppression and support functions during multiple lightning fires in a timely manner. The plan specifically addresses the following:

- Prompt activation of the plan.
- An appropriate response to current and expected activity.
- Prompt detection and reporting of fires.
- Clear, effective, and organized communications.
- Appropriate use of aircraft.
- Initiation of resource orders for additional equipment and support for changing circumstances.
- Initiation of suppression actions on all fires within the capabilities of the available resources.
- Pre-positioning of resources in affected area.
- Establishment of procedures for documentation of resource orders, fire organization, planning, mapping, and chronology of suppression actions.
- Prompt and appropriate allocation of resources.
- Ensuring cost effective use of available resources.
- Maintaining safe and efficient use of available resources.

## III. Plan Activation

The Unit Duty Chief will authorize the activation of the NEU Lightning Plan in conjunction with the Emergency Command Center and on duty Battalion Chiefs. The ECC will notify the Unit by radio that the NEU Lightning Plan has been activated and which Battalions are affected.

The Unit will be divided in one of two following options as needed.

- ◆ Option "A" - Modify Response Plan
  - Keep Unit as a whole
  - Utilize command frequencies as needed
  - Reduce response to appropriate levels based on Reports on Conditions and fire behavior.

- ◆ Option “B”
  - The Unit will be divided into Branches as needed, North, South, and or East.
    - North Division-Branch I
      - Battalions 12-Div A, 14-Div B, 16-Div C, 19-Div D
    - South Division-Branch II
      - Battalions 11/18-Div U, 13-Div W, 10/17-Div X
    - East Division-Branch III
      - Division Y/Z
  
- ◆ Option “C”
  - The Unit will be divided into Branches as needed, North, South, and or East.
    - North Division-Branch I
      - Division Nevada & Yuba
    - South Division-Branch II
      - Division Placer West, Lincoln Basin
    - East Division-Branch III
      - Eastside

#### IV. Detection

- Lookouts
  - Lookouts will notify the ECC of all new smokes and active cells. All radio traffic will be held to emergency traffic and updates on current conditions.
  - The following information will be provided by the lookout:
    - Direction (340 degrees)
    - Distance (Mileage)
    - Landmarks
    - Legal location if known
  - Smokes spotted outside Unit Boundaries or outside of State DPA will be reported to the ECC. The ECC will contact the appropriate center to report information.
  
- Supplemental Detection
  - Unit and Local Government personnel will provide supplemental detection in assigned areas. Personnel will report storm activity and new fire information.
  - All aerial recon will be requested through the ECC. Depending on lightning activity, pre-planned flights will be scheduled as needed.
  
- Remote Detection
  - The BLM lightning detection system will be used to identify general areas affected by strikes.

## V. Escaped or Complex Fires

If one or more fires develop beyond initial attack capabilities, they will be removed from the lightning plan organization. This will occur following concurrence with the Unit Duty Chief and ECC. A separate fire organization will be established under ICS and operated through the ECC under normal dispatch procedures.

## VI. Communication

- Branch Directors will utilize NEU frequencies for communication with the Divisions and ECC.
- Divisions will use assigned Command and Tactical frequencies
- Divisions will use Tactical frequencies for primary communication between resources and stations.
- Branch I and Division Communications
  - See attached organization chart
- Branch II and Division Communications
  - See attached organization chart
- Reporting new fires
  - Divisions will contact the ECC as necessary to report new fires and provide updated information
  - Prior to notifying the ECC of a new fire, the following information will be recorded.
    - Location of incident address or Latitude and Longitude (degrees, min format when possible).
    - Time of incident
    - Cause
    - Resources assigned
    - Size
    - Jurisdiction
    - Company Officer responsible for report
  - The ECC will build incidents for each fire and assign an incident number.
- Significant new fires
  - Divisions will immediately notify ECC of all significant fires that will require additional resources. The ECC will process requests for additional needs.
- It is imperative that an updated acreage on each fire is reported to the ECC daily prior to 17:00.
- A determination of DPA is imperative to assign the appropriate ECC and ordering point.

## VII. Air Branch

- All aircraft will be requested through the ECC.
- Aircraft utilization will be determined by the ECC and prioritized based on fire status.

## VIII. Ordering & Logistics

- Resource Ordering
  - The ECC will facilitate all ordering
- Logistical Support
  - The ECC will facilitate logistical support

Consider reflex time, assess resource and logistical needs and order early.

## IX. Resource Staging and Allocation

- Resources will be assigned to Branches and Divisions based on current and expected needs.
- During periods of expected lightning on the eastside, one engine and one handcrew will be assigned at the request of the Battalion.
- Staging will be the responsibility of the Branch or Division.

## X. Incident Dispatchers

- Each branch or division should assign personnel to coordinate and communicate with assigned resources.
- If fire activity dictates and ECC staffing allows, the ECC will provide a dispatcher for a Branch or Division.

## XI. Deactivation of Lightning Plan

The Unit Duty Chief will authorize the deactivation of the NEU Lightning Plan in conjunction with the Emergency Command Center and on duty Battalion Chiefs. The ECC will notify the Unit by radio that the NEU Lightning Plan has been deactivated, which Battalions are affected, and provide effected resources with new assignments.

## XII. Thunderstorm Safety

### THUNDERSTORM SAFETY

Thunderstorms cause significant hazards for wildland firefighters, including downbursts that can cause extreme fire behavior and lightning. When thunderstorm development is likely, lookouts should be posted and aware of signs of a developing storm. A sudden reversal in wind direction, a noticeable rise in wind speed, and a sharp drop in temperature may note the mature stage of a storm. Heavy rain, hail and lightning occur only in the mature stage of a thunderstorm. During a storm, use the following guidelines:

- Do not lie down.

The best position is sitting on the pack or crouching with feet close together.

Avoid sitting directly on the ground, if possible; but, if necessary, keep feet and butt close together.

Avoid grouping together. Keep a minimum of 15 feet between people when possible.

Removing caulk boots will not provide safety if stocking covered or bare feet are then in contact with the ground--don't bother!

- "Stay out of dry creek beds" is correct for flash floods, but has nothing to do with lightning.
- Handheld radios (with short rubber antennas) or cell phones are safe to use. Communication is vital to crew safety. Do not use land line radios or radios with elevated antennas.
- Wide, open spaces are better than trees or clumps of trees in the vicinity. Ridge tops, etc., should be avoided.
- If you feel the hair on your arms or head "stand up," there is a high probability of a strike in the vicinity. Crouch or sit on a pack.
- Put down all tools.
- Take shelter in vehicles if possible.

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