

CODE of ETHICS

for Instructors of the National Wildfire Suppression Association

Preamble

Wildland fire fighting agencies have relied heavily on the private sector to supply firefighters to suppress fires and assist with Department of Homeland Security activities for national security. More than half of the firefighters were employees of private contractors that bid their services to the agencies responsible for protection.

The wildland agencies require the contractors to train and certify their people to the standards established in the “Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification System Guide” (PMS 310-1). This guide was developed by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) to establish minimum standards for both agency and contract firefighters. Additional requirements for certification for contract firefighters can be found in geographical area Memorandums of Understanding and agency contracts.

NWCG has also established instructor levels and requirements. Course coordinators and instructors are the cornerstone for developing qualified personnel. The NWSA instructor, in their roles as fire suppression experts, seek to not only teach the required courses but instill a sense of safety awareness both on and off the fireline to all trainees.

The purpose of this **Code of Ethics** is to inspire, guide, and provide standards by which to judge conduct of NWSA Instructors in their professional teaching lives. Compliance with the code demonstrates members respect for the trainees, their safety awareness and mutual respect for all firefighters. On joining NWSA and becoming a certified instructor, a person assumes a special responsibility to the firefighting community by promising to uphold and abide by the following:

Principles and Pledges

1. Shall treat all students with respect and in a professional manner.
2. Shall not unfairly exclude any student from participation in any curriculum on the basis of age, race, color, sex, religion, national origin, marital status, or sexual orientation.
3. Shall not misrepresent his/her professional qualifications.
4. Shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about a colleague.
5. Shall not accept any gratuity, gift, or favor that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or actions.

Code of Ethics continued:

6. Respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law.
7. The Instructor exerts every effort to raise professional standards and enhance the public image of NWSA.
8. The course coordinator and instructor will adhere to the standards established by NWCG Instructor's Guide for each specific course. Particular emphasis will be given to instructor qualifications, course prerequisites, course/unit objectives, testing and evaluation of students, and course evaluations.
9. Instructors will adhere to guide lines established by the following NWCG publications:
 - a. Course Coordinators Guide, PMS 907
 - b. Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification Guide, PMS 310-1
 - c. Field Managers Course Guide
 - d. Geographical Memorandums of Understanding
 - e. NWSA Training Manual, February 2003
10. Instructors using their NWSA Instructor Certification to teach courses will use the NWSA Data Base to document all persons trained.

The National Wildfire Suppression Association Code of Ethics Agreement specifies the process through which a member's violation of the code may lead to expulsion from NWSA or other disciplinary action. No action will be taken unless a written complaint has been filed and submitted to the NWSA Executive Secretary.

Adopted by the NWSA Board of Directors, on December 15, 2003.

Agreed to by: _____, on _____
NWSA Instructor Signature

