

Provider Guide for
The State-based Occupational Health Surveillance
Clearinghouse

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1. Purpose

These procedures establish guidelines for the process by which state agencies (aka “providers”) submit documents to the State-based Occupational Health Surveillance Clearinghouse (aka “clearinghouse”). This process begins with the selection of appropriate documents and ends with submission of an RSS feed to the State-based Occupational Health Surveillance Clearinghouse of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

2. Background

2.1. Need for the State-based Occupational Health Surveillance Clearinghouse

The vision of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health is safety and health at work for all people through research and prevention. NIOSH sponsors many occupational health and safety programs to work towards this vision. In turn, the states conduct surveillance, write articles and develop outreach materials for at-risk populations.

Many of the state materials produced through NIOSH funding are classified as “gray literature.” Gray literature is open source literature that is not controlled by commercial publishing (e.g. pamphlets, flyers, educational brochures). It is important to retain copies of gray literature because: (1) they are part of program output and represent documentation of program activities, (2) they are not captured by popular search engines (i.e. PubMed, Google Scholar, and Web of Knowledge) and (3) they reflect the changing nature of state and national health priorities.

2.2. Mission and Goal of the State-based Occupational Health Surveillance Clearinghouse

The mission of the State-based Occupational Health Surveillance Clearinghouse is to organize state occupational health materials and make them universally accessible. To achieve this mission, the goal of the clearinghouse is to acquire information on the web-based location and other attributes of all occupational health publications produced by the state.

This clearinghouse will benefit both the state programs and NIOSH. All types of occupational health publications that the states choose to provide can be included in the clearinghouse: gray literature, peer-reviewed publications, NIOSH-sponsored research articles, and materials that were not funded by NIOSH. As a centralized repository of all state occupational health publications, these publications will be easier to locate and access. Additionally, NIOSH will be able to have a complete inventory of publications that were produced through its funding.

2.3. Submitting Publication Data to the clearinghouse

A state-managed RSS feed is the preferred method of collecting information for the clearinghouse. An RSS feed allows the provider to control the content of its own publications in the clearinghouse. For example, the state will be able to assign its own keywords and descriptions to its publications. Additionally, the state-managed RSS feed is automatically synchronized to the clearinghouse, allowing any additions or changes to the RSS feed to be reflected in the clearinghouse when the RSS feeds are processed weekly. Providers can also email NIOSH its RSS file or send NIOSH a list of its publications to include in the clearinghouse if creating an RSS feed is not feasible.

3. Entities Affected

These procedures are for any state agency or program that wishes to contribute to the State-based Occupational Health Surveillance Clearinghouse. Entities that contribute to the clearinghouse are referred to as “providers” in this document. A provider does not need to receive funding from NIOSH in order to contribute to the State-based Occupational Health Surveillance Clearinghouse.

4. Responsibilities

4.1. NIOSH.

NIOSH will ensure that the provider will receive support in the form of tools, manuals, and technical consultation as they develop an RSS feed for the State-based Occupational Health Surveillance Clearinghouse.

4.2. Provider

The provider will maintain an inventory of its publications and make it available to NIOSH (Section 5); the provider will make its publications publicly available on the internet; the provider will provide the URL of the publication’s internet-based location or the URL of the landing page of the publication (Section 5.3.4); and the provider will assign values to the clearinghouse fields (Section 5.3). Participation in this project is voluntary.

5. Procedures for providers to submit documents to the clearinghouse.

5.1. Select appropriate documents for the clearinghouse.

5.1.1. Inclusion criteria:

- 5.1.1.1. Any occupational health publication produced at the state level.
- 5.1.1.2. Occupational lead poisoning publications produced at the state level (e.g. Adult Blood Lead Exposure Surveillance Program (ABLES)).

5.1.1.3. Occupational pesticide poisoning publications produced at the state level (e.g. SENSOR-Pesticides).

5.1.1.4. *Err on the side of inclusion:* If it is uncertain whether the document belongs in the clearinghouse, include it.

5.1.2. Exclusion criteria:

5.1.2.1. Publications produced at the federal level, unless primary authorship is at the state level.

5.1.2.2. FACE Publications that were already submitted to the Division of Safety Research (DSR) at NIOSH do not need to be included. These publications are housed in a separate database and will be imported into the clearinghouse.

5.2. Create an RSS file for the clearinghouse.

There are two ways of creating an RSS file of the state occupational health publications. The first method, described below as Method A, uses the RSS editor (an application created by NIOSH) to create an RSS file. In the other method, Method B, the provider utilizes its existing publication database to complete fields for the RSS file. The resulting RSS file is the same regardless of which method is chosen.

Only the publications that are written in the RSS file will be displayed in the clearinghouse. As new publications are created, the provider does not need to create a new RSS file. Instead these publications can be added to the RSS file. As publications become obsolete, the provider can delete them from the RSS file so that they are not displayed in the clearinghouse.

Note: An RSS feed is written in extensible markup language (XML). RSS files are also called XML files. Not all XML files are RSS files, but all RSS files are written in XML.

5.2.1. Method A: Use the RSS Editor to create an RSS file.

5.2.1.1. Description of Method A:

Contact NIOSH at StateDocs.NIOSH@cdc.gov to receive a copy of the RSS editor. After installing the RSS editor software, an RSS file of the publications can be created by assigning the field values according to Section 5.3.

If the provider has its own publication database and IT resources, then the provider may want to consider creating an RSS file through its own methods. See Method B.

5.2.2. Method B: Create an RSS file by following the RSS feed specifications.

5.2.2.1. Explanation of Method B

Some providers already keep a publication database through a type of content management software. For example, some state agencies use SharePoint or SQL to maintain its publication database. Method B is to have the provider's information technology (IT) personnel create an RSS file by following the RSS specifications for the clearinghouse.

Refer to "StateDocs RSS Specification" to learn the specifications for the clearinghouse. Contact NIOSH at StateDocs.NIOSH@cdc.gov to receive this document. The RSS specifications can also be found under the help menu of the RSS Editor.

It is anticipated that many of fields in the state's publication database will be the same as those required for the clearinghouse (i.e. title, date of publication, and description). For this reason, it may be more time efficient to work with IT personnel on creating an RSS file from the publication database. Theoretically, an RSS file could be generated from the fields in the provider's publication database.

Note: If the provider has kept a list of its publications through Microsoft Excel, this file can be converted to an RSS file by cutting and pasting the Excel worksheet into the "sheet view" of the RSS Editor. Contact NIOSH at StateDocs.NIOSH@cdc.gov if there are problems with this conversion.

5.2.2.2. *Provider Checklist for Method B*

If the provider meets all the criteria below, then it would be a candidate for automatic creation of an RSS feed (Method B).

- 5.2.2.2.1. Does the provider maintain a publication database using content management software?
- 5.2.2.2.2. Does the provider have access to its publication database?
- 5.2.2.2.3. Does the publication database contain some or all of the same fields as the clearinghouse?

The mandatory clearinghouse fields that are not present in the provider's publication database will need to be populated before final submission of the RSS file to the clearinghouse.

- 5.2.2.2.4. Does the provider have the technical knowledge to create an RSS file? Or, does the provider have access to IT personnel who can create an RSS file?

- 5.2.2.2.5. Are occupational health publications readily discernable from non – occupational health publications in the publication database?

For example, perhaps there is a field in the state publication database named “program” that contains a value named “occupational health.” Since the clearinghouse is supposed to contain occupational health publications, all publications that contain the value of “occupational health” for the field “program” could be flagged for transfer to the RSS file.

Another example: if all of the occupational health publications were authored by one person then the occupational health publications can be selected by the “author” field.

If the publication database does not contain fields that distinguish occupational health publications, would it be possible to “flag” the appropriate publications? For example, a field could be added to the publication database called “NIOSH Clearinghouse.” All documents that pertain to the clearinghouse would need to have this field marked.

5.3. Assign the appropriate values to fields.

5.3.1. Title. *Required Field.*

Ex: Protect Yourself against Back Injuries - Spanish

5.3.2. Description. *Optional Field.*

Use this field to describe the document or write an abstract.

Suggested information to include in the description:

- 5.3.2.1. Type of publication.
- 5.3.2.2. Source of document (the state program from which it was produced).
- 5.3.2.3. Type of illness/injury that is described in the article.
- 5.3.2.4. Target audience of the article.
- 5.3.2.5. Example: “Injury prevention tips from Washington State's TIRES program containing a true story of a truck driver who was injured while unloading a trailer.” This description contains information on publication type (tip sheet), the source of the document (Washington TIRES), and injury (unloading injury).

5.3.3. Keywords. *Optional Field.*

- 5.3.3.1. Selecting keywords.

Publications in the clearinghouse website can be found by using the search function. When populating the keywords field in the RSS Editor, it is unnecessary to repeat words that are already found in the publication's title or description. A publication can be found by searching for the publication's title, document type, sector or cross-sector, and other fields of the clearinghouse. Choose key words that are not already found in other fields of the document.

For example, "risk" does not need to be listed as a keyword if the title of the document is "Reducing Risk of Injury in the Workplace."

5.3.3.2. Describing keywords.

Creating derivatives of keywords is unnecessary because the search function will find the derivatives.

For example, for the key word "load," the words "unloading," "unload," and "loading" can also be found when searched.

5.3.4. Item URL. *Required Field.*

The URL field for journal articles (6.2.4.1) is distinct from all other publications (6.2.4.2).

5.3.4.1. URL for journal articles.

For journal articles it is preferred to list a web address that leads to the free full text of the publication.

If the free full text is not available, the next best web address would be the digital object identifier (DOI) web address (See Section 5.3.4.1.1 below). The DOI web address will redirect the user to a valid website where the publication can be found (e.g. PubMed, Wiley Interscience).

If neither the free text or a DOI is available for the journal articles, then use a persistent web address of the publication (See Section 5.3.4.1.2 below).

5.3.4.1.1. How to find and create a DOI web address.

The DOI is now frequently found within the publication, printed in fine print alongside the author address, grant

number, and other authorship information. Not all publications have DOIs assigned to them.

If you cannot find the DOI within the article, you might be able to find it online in one of the publication directories. Wiley Interscience lists the DOI underneath the abstract of its articles. In PubMed, the DOI can be found in the field named "AID." Choose the "Abstract" view in PubMed to view the "AID" field.

Alternatively, you can find the DOI directly from the journal itself:

- 5.3.4.1.1.1. To find the DOI in the journal, go to the journal's website. A list of journals and their corresponding websites can be found in "Citationinfo.txt."
- 5.3.4.1.1.2. Look up the article and find its DOI. Most journals will list the DOI in fine print beneath the abstract.
- 5.3.4.1.1.3. Create a web address by adding the DOI to the end of this web address: <http://dx.doi.org/>

Example: The journal article from New Jersey, "Mortality in Police and Firefighters" has the DOI of "10.1002/ajim.4700090603."
The web address and DOI are combined to form the following DOI web address:
"<http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/ajim.4700090603>"

- 5.3.4.1.1.4. Check the DOI web address to make sure it is valid. Occasionally an article will contain a DOI that does not work.
- 5.3.4.1.2. If the DOI cannot be found, use the persistent web address of the publication.
 - 5.3.4.1.2.1. Persistent links in the PubMed database.

To create a persistent link in PubMed, find the publication's PMID. (The PMID is written underneath the abstract.) Add the PMID number to the end of the web address
"<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/>" to create the persistent URL.

For example, the New Jersey publication "A

methodology for identifying workers exposed to asbestos since 1940” does not have a DOI. However, it has a PMID of “3592041.” The persistent URL for this article is [“http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/3592041”](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/3592041)

5.3.4.1.2.2. Persistent links in other databases.

This website contains information on finding persistent links within databases:
<http://library.fgcu.edu/RSD/Guides/links/databases.htm>.

5.3.4.2. URL for multi-file publications.

Some publications are composed of multiple files. For example, the state of Michigan has a publication “Manual for Sandblasting” that is composed of over fifty files. Instead of listing each file individually, list the web address where the entire publication with all its sub-parts can be found.

Example of a multi-file publication:
<http://www.oem.msu.edu/blasting.aspx>

5.3.4.3. URL for all other publications.

For non – journal articles and non – multi-file articles, list the URL that points to the location of the document on the provider’s website.

5.3.5. Date Published. *Required Field.*

5.3.5.1. If there is no known publication date, 11/9/2000 is being used as a placeholder value for the date. (November 9 is similar to 11-99, the police radio code for “officer needs help.”)

5.3.6. Document Type. *Required Field.*

5.3.6.1. Annual Report.

Report that describes the program outcomes for the year.

5.3.6.2. Brochure.

A publication, usually no more than a couple pages in length, that contains information on a public health program, summarizes key findings from a study, or contains guidelines and tips on

preventing illness and injury (e.g. fact sheets, tip sheets, and flyers). Unlike technical reports, brochures do not contain detailed information on data methods or complete study findings. The target audience of a brochure is members of the public who are at risk for the disease, condition, or hazard.

5.3.6.3. Case Report.

Description of the circumstances leading to an occupational injury or illness in a person or group of persons. Unlike brochures, the target audience of a case report is public health professionals. Case reports that have been published in a journal should be classified as a journal article.

5.3.6.4. Journal Article.

An article that has been published in a peer-reviewed journal.

5.3.6.5. Newsletter.

A periodical publication of key research findings, policy changes, and other announcements pertaining to a public health program.

5.3.6.6. Survey and Data Instrument.

Survey instruments, questionnaires, field manuals, or other materials describing data collection methods.

5.3.6.7. Technical Report.

A report containing the findings from an investigation or study. Technical reports include findings from surveillance, hazard evaluations, surveys, and task forces. Technical reports that have been published in a journal should be classified as a journal article. Free-standing charts, tables, and graphs are technical reports. The target audience of a technical report is other public health professionals.

5.3.6.8. Multi-Media.

Assign to posters, Power Point presentations, videos and audio files or any other alternative type of media.

5.3.6.9. Other.

Assign for publications that do not fit into any of the other document types.

5.3.7. Sector. *Required Field.*

These industrial sectors have been selected by the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) of NIOSH to encompass all areas of NIOSH's occupational health programs.

- 5.3.7.1. Non-specific. *Assign this sector when the publication does not fit in any of the other industrial sectors listed below.*
- 5.3.7.2. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing
- 5.3.7.3. Construction
- 5.3.7.4. Healthcare & Social Assistance
- 5.3.7.5. Manufacturing
- 5.3.7.6. Mining
- 5.3.7.7. Services
- 5.3.7.8. Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities
- 5.3.7.9. Wholesale & Retail Trade

5.3.8. Cross Sector. *Optional Field**.

Cross sectors are diseases or activities that are not limited to a single sector, but apply to any sector. The National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) of NIOSH has created 24 cross-sectors that encompass NIOSH activities. Twelve of these cross sectors have been selected for classification of publications in the State-based Occupational Clearinghouse plus two non-NORA cross sectors and one "All" cross sector. These 15 cross sectors are described below.

**Note that although the cross sector field is "optional," this field needs to be completed in order for the publication to be registered in the clearinghouse. These fields are currently noted as optional to reduce the administrative burden of those states that wish to contribute to the clearinghouse. If the provider does not populate this field, a NIOSH employee will review the documents to populate empty fields.*

- 5.3.8.1. Non-specific. *Assign this sector when the publication cannot be assigned to any of the sectors listed below, or when the publication applies to all industries.*
 - 5.3.8.2. Cancer, Reproductive, and Cardiovascular Diseases
 - 5.3.8.3. Hearing Loss Prevention
 - 5.3.8.4. Immune and Dermal Diseases
 - 5.3.8.5. Musculoskeletal Disorders
 - 5.3.8.6. Respiratory Diseases
 - 5.3.8.7. Traumatic Injury. *An injury produced by sudden physical injury (i.e. falling from a loading ramp, electrocution, being struck by a workplace object, etc.)*
 - 5.3.8.8. Work Organization & Stress-Related Disorders
 - 5.3.8.9. Nonfatal Illness*. *Assign if the publication describes a nonfatal illness that cannot be categorized in 5.3.8.1 – 5.3.8.8.*
 - 5.3.8.10. Personal Protective Technology
 - 5.3.8.11. Small Business Assistance and Outreach. *Assign for publications that are created specifically to address occupational health issues in small businesses.*
 - 5.3.8.12. Occupational Health Disparities. *Assign if the publications analyzes occupational health disparities according to special demographic characteristics (e.g. race, immigrant groups, gender).*
 - 5.3.8.13. Economics. *Assign if the publication analyzes economic factors that influence occupational health.*
 - 5.3.8.14. Workplace Exposure*. *Assign if the publication evaluated a workplace exposure or hazard that leads to disease, or the publication advised on preventing workplace exposures.*
 - 5.3.8.15. Health Hazard Evaluation (HHE).
- * Not a NORA cross sector

-----Disease: Illness/Injury-----

Non-Disease →

5.3.9. Sub-Sector. *Optional field.*

Certain cross sectors are comprised of multiple sub-sectors. The sub-sector field is “grayed out” (unavailable) if the selected cross-sector does not contain sub-sectors. If the cross-sector does contain a sub-sector, then the

user will be able to select a sub-sector.

The values for the sub-sector field are self-explanatory and will not be described here.

5.3.10. NIOSH funded. *Required field.*

Check this box if the article is funded in part or whole by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Public journals require documentation of government support of the research article. There is often, but not always, a note within the document indicating NIOSH funding.

5.3.11. Language. *Optional Field.*

5.3.11.1. English

5.3.11.2. Spanish

5.3.11.3. Other

5.4. Save the RSS file and share it with NIOSH.

In order to make the RSS file an RSS feed, it needs to be posted on the state department website where it will be accessible by NIOSH.

The advantage of creating an RSS feed is that it eliminates the middle man. By making an RSS feed, the documents listed in the RSS feed will be automatically processed and displayed online. However, if the RSS file is emailed the RSS file needs to be processed manually by NIOSH every time the RSS file is modified.

The first time you create the feed, the web address of the feed will need to be provided to NIOSH. From that point forward the RSS feed can be edited without notifying NIOSH. When the RSS feeds are processed each week, any changes made to the RSS feed will be automatically reflected on the clearinghouse website. The important thing to remember when creating an RSS feed is to make sure that the web address always remains the same.

6. References

- 6.1. Digital Object Identifier (n.d.). *Frequently Asked Questions about Digital Object Identifiers*. Retrieved from <http://www.doi.org/faq.html#1>
- 6.2. Gray Literature (n.d.) In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gray_literature
- 6.3. *National Occupational Research Agenda*. (2009, August 28). Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/NIOSH/NORA/>
- 6.4. RSS Feeds (n.d.) In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rss_feeds

7. Revision History

Date	Rev. No.	Change	Reference Section
10/1/09	1.0	New Policy/Procedure	Not applicable
1/18/10	Draft 1.1	No change from 1.0. The version was listed as “Draft 1.1” for the COSS conference	Not applicable
4/9/10	1.2	FACE publications listed in exclusion criteria Explanation of how to convert an XLS file to an XML file added. Section 5.3.2 which contains guidance on how to describe key words is deleted. A new IT feature makes this advice obsolete.	5.1.2.2 5.2.2.1 5.3.3.2 Deleted
5/5/10	1.3	The Table of Contents was fixed. It incorrectly displayed some fields as optional that were required (i.e. “Sector” was noted as optional). “State-Based” changed to “State-based.” “Multi-sector” changed to “non-specific” Sentence about primary authorship deleted because this information is redundant, it is already found under “Exclusion Criteria.”	TOC Throughout 5.3.7.1, 5.3.8.1 3.
6/24/10	1.4	“State-based Occupational Health Clearinghouse” changed to “State-based Occupational Health Surveillance Clearinghouse.” Section title changed from “RSS feeds” to “Submitting Publication	Throughout 2.3

		Data to the clearinghouse.”	
		RSS feeds description changed to reflect that RSS feeds are processed weekly, not immediately.	2.3
		Sentence added, “Participation in this project is voluntary.”	4.2
		Portion of sentence deleted, “regardless of whether it is an occupational health publication.”	5.1.1.2
		Description of exclusion criteria expanded. Instead of all FACE publications, only FACE publications already submitted to DSR excluded.	5.1.2.2
		The language of the instructions was changed to be more precise: the provider is not creating a “publication inventory,” but an RSS file. An RSS file is not an RSS feed until it is posted online. Other small corrections in language made.	5.2, 5.4
		The derivatives of keywords do not need to be described in the keywords field.	5.3.3.2
		The types of URLs for journal articles were prioritized.	5.3.4.1
		Workplace Safety Poster changed to Multi-Media	5.3.8.14
		Explanation of this section was expanded.	5.4
10/12/10	1.5	Recommendation added to put the language of the publication in the title for non-English publications.	5.3.1.1
		Definition of a “non-specific” publication expanded to include	5.3.8.1

		publications that apply to all industries.	
10/20/10		Change in Coordinator	
10/20/10		Added new language field	5.3.11
12/13/10		Deleted a incorrect link for NIOSH to the correct link of StateDocs.NIOSH@cdc.gov	5.2.2.1.

8. Acknowledgements and Contact Information

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