

Top 20 Items to Stay On Top In 2015

- 1. Annual Report to the OSWCC** - Your SWCD's required Annual Report of Activities is now fulfilled by reporting all your activities in the Soil and Water Information Management System (SWIMS). SWIMS data should be entered as it occurs including mapping of all completed BMPs/services. Make sure there is a 2014 BMP installed date entered for all BMPs/Services. Also ensure that Initiatives are captured by creating and reporting "Events". The OSWCC will run annual reports for each SWCD on January 15, 2015. Optional: Please mail printed copies of a SWCD program highlight documents to the OSWCC and the OFSWCD for promotional use.
- 2. Cash Basis Reports** - Cash Basis Reports are due to the State by March 1. Please send a copy of the document only via email to Lisa Syx at lisa.syx@dnr.state.oh.us and your Program Specialist. Please be prepared to send a copy of the document to the ODNR External Auditor electronically and any supporting documents either electronically or by regular mail like has been done in the past. More information on where to send the reports will be provided in a future update. Use the 2013 Cash Basis version; you can find a copy on the "[SWCD Forms](#)" page of ODNR website. Contact your Program Specialist for individual Cash Basis help sessions. Also for help, you can view the [2012 Cash Basis Overview training webinar](#). Find the link near the Cash Basis form on the "SWCD Forms" page. It is also necessary for the fiscal officer to publish a notice in the newspaper upon the completion of the report and the fact that the report is available for public inspection at the District Office.
- 3. Reorganization** - Complete your reorganization forms by **February 1**. An e-version of the reorganization form can be found using this link [REORGANIZATION](#). SEND a .PDF of the OFFICIAL FORM TO the OSWCC attention of Rhonda Tipton at Ronda.Tipton@dnr.state.oh.us and CC your Program Specialist.
- 4. Nominating Committee** - During your January Board Meeting your board chair should appoint a member of the board to serve on the nominating committee for the 2015 election and determine which [two other individuals knowledgeable about the SWCD \(who are NOT board members, employees or immediate relatives\) will serve as well](#). Please note these individuals in your January Board Meeting Minutes.
- 5. Records Retention Commission** - This is a good time to review your records retention schedule and set the dates for your SWCD's Records Retention meetings for 2015. For current guidance, please refer to the [Chapter 2 of the Administrative Handbook](#) or review the documents at [Ohio Historical Society's Local Government Records Program website](#)
- 6. IRS 1099 Reporting** - For services or products or cost-share a copy of the 1099 copy B is due to landowner on or by January 31, 2015. 1099s (1099G) are required to be sent out to any one your SWCD paid 600 dollars or more to for cost share - including cover crop and nutrient trading and any one your SWCD paid for conservation easements or CREP in 2014, except corporations. Amounts of \$600 dollars or more paid to interns or other individuals paid to do work for the SWCD who is not an employee should be issued a 1099 Misc. All District fund payments to SWCD employees, regardless of amount, or taxable benefits, stipends etc. also should be reported on the employee W-2. The 1099 "copy A," plus the forms 1096 are due to IRS on or by February 28, 2015. Order forms at: [Order IRS Forms](#) For guidance contact the IRS: [Ohio IRS Offices](#)
- 7. Open Meetings Act** - Per the Ohio Open Meeting Act, SWCDs are required to publish when board meetings will occur in 2015. Remember to include language which gives members of the media and general public the opportunity to be notified of any special meetings or meetings on a particular topic. Keep records of all correspondence that document this notice including the actual newspaper clipping. Also, consider creating an Open Meetings/Public information policy. A [Model Open Meeting Policy](#) can be found on the DSWR web site. Don't forget to **SEND YOUR PROGRAM SPECIALIST AN EMAIL confirming 2015 board meeting dates/time**.
- 8. Open Records Public Officials Training**. All elected officials in the state of Ohio, or appropriate designees, are required to attend training approved by the Attorney General once during their term. The training is to ensure that public officials are appropriately educated about their obligations under the [Public Records Act](#). The act states that a "designee" may be a designee of one elected public official or of all the elected officials if the public office includes more than one elected official. Ensure that a current copy of all records training certificates are maintained in the district files and affirm at the January board meeting those who have had the training including identifying any designees. If there is no official public records' training at the 2014 OFSWCD Annual Meeting in February, a list of local Certified Public Records Trainings can be found on [the State Auditor's website](#).
- 9. Oath of Office** - Each newly elected, re-elected or appointed Supervisor needs to be sworn in prior to or immediately upon taking office AND prior to participating in any SWCD business. Board members may be sworn in by any other elected official with equal or greater geographic jurisdiction, such as other SWCD board members; Co. Commissioner or State Legislators. Regardless of where they were sworn in, the details of the location and who administered the oath to which board members must be included in minutes. Also, have them complete the following and keep on file: [Oath of Office](#)

10. Fiscal Changes/Updates - Secure change in signature cards for new fiscal agents and/or treasurers. Review depository agreements with your bank to ensure they are valid through the current year. Use this form to inform the county Auditor of changes if needed: [Certification](#)

11. Fiscal Agent/Treasurer Training/Exemption - Ohio law requires various public financial officials to receive continuing training in the investment and management of public finances. SWCD board members may be required to take annual training depending on the type of financial instruments are used to invest your District Fund. Here is a link to FAQs on the subject: http://www.tos.ohio.gov/cpim_faq. Visit the Treasurer of State's website to find the [current exemption form](#).

12. Inventory – Perform an annual inventory review. Contact your Program Specialist if you need additional inventory stickers. Remember to present a copy of the inventory at a board meeting for board member acknowledgement or approval and to have fiscal agent to initial.

13. Monthly Minutes and Agenda – The OSWCC now **requires** the SWCD to send Program Specialists copies of all board meeting announcements, agendas, minutes (within 10 working days), and financial statement preferably in digital format via e-mail. **SEND THESE ITEMS TO YOUR OFSWCD AREA DIRECTOR TOO!**

14. Internal Audits – ODNR-DSWR Internal Audits should be completed by July 1. Your Program Specialist will contact the SWCD staff to schedule a date.

15. Policy Reviews - Review your last formal fiscal audit and annual internal audit for policies that need to be addressed and items that need to be reviewed by the board for the coming year. Examples include: annual review of employment policy, job descriptions, spending authorities, and MOUs and/or adoption of policies with regard to paying for food at board and other meetings, travel reimbursement rates; open meeting act procedures, public information requests, current IRS mileage rates, forestry NOI procedures etc.

16. Ethics Policy – Review your SWCDs ethics policy with your new board members and work through the potential conflict of interest worksheets. All SWCD board members and staff are encouraged to complete the (NEW) online training created by the Ohio Ethics Commission (including printing out a certificate of successful completion) at <http://dw.ohio.gov/ethics/education/elearning/insights/index.html>. Need help with your SWCD's ethics policy? Click to download the [Model Ethics Policy](#). If your new board member has not received the mandated copy of the Ohio Ethics Law, (within 15 days of taking office) download it here: [Ohio Ethics Law](#). Also, new employees must be given a copy within 15-days of employment.

17. New Board Member Training/Events – A half-day state-wide New Board Member Training will be held at the OFSWCD Annual Meeting in February. Introductory sessions will be held regionally:

Area 1 – January 8, 2015; 6:00 pm-8:30 pm;
DOW Office, Findlay, Ohio

Area 2 – January 10, 2015; 8:30 am-12:30 pm;
Galaxy Restaurant; Wadsworth, Ohio

Area 3 – January 12, 2015; 6:00 pm
Frontier Power, Coshocton, Ohio

Area 4 – January 10, 2015;
Montgomery SWCD; Brookville, Ohio

Area 5 – December 3, 2014, 6:00 pm;
Pickaway Ross Career Center, Chillicothe, Ohio

18. Area Envirothon – Will be held on the following dates with the Host District noted:

Area 1 – April 22, 2015, Fulton SWCD

Area 4 – April 28, 2015, Clermont SWCD

Area 2 – April 22, 2015, Geauga SWCD

Area 5 – April 28, 2015, Vinton SWCD

Area 3 – May 6, 2015, Belmont SWCD

State Envirothon – June 7-9, 2015; Ashland County.

19. Roster Updates – Review the [OFSWCD Roster](#) and be prepared to submit changes at the beginning of the year when asked to do so in an email request from the OFSWCD.

20. OFSWCD State Wide Meetings –

Annual Meeting: February 22-24, 2015 Renaissance Hotel, Columbus, Ohio

Summer Supervisor School: July 19-21, 2015 Carlisle Inn, Walnut Creek, Ohio,

Look for registration information at www.ofswcd.org.