



NOAA Satellite Operations Facility

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The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the General Services Administration (GSA) worked together to design and build a new home for NOAA's environmental satellite and data processing operations. The NOAA Satellite Operations Facility (NSOF), located at the Suitland (Md.) Federal Center, opened in early 2007. NSOF provides a modern, state-of-the-art home for NOAA's 24/7 satellite program operations, which were previously housed in the decaying World War II-era Federal Office Building complex.

GSA and NOAA worked together to invest construction dollars for a modern clean design that demonstrates NOAA's long-term commitment to the Suitland Federal Center and its surrounding community. The U.S. operational environmental satellite program, which was part of a predecessor agency to NOAA, moved to the Suitland Federal Center in 1958 and joined the weather-related functions that had been in Suitland since the late 1940s.

NSOF houses more than \$50 million in high technology equipment, including 16 antennas, which control more than \$4.7 billion in environmental satellites. NSOF provides environmental data used to develop weather and climate products, as well as other information products used daily by industry and citizens across the Nation.

Each day, NSOF processes more than 16 billion bytes of environmental data from 15 different satellites, supporting U.S. and international missions.

- NSOF's Satellite Operations Control Center (SOCC) manages:
  - NOAA's Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellites (GOES)
  - NOAA's Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellites (POES)
  - Air Force's Defense Meteorological Satellite Program (DMSP)
  - The international Jason-2 and EUMETSAT MetOP missions
- NOAA's computer facility, which processes satellite data to support meteorology, oceanography, solid Earth geophysics, and solar-terrestrial sciences
- NOAA's systems development for future observing platforms
- COSPAS-SARSAT: Satellite-assisted search and rescue
- National Ice Center, jointly operated by NOAA, the U.S. Navy, and the U.S. Coast Guard

### NSOF Statistics

- Location:** Suitland Federal Center, Suitland, Maryland
- Size:** 208,271 gross square feet (19,324 square meters)
- Personnel:** Approximately 550 – NOAA employees and contractors plus personnel from the Department of Defense, U.S. Coast Guard, and National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- Construction Cost:** \$53 million, including both GSA and NOAA portions of the project
- Project Cost:** \$81 million, including both GSA and NOAA portions of the project. NOAA's outfitting and continuity of operations cost during the move to NSOF are included in these amounts.
- Green Roof:** 146,000 square feet (13,560 square meters)
- LEED® Rating:** Gold



NOAA's next-generation satellite series will also be operated from NSOF:

- National Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System Preparatory Project
- Joint Polar Satellite System: The next generation polar-orbiting satellite system
- GOES-R: The next generation geostationary operational environmental satellite series

### NSOF Building

NSOF was designed by Morphosis/Einhorn Yaffee Prescott Architecture & Engineering, P.C., a joint venture under contract to GSA, and constructed by P. J. Dick Incorporated. The design of the building is meant to reflect NOAA's dual high technology and environmental stewardship mission. It was designed under the auspices of GSA's Design Excellence Program and the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) program. The design consists of two main components: a slender three-story tower that houses the satellite operations and computer centers, topped with multiple antennae and a high-tech office space area covered with a domed green roof. The roof is one of the largest green roofs in the National Capital Region. The central plant has redundant mechanical and electrical infrastructure to support the facility's operations 24/7.



NSOF has been awarded several design citations, including a GSA Design Award for 2002 for outstanding public architecture and design. The building has been displayed at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., as part of an exhibit titled "Of Our Time" and in architectural exhibits in Venice, Italy.

The NOAA Satellite and Information Service mission is to ensure timely access to global environmental data from satellites and other sources to promote, protect, and enhance the Nation's economy, security, environment, and quality of life. To fulfill its responsibilities, NOAA acquires and manages the Nation's operational environmental satellites, provides data and information services, and conducts related research.

For more information:  
[www.nesdis.noaa.gov](http://www.nesdis.noaa.gov)

