








NATURAL DISASTER PLANNING FOR BUSINESSES




Making sure your business is prepared for hurricane season and other natural disasters will ensure the best possible protection for your staff members and your property during these dangerous storms. Here are some of the most important strategies for preparing for natural disasters in the future.

TYPES OF NATURAL DISASTERS				
				
WINTER STORMS	FLOODING	EARTHQUAKES	WILDFIRES	TORNADOES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Disrupt trafficCreate power outagesCause communication systems breakdowns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">90% of natural disasters include floodingLoss of life, injuries and property damageHurricanes are often responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Seldom cause loss of life in the USCan cause firesDisrupt electrical service and water supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Can cause loss of life and property damageSmoke inhalation can be an issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Over 1,000 tornadoes occur in the US yearlyDamage can be extremeCan cause loss of lifeSometimes develop quickly and with little advance indication


THE BASICS OF NATURAL DISASTER PREPARATION: A FOUR STAGE PROCESS

1




Identify your company's risk of damage

2




Develop a disaster recovery plan

3




Put your plan into action

4



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1: IDENTIFY RISKS



Can your company continue to operate without access to buildings damaged or rendered unusable by hurricanes or other disasters?


Do you have a plan in place to notify employees, vendors and customers about the status of your operations?

Do you have backup vendors and suppliers if your current vendors are rendered inoperable after the storm?

Do you have a disaster recovery plan in place to establish priorities for recovering equipment, inventory and other items of value from your property after a hurricane?

For retail operations, can you ship orders from an alternate location if your current location is damaged and cannot be used?

2: DEVELOP A PLAN



Create business continuity plans, including crisis communications procedures that ensure clear lines of contact between your company, your employees, your vendors and your customers.

Boost awareness for your employees about the appropriate procedures to follow if a hurricane is on the way or has already occurred.


Establish a plan for assisting employees with evacuating or sheltering in place. If sheltering in place is a possibility, create an emergency supply kit for your business.

Conduct a training session for your employees on all procedures to follow during and after a hurricane.

Schedule a natural disaster drill for your business.


Make sure that you have the right insurance policies in place, and create a comprehensive inventory of all equipment, inventory and other items in your business location.

3: ACTING ON YOUR PLAN



Some of the measures recommended by FEMA include consulting with a professional engineer to evaluate the following structural elements:


- Load path and elevation of your company
- Roof systems
- Skylights
- Bracing for gable-end walls
- Noncombustible gutters and downspouts
- Wall strength and integrity
- Soffit supports
- Exterior doors, windows and garage doors
- Floodproofing capabilities



Systems should also be reviewed and evaluated by an engineer to determine their ability to resist a hurricane, earthquake or other damaging events. These systems include the following:

- Fuel tanks and generators
- Electrical wiring and systems
- Communications equipment, including antennas
- Rooftop structures
- Potable water, sewer and water management systems
- Lighting and mechanical systems

4: APPLY WITH FEMA



Apply for recognition as a Ready Business with FEMA and take your place as part of the Ready Business Community. To be completed after your plan is in place.

