

Storm Season Checklist

Plan now to be prepared for the summer season

Developing a written preparedness plan and training employees to implement it is critical. The following guidelines are provided to assist you in the development of your plan. When you develop your written plan, make sure to address the following major areas:

1. Make plans for the protection of facility, equipment and structures.
2. Develop a staffing policy that identifies essential employees and which of them, if any, must remain at the facility during the hurricane. The policy should identify when employees will be released from work as well as when they are expected to return.
3. Develop procedures and policies for all phases of hurricane operations:
 - Pre-season preparedness
 - During the storm
 - After the hurricane
4. Identify and protect vital records such as accounts receivable, customer records, tax records, and other personnel and administrative documents.
5. Review insurance policies to ensure that there is adequate coverage. Questions to ask include:
 - Is the facility in a evacuation area?
 - Does the insurance package include wind/storm coverage?
 - Is the facility located in a flood prone area and is the flood insurance adequate?
 - Does insurance cover damage to contents, including vital records and office equipment?
 - Does the package include liability coverage for injury to employees as well as potential lawsuits from customers?

Before the Storm

1. Compile an emergency contact list with 24-hour telephone contact numbers of essential employees.
2. Identify vital records and make backup copies to a flash drive, copy them to an external backup drive, or use an offsite backup service. Identify a safe storage level area within the facility where records can be relocated, if necessary. This area should be above ground level and away from windows and exterior walls, which may leak. In a one-story facility, file cabinets and boxes may be placed on pallets up off the floor. Consider moving vital records off-site, particularly if the business is in a storm-surge area.
3. Determine responsibility for maintaining the facility. Ensure that the following items are addressed:
 - Patch roofs and windows.
 - Check security and flood lighting.
 - Identify lightweight, loose items in outside storage areas that may be blown around in the wind.
 - Identify emergency power requirements and determine if generator is available. If facility must be operational during a hurricane and a generator is not available, rent or purchase a generator. Test generator monthly during the hurricane season.
 - Determine if computer support will be available for primary/ critical computer users who need to remain operational during a hurricane.
 - Verify that communications equipment is operational.
4. Determine the type and amount of hurricane emergency supplies necessary. All hurricane emergency supplies should be clearly marked and stored in a secure area that is accessible in an emergency. Recommended supplies include:
 - One month's supply of ratchets, rods and any hardware needed to get ad copy back up on billboards once the storm has passed.
 - A battery-operated radio or TV (test reception in building).
 - One flashlight per person working during the hurricane.
 - Extra batteries for both radio and flashlights.
 - First-Aid kit.
 - Emergency tool kit, if necessary.
 - Food and water supplies for staff assigned to the facility during the hurricane. Be sure to include needed utensils, can opener and trash bags.
5. Provide employees with hurricane preparedness information and allow them time to go home and secure their personal property.

After the Storm

1. Assess damages at facility including roof, water, damage and broken windows and of structures and rate each structure accordingly so everyone knows which ones to work on first, second, etc.
2. Initiate cleanup of plant and of any vinyl or sign pieces lying around in the field.
3. Do not turn on computer equipment if there are indications of low voltage power fluctuations, low air conditioning output, water under raised floor, broken windows or damaged equipment.
4. Employees return to work according to staffing schedule.



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