

Hurricane Preparation Checklist

Person Responsible	Time Needed	Activity	Completed/When
		Shut down the following processes and operations. (Develop separate checklists for these...such as electrical equipment, machinery, heating equipment, etc.)	
		Assemble damage control supplies and equipment and store them in a secure area. Portable pumps, generators, hose, mop, rolled fencing, lumber nails, tarpaulins, plywood, sandbags, shovels, axes, camera, film, power tools, hand tools, etc.	
		Protect or relocate vital company records.	
		Anchor or relocate items in the yard that are subject to damage from high winds, rain, or flooding waters.	
		Drain open tanks of hazardous materials; move storage drums to a secure location. (never inside the facility); and shut-off and drain any supply lines. Isolate any chemicals that can react violently.	
		Inspect the roof, gutters, flashing, and drains and make any necessary repairs. Strap or anchor to the roof structure (e.g., the joists) all roof-mounted equipment such as HVAC units, exhaust vents, communication devices, etc.	
		Ensure that all ground tanks are filled to capacity with water or product and are secure from wind damage. Check the position of vent line on underground tanks to ensure it is above anticipated storm surge level.	
		Install pre-fitted plywood or metal storm shutters on glass windows/doors/skylights to protect against flying debris and winds. Relocate or cover inventories near window, door, and skylight openings.	
		Assemble supplies for the Emergency Response Team.	
		Verify that all fire protection equipment is in service.	
		Inspect all drains and catch basins and insure they are free from debris.	
		Cover sensitive equipment, i.e., computers, stock, with tarpaulins or waterproof covers.	
		Move goods and critical equipment off the floor.	
		Turn off gas supply and non-essential electrical equipment.	

Prevent further damages, make repairs after the storm.

Once the storm has subsided, your emergency crew can begin damage control. The most important step is to prevent further damage, even before you have a chance to reach your insurance broker and report your losses. Secure the site as quickly as possible. Document the loss, and use common sense as a business operator to start the recovery. You don't need to wait for the claim representative to arrive to begin temporary repairs. Once this has been done, efforts to return the business to operating capacity quickly and economically can begin in full.

Having an emergency response plan in place will help your efforts. Such a plan will resemble the format outlined below. All these activities can be started or completed even before you can reach your insurance broker, or a claim representative has been to your site.

- Survey the site for damage. Determine priorities. Identify hazards, and take action to reduce them.
- Evacuate the premises if major structural damage is found.
- Report any broken gas lines and downed power lines.
- Call key management personnel.
- Cover broken windows and openings in the roof.
- Check drainage systems. Make sure they are free of debris.
- Notify contractors so that repair can begin.
- Assess and document damage: 1) keep a detailed log of damage for insurance purposes; 2) take photos or videos of damaged areas; 3) temporary repairs may be started as long as damage has been documented; 4) damaged goods and building materials should remain protected on site until released by the claim representative.
- Begin damage control on specific equipment vital to your operation—such as your electrical equipment.

Most mechanical, electrical, and pressure equipment inundated by flood waters can be cleaned and put back into service...if properly handled by a qualified expert.

If not properly handled, however, fire or electrical damage can result.

Know ahead of time if you're going to call in a qualified service to handle the job, or if you'll use internal staff. Make sure your staff is properly trained now, if you'll rely on them later.

Assess your plan after the storm.

After your business has recovered from a hurricane, assess how the emergency plan worked. What could be improved? Were all supplies on hand? Was there enough time allotted for everything that needed to get done? Did you have enough staff assigned? Improve your plan based on your experience. And remember to review it every six months to incorporate any new needs.