



PREPARE YOUR BUSINESS

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and U.S. Department of Labor, 68% of small-business owners do not have a written disaster recovery plan.

Here's what happens after a natural disaster to businesses without a plan.

IMMEDIATELY	ONE YEAR LATER	THREE YEARS LATER
40% won't reopen	25% will close	75% will fail

All businesses should have a disaster plan to communicate with employees, local authorities, customers and others during and after a disaster.

Follow these guidelines to prepare your place of work:

- ▶ Provide employees with information on when, if and how to report to work following an emergency.
- ▶ Set up a telephone call tree, a password-protected page on the company website, an email alert or a call-in voice recording to communicate with employees.
- ▶ Store valuable information in fire/waterproof containers, off-site and away from the storm's path.
- ▶ Evaluate your insurance coverage to ensure it will allow your business to fully recover after a storm. Keep your policy in a location off-site.
- ▶ Maintain a video or pictures of your office/equipment prior to a disaster.
- ▶ Have a supply of spare parts and alternative power supplies.
- ▶ Locate alternate work sites and moving companies.
- ▶ Ensure that there are written procedures in place, lists of customers, vendors, inventory, calendars and schedules; and that this information and location is shared with other employees who will be needed to get the business back in operation.
- ▶ Unplug equipment during major storms.
- ▶ Encourage employees to have a workplace survival kit.
- ▶ Complete a business disaster recovery plan. You can find a sample business emergency plan at ready.gov/business or FloridaDisaster.org.



IF MY BUSINESS IS DAMAGED, HOW DO I GET HELP?



Insurance

Insurance companies will send special disaster assistance teams, as will the state and federal government, to perform damage assessments.

To prepare for a claim:

- ▶ Take pictures of the damage, both to the property and its contents.
- ▶ Have all your insurance documents ready.
- ▶ Do not pay for any services until repair work has been completed.

Always hire a licensed contractor

Unlicensed contracting is a felony during a state of emergency. To verify a contractor's license, or to file a complaint against a contractor:

- ▶ **The Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR)**
1-850-487-1395, or MyFloridaLicense.com
- ▶ **Sarasota County Planning and Development Services, Building and Permitting**
941-861-6126 or email licensing@scgov.net

Commercial Debris Removal

Debris from commercial establishments is the responsibility of the property owner. Commercial property owners should contact their insurance company or the **FEMA Small Business Assistance Program** for assistance with debris removal.

Avoid stacking debris after a storm event:

- ▶ By utility poles.
- ▶ Under power lines.

- ▶ On top of water meters or other water connections.
- ▶ By fire hydrants.
- ▶ By vehicles.
- ▶ Next to mailboxes or fences.
- ▶ On storm drains.
- ▶ In the street.

If you hire a contractor to perform any type of work involving debris, the contractor is responsible for disposal of the debris. Contractors are required by law to dispose of debris properly; they cannot place it in the road's right-of-way. This doesn't apply to work performed by faith-based organizations and volunteers.


Federal Emergency Management Administration: fema.gov


Small Business Administration: sba.gov



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