



# HOW YOU CAN PREPARE FOR HURRICANES

## PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS!

FEMA indicates that as many as 75% of businesses fail within 3 years of a natural disaster because they didn't have a continuity plan. Prevent this from happening to your business by following these 4 key steps:

1. Develop Pre-Hurricane Plan
2. Test Plan Frequently
3. Establish Evacuation Procedures
4. Determine Hurricane Damage

To find emergency test exercise ideas, visit: <https://www.ready.gov/business/testing>

## 4 STEPS TO HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

### STEP #1 - DEVELOP PRE-HURRICANE PLAN

Your company's business resiliency program should incorporate emergency related action plans that identify loss exposures. If hurricane loss applies to your business, be sure that you:

- Have proper insurance coverage for both physical damage and business interruption
- Establish written procedures for protecting all aspects of the business—including data, property and structures
- Catalog and photograph valuables, equipment and structures
- Identify structural weaknesses and potential measures to address these, such as the use of boards or shutters and sandbags
- Map out an evacuation route and check vehicle supply kits
- Train employees how and when to follow hurricane procedures, including safety precautions for using tools and equipment
- Create an emergency supply kit (visit [www.ready.gov/kit](http://www.ready.gov/kit) for suggestions)

### STEP #2 - TEST PLAN FREQUENTLY

Once your plan is in place, test it often to make sure every aspect works and your employees know exactly what to do. Here are some suggested test exercises:

- *Walkthroughs, workshops and orientation seminars* - designed to familiarize team members with their responsibilities identified in the emergency preparedness plan
- *Tabletop exercises* - discussion-based sessions where team members meet in an informal, setting to discuss their roles and responsibilities during an emergency
- *Functional exercises and scenario-driven drills* - such as the failure of a critical business function or a specific hazard, aimed at validating plans and evaluating team member readiness
- *Full-scale exercises* - as close to the real event as possible; lengthy run-throughs that take place on location using the equipment and personnel that would be called upon during a real hurricane



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## HELPFUL ONLINE RESOURCES

Easily access these helpful online disaster resources:

**Business Continuity**  
[www.ready.gov/business](http://www.ready.gov/business)

**Hazard Planning**  
[www.ready.gov/planning](http://www.ready.gov/planning)

**Disaster Kit**  
[www.ready.gov/kit](http://www.ready.gov/kit)

**Emergency Alerts**  
[www.ready.gov/alerts](http://www.ready.gov/alerts)



## STEP #3 - ESTABLISH EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Your county's Office of Emergency Management will know if your business is in an evacuation area and can provide updated maps with evacuation, routes and public shelters. Social media, especially Twitter, is also a great source of real-time information.

Once local officials have issued a call to evacuate, take the following with you:

- Emergency supply kit
- Important papers (or make sure they are in a safe place)
- Maps and evacuation route information
- Cell phone

## STEP #4 - DETERMINE HURRICANE DAMAGE

After local authorities have indicated it's safe to return to business, you should document all damage and losses using your records and any before and after photos and videos. Damage caused by a hurricane can result in new hazards, such as structural damage, electrical exposures and contaminated water supplies. Conduct the following when reentering, evaluating, securing and recovering the site:

- *Reentering evacuated areas* - wait for your storm-damaged area to be given the all-clear to enter by local authorities.
- *Evaluating your facility* - look for obvious structural damage before attempting to enter a building, and report any dangling power lines, or broken water pipes to the utility company. Ensure all electrical outlets and appliances are dry before attempting to power them back on.
- *Securing the site* - hire security or arrange for staff to monitor the property to avoid potential looting.
- *Recovering* - document and report all damage to your insurance company. Contact local building inspection officials, if necessary.