



POWER

*through Partnership*

# Natural Disaster Preparedness Guide for Businesses

## Advisory Definitions

Advisory Term	Issued When
<b>Hurricane Watch</b>	A tropical cyclone containing winds of 64 kt (74 mph) or higher poses a possible threat, generally within 48 hours.
<b>Hurricane Warning</b>	Sustained winds of 64 kt (74 mph) or higher associated with a tropical cyclone are expected in 36 hours or less.
<b>Tropical Storm Watch</b>	A tropical cyclone containing winds of 34 to 63 kt (39 to 73 mph) or higher poses a possible threat, generally within 48 hours.
<b>Tropical Storm Warning</b>	Sustained winds of 34 to 63 kt (39 to 73 mph) or higher associated with a tropical cyclone are expected in 36 hours or less.
<b>Flood Watch</b>	Conditions are favorable for flooding.
<b>Flood Warning</b>	Flooding is imminent or occurring.

Resource: National Weather Service <https://www.weather.gov/lwx/WarningsDefined#Tropical%20Storm%20Watch>

## Pre-Storm Preparedness

### Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Development

- Create an emergency action plan (EAP) and assign roles for an emergency response team (ERT) that is appropriate for your business.
- ERT members should fully understand their responsibilities as well as general goals and procedures as outlined in your EAP.
  - Designate an ERT member to track weather conditions and the progress of the storm.
  - Designate an ERT leader who would have authority to implement the EAP upon reaching benchmarks outlined in your EAP, including when to cease operations and dismiss personnel.
- The EAP should minimally include:
  - Contact information for ERT members, civil authorities, etc.
  - Plans for backup communication.
  - Details identifying critical areas of your facility and operation as well as those employees trained and authorized to initiate shutdown procedures.
  - Plans to protect and, if necessary, relocate all vital company records.
  - Plans to protect key equipment, stock/inventory, etc.
  - Evaluation and preparation for flooding and/or windstorm-related flooding.
  - Arrangements with appropriate contractors for post-storm repairs and supplies.
  - Details for securing the site after the storm.

Please consult with a professional on developing the appropriate plan for your specific business operation. Each business is unique and requires careful evaluation and planning to prepare for a natural disaster.

### Impending Storm Action Items

- Continue to monitor and track the progress of the storm, its path and its intensity.
- Determine if or when an emergency action plan should be initiated.
- Follow your procedures on when to shut down operations that may be in the anticipated path of the storm.

## Proactive Measures During the Storm

Plans to evacuate the ERT before the storm reaches your area, if evacuations become necessary, should be evaluated well in advance of the storm. Please heed the advice of local and state authorities with respect to evacuations.

If it is possible for members of the ERT to remain on the premises safely during the storm, the following proactive measures may be taken to prevent extensive damages:

- Monitor for possible structural damage and make repairs as needed, if possible.
- For the threat of fire, monitor water pressure for the sprinkler system. Identify potential causes of fire (electrical sources) and take corrective action as necessary.
- Monitor for flooding from rain or tidal surge and create barriers using sandbags as needed.

## Actions & Evaluations After the Storm

- Secure the site evaluating and addressing any safety hazards.
  - Check for water damage to equipment, etc. before turning on electricity. Consult with an electrician as necessary.
  - Ensure that fire protection equipment is in working order. If needed, contact the local fire department for instructions on activating fire protection components.
- Survey and take pictures of all damages.
- Begin salvage and clean-up as soon as possible after addressing safety concerns. Work with designated contractors to:
  - Make temporary repairs to mitigate damage (roofing, clogged drains, broken windows, etc.)
  - Remove standing water and address moisture and the potential spread of bacteria, mold, etc.
  - Separate damaged goods, inventory/stock from undamaged items.
  - Compile an itemized list of materials and labor used in making repairs.
- Contact your insurance company to report a claim for damages.
- If possible, resume operations.

## Additional Resources

Info Type	Link & Organization
<b>Disaster Preparedness</b>	<p><b>Ready.gov:</b> <a href="http://www.ready.gov/business">http://www.ready.gov/business</a> Preparedness Info for Businesses</p> <p><b>American Red Cross:</b> <a href="https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/workplaces-and-organizations.html">https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/workplaces-and-organizations.html</a> Preparedness Info for Businesses</p> <p><b>US Dept of Labor:</b> <a href="https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/evacuation/index.html">https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/evacuation/index.html</a> Evac Plans &amp; Procedures eTool</p> <p><b>FEMA:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="https://www.fema.gov/emergency-management-agencies">https://www.fema.gov/emergency-management-agencies</a> Emergency Management Agencies Listing</li><li>• <a href="https://community.fema.gov/AP_Login">https://community.fema.gov/AP_Login</a> Preparedness Portal</li><li>• <a href="https://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program">https://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program</a> National Flood Insurance Program</li></ul>
<b>Weather</b>	<p>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="https://www.noaa.gov/weather">https://www.noaa.gov/weather</a> National Weather Service</li><li>• <a href="https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/">https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/</a> National Hurricane Center</li></ul>