

SEPTEMBER 2015

SEPTEMBER TOPICS

1. National Preparedness Month
2. Are You Ready for a Power Outage?



ARE YOU READY FOR A HURRICANE?

The north Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1 to November 30, peaking during late August and September. So if you're along the Atlantic coast and you're not prepared for a hurricane, now is a perfect time to get ready.

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

Hurricanes pose wind and flood hazards. How great is your business' risk from a hurricane?

FEMA recommends you:

- Learn the elevation level of your property and whether the land is flood-prone. This will help you know how your property will be affected when storm surges or tidal flooding are forecasted.
- Identify levees and dams in your area, and determine whether they pose a hazard to you.

PREPARING YOUR BUSINESS FOR A HURRICANE

Hurricane evacuations tend to be regional; workers may have to travel more than a hundred miles inland and stay for several days. Make sure you know your community's hurricane evacuation routes and how to find higher ground. Determine where you would go and how you would get there if you needed to evacuate.

Before you go, you'll want to secure your property:

- Tape does not prevent windows from breaking. You can protect windows by:
 - Closing permanent storm shutters.
 - Covering all windows with 5/8" exterior grade or marine plywood, which is cut to fit and ready to install.
 - Installing laminated glass with impact-resistant glazing.
- Fasten your roof securely to the frame structure with straps or clips. This will reduce roof damage.
- Keep trees and shrubs well-trimmed so they are more wind-resistant.
- Clear loose and clogged rain gutters and downspouts.
- Reinforce overhead and roll-up doors; if wind enters through these openings, it can cause dangerous and expensive structural damage.
- Plan to bring in all outdoor furniture, decorations, garbage cans, and anything else that is not tied down.
- If you plan to stay through the hurricane, you'll want supplies like food, blankets, water and batteries. You might want to consider building a safe room and installing a generator. In a high-rise building, when high winds are present, be prepared to take shelter on a lower floor because wind conditions increase with height. In these conditions, be sure to take shelter in a small interior room without windows. If flooding may occur, be prepared to take shelter on a higher floor safely above the flooding and wave effects.



ARE YOU READY FOR A POWER OUTAGE?

When the power's out, your business and your workers may face hazards they don't expect. Be aware of—and prepared for—the hazards of suddenly being powerless...

PREPARING FOR A POWER OUTAGE

Here are some hazards you might not anticipate that can occur during power outages:

FIRE. Never use candles during a power outage or power outage due to extreme risk of fire. Use only flashlights for emergency lighting. Prepare by laying out a supply of batteries.

SPOILED FOOD. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to keep food as fresh as possible. If you must eat food that was refrigerated or frozen, check it carefully for signs of spoilage.

POWER SPIKES. Turn off or disconnect appliances, equipment or electronics when the power goes out. Power may return with momentary "surges" or "spikes" that can damage computers as well as motors.

CARBON MONOXIDE. Do not run a generator inside a home or garage; carbon monoxide is odorless and invisible, and it kills stealthily.

ELECTRICAL HAZARDS. Do not connect a portable generator to a building electrical system. If you use a portable generator, connect the equipment you want to run directly to the outlets on the generator. Generators that are permanently installed should be installed by a qualified electrician so that they do not create feedback hazards.

EMERGENCY SERVICES INTERRUPTIONS. Do not call 911 for information — call only to report a life-threatening emergency to avoid overwhelming the system.

HEAT STRESS. Take steps to remain cool if it is hot outside. Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Drink plenty of water, even if you do not feel thirsty.

COLD STRESS. Put on layers of warm clothing if it is cold outside. Never burn charcoal for heating or cooking indoors. Never use your oven as a source of heat.

TRAFFIC HAZARDS. Eliminate unnecessary travel, especially by car. Traffic signals will stop working during an outage, creating traffic congestion.

STRANDING. Remember that equipment such as gas pumps and elevators may not work during a power outage.

When the power's out, it's too late to download the checklists and resources you need, so make sure you have a printed copy available and ample spare batteries to keep your phone alive, as this may be your greatest safety tool in this type of emergency.



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