

# THE TOOLBOX

SPECIAL EDITION

a loss control resource for members

Compliments of  member INSURANCE



## SPECIAL EDITION: Hurricane Planning Can Save Your Business!

The consequences of not having a Hurricane Plan can destroy a company. According to FEMA, almost 40% of small businesses that close due to a disaster never reopen. A major reason businesses go under after a natural disaster is that they don't recover, or do so fast enough. With this year's hurricane season starting up, it is the perfect time to review your insurance policy. Maybe you were lucky this far without a plan for hurricane like weather, but why take chances with your business?

Hurricanes don't just affect coastal areas as you may think. Weather relating to hurricanes can be felt miles inland. Hurricane hazards come in many forms: storm surge, high winds, tornadoes, and flooding, which can devastate your business.

### *Beginning of Hurricane Season:*

- Meet with management and staff to discuss your company's hurricane plan including closing procedures, updating employee contact information, and developing an employee phone tree or verifying that an informational hotline is working.
- Review your insurance coverage with your agent.
- Ensure any backup generators are working properly and fully fueled.
- Plan how you will maintain operations should your location be heavily damaged or uninhabitable, such as rental trailers and office equipment.
- Be prepared to work with limited supplies of cash and to be without water, sewer or power for at least two weeks. Store emergency supplies at the store.
- Have your building inspected by a licensed professional to recommend any retrofitting to help the building withstand hurricane force winds.

### *Before an Expected Hurricane:*

- Take necessary precautions to secure your building, such as covering windows and moving equipment to a secure location.
- Meet with employees to review the Hurricane Plan.
- Determine which employees will be the first back to the store after the hurricane subsides to begin any recovery and clean up.
- Monitor the progress of the storm and keep employees informed.
- Perform an additional backup of computer systems. A copy of the company's sensitive data and records should always be stored off site, should something happen to the store location.
- Reach out to your vendors and suppliers. You will need to work with them regarding your operational status to alter delivery shipments to maintain business needs.
- Be sure to close your business in sufficient time to allow employees to secure their homes and evacuate if needed. Protect your team. The only thing you can't replace is the people.

### *Review Your Insurance Coverage. . .*

- Have your business appraised at least **every five years**.
- Inventory, document and photograph equipment, supplies and workplace.
- Have copies of insurance policies and customer service phone numbers.
- Obtain Business Interruption Insurance.
- Remember: Flood Damage requires separate coverage and is **NOT** covered under other insurance policies.

### *Recovering from a Hurricane:*

- Assess damage at the store and determine if the location should remain open or closed.
- Photograph or videotape your facilities to document damage prior to any clean up.
- Make any emergency repairs to prevent looting or further damage.
- Note and record all losses and report any claims to the insurance company as soon as possible.

*For additional risk management tips and resources, visit The Toolbox website or email [peaceofmind@memberins.com](mailto:peaceofmind@memberins.com).*