Flood Preparedness & Response Checklist



Statistically, businesses are more likely to be flooded than to burn down. Although floods cannot be predicted, you can prepare for them by using the checklist below. (Source: OHS Insider, with information compiled from the US Small Business Administration and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA.)

Planning for a Flood

- Find out if your facility is in a flood plain
- Learn the history of flooding in your area
- Find out about the elevation of your facility in relation to streams, rivers and dams
- Review your community's emergency plan and evacuation routes and where to find higher ground
- Establish warning procedures for your facility
- Establish emergency communication procedures, e.g., alert notification system, phone tree, etc.
- Establish and practice evacuation procedures for your facility
- Inspect the parts of your facility that are subject to flooding
- Identify records and equipment that can be moved to a higher location
- Make plans to move records and equipment if a flood occurs
- Purchase a radio that picks up Environment Canada's Weather radio broadcasts (NOAA Weather Radio in the US) and use it to listen for flood watches and warnings
- Talk to your insurance agent about your policy and coverage

Before the Flood

- Review your Emergency Plan with your response team and key employees
- Take all necessary steps to prevent the release of dangerous chemicals stored on your property
- Anchor all fuel tanks
- Postpone scheduled deliveries of goods
- Identify meeting place and time for all key employees on your Crisis Management Team
- Create voicemail for evacuation or out of office
- Update disaster recovery kits
- Activate crisis back-up procedures
- Maintain accurate inventory of product on site
- Use plugs to prevent floodwater from backing up into sewer drains, or install flood vents or flood proof barriers
- Stay tuned to local media community messaging

During the Flood

- Remember that life and safety take precedence over everything else
- Implement next phase of your business continuity plan
- Send non-critical staff home
- Raise elevators to the second level and turn off power
- Stay tuned to local media and evacuate as instructed or when circumstances require
- Take cell phones, charger, critical hardware and emergency kits with you
- Unplug electrical items before leaving
- Consider redirecting business phones to your cell phones or an answering service
- Have a central point of contact for all employees so you can find out where they’re located during and after the flood

After the Flood

- Listen to news reports to verify the community water supply is safe to drink
- Avoid floodwaters, which may be contaminated or electrically charged
- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded, roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of your car
- Clean and disinfect everything that got wet
- Implement Disaster Recovery Plan
- Assess damage
- Notify key people of next steps on basis of damage assessment
- Contact employees via determined communication method and discuss next steps
- Contact your insurance agent