

PREPARING FOR **EMERGENCIES** **+ DISASTERS**

FINANCIAL TIPS FOR SMALL BUSINESS



PLAN AHEAD

- Prepare a business disaster plan, and review and update it regularly.
- Prepare a business continuity plan in order for your business—at least the critical functions—to continue to operate regardless of the emergency event.
- Be sure to have emergency cash. If possible, set aside several months' worth of business expenses to pay bills and payroll.
- Maintain a good credit history to enable you to obtain emergency loans and qualify for better pricing on loans and insurance.
- Make sure you have adequate insurance coverage—the right type of insurance and enough coverage—to resume and rebuild your business.
- Prepare an inventory of all equipment and merchandise.
- Back up your data regularly, make copies of important documents, and store off-site in a secure place.

EMERGENCY CHECKLIST

- Cash on hand for immediately following a disaster.
- Emergency contact information for all employees.
- Central point of contact for employees to report to after the emergency.
- Key to your safe deposit box.
- Credit cards, bank account numbers, and financial documents safely stored and ready to take with you if you have to evacuate.
- Camera to document damage to your business.
- List of contact phone numbers or Web sites for your bank accounts, credit cards, loans, suppliers/vendors, and insurance companies.
- If possible, have your spouse, a family friend, or neighbor help you handle preparations at your home on a timely basis.

RECOVERY AND REBUILDING

- Take photos to document damage to your business.
- Save all receipts for repairs and replacement of property.
- Develop an emergency business budget to meet your initial priorities for resumption of business and begin to determine whether you'll need financial assistance.
- File your insurance claim promptly and register for federal emergency assistance if it is available.
- Determine the whereabouts of your employees, their needs, and their ability to return to work.
- Contact your bank and your creditors to learn if payments can be rescheduled and if additional credit may be available. Forward statements to a new address if you've relocated your business.
- Keep your business and personal disaster loss records and receipts separate.

AVOID SCAMS AND FRAUD

- Ask for photo ID from government staff, insurance adjusters, and repair workers.
- Use licensed and insured companies for all repair work.
- Get written estimates and signed contracts.
- Do not make full payment in advance for repairs and services—wait until the job is completed to your satisfaction.
- Avoid charity fraud by making donations to agencies already familiar to you.

LEARN MORE OR REPORT FRAUD AT

www.ftc.gov

ONLINE RESOURCES

American Red Cross

www.redcross.org/services/disaster/

Bank Regulators

www.fdic.gov
www.federalreserve.gov
www.occ.gov
www.ots.gov

Disaster Contractors Network

www.dcnonline.org/chooseState.cfm

Institute for Business and Home Safety

www.ibhs.org/business_protection/ofb_toolkit.asp

Internal Revenue Service

www.irs.gov/publications/p584b/index.html
www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p2194b.pdf

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

www.ready.gov/business/index.html

U.S. Department of the Treasury “Weathering the Storm” Brochure

www.ustreas.gov/offices/domestic-finance/financial-institution/fin-education/weathering-the-storm.pdf

U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

www.fema.gov/business/guide/index.shtm

U.S. Government Official Web Portal

www.firstgov.gov/

U.S. Small Business Administration

www.sba.gov/disaster_recov/index.html

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