

Emergency Response Checklist



A blueprint to assist in the protection of your organization's assets and human resources, in the event of an emergency.



INTRODUCTION:

All businesses – no matter how small – need a plan for responding to emergencies that might disrupt their ability to operate. Your customers rely on you and the success of your business depends on your ability to respond to their needs.

If disaster strikes, your business may ultimately require the following:

1. A documented plan that you can follow.
2. Key people who are responsible for the response and recovery effort.
3. Access to the resources and records that are vital to your operation.
4. An alternate location at which to operate, if appropriate to the nature of your business.

As you work toward developing a comprehensive plan, you should establish an emergency response checklist to immediately guide your employees through the essential actions they should take to ensure the protection of the organization's assets and human resources, in the event of an emergency.

The following is a general response checklist. As such, it does not cover every contingency. However, it does provide general guidance that can be useful in developing a checklist appropriate for your business.

RESPONSE & RECOVERY CHECKLIST

PREPARATION PHASE:

- Establish a building evacuation plan and post it in a highly visible location. Train employees on the plan. If you operate a business in which customers are frequently in your building, it is important for employees to calmly help everyone to exit the building. The evacuation plan should include a location where all employees must meet, to ensure that everyone exited the building safely. This can be the parking lot of your business, a nearby restaurant or other location.
- Post the names and locations of the nearest emergency medical facilities in a highly visible location, available to all employees.
- Keep an updated list of all employees' telephone numbers and addresses. If available, get cell phone numbers in addition to regular phone numbers.
- Maintain current emergency contact information for each employee. If an employee becomes ill, is injured, or dies, prompt notification is essential.

- Designate at least two employees per shift to keep this personnel information in the trunk of their car, or at their homes if located a reasonable distance from the work location. Fire or water damage may make such items useless if kept in the affected building.
- Maintain a list of all vendors and their scheduled delivery days, if applicable. Your vendors can be valuable allies in getting you the supplies necessary to get your business up and running. You may not want to take delivery on a shipment if the emergency affects your ability to operate in your current location. Make sure that appropriate individuals keep this information in their cars or at an off-site location.
- If your business has multiple locations, make sure that you maintain an up-to-date list of the telephone numbers and addresses. Make sure that appropriate individuals keep this information in their cars or at an off-site location. Assign individuals the responsibility for notifying the locations of your situation.
- Make sure you have an emergency kit available. This kit might contain some or all of the following, depending on the size, location, and nature of your business:
 - A battery operated radio or television.
 - Fully equipped first aid kit. The Red Cross has kits of varying sizes available.
 - Red Cross first aid manual.
 - Battery operated flashlights and lanterns.
 - Reflective vests to ensure that members of your Response Team are readily seen and identifiable.
 - Walkie-talkies to facilitate communication between team members.
 - Some blankets.
 - A supply of bottled water.
- Store the kit in a readily accessible location. Make sure Response Team members know where it is.

RESPONSE PHASE:

- Access the emergency kit. You may need the radio or flashlights immediately.
- Determine the nature and extent of the emergency. For example, if you lose power, what is the cause? How widespread is the outage? How long it is expected to last? If severe weather threatens, determine which geographic areas the warnings are posted for.
- Call 911, if necessary.

- Inform employees in the building of the emergency. In the event of a fire, exit the building promptly. In the event of a tornado, have employees take cover. If severe weather threatens, consider that authorities may close roads or otherwise limit travel.
- If the emergency results in the need to close the work location, make sure that all employees exit the building. If possible, Response Team members should conduct a walk-through to verify.
- Help any injured employees and/or visitors. Ensure they receive appropriate medical attention.
- Notify any employees not in the building at the time of the emergency of the situation. This may be necessary if your business operates multiple shifts or if your company has people who are routinely on the road. At a minimum, post information on the main door to the building in the event telephone lines are down or cell phones cannot be activated. If widespread notification is necessary, contact your local radio news station.
- Notify employees' designated contacts if they are hurt or ill.
- Contact other locations if your business has multiple locations.
- Contact your vendors.
- If telephones are working, record a message informing callers of the situation. Update the message as necessary.
- If necessary, secure the location. Make sure doors lock or that security is in place. Board up windows. Take other steps as necessary.
- Activate your Disaster Recovery Plan.

Contact Meadowbrook to design a specific disaster recovery plan, or schedule a risk assessment of your organization today.



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