Winter Weather Preparedness

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Preparing your Organization for Winter Weather Season

1. The Risks to Business
2. Planning: Before, During & After the Storm
3. ZERO HOUR: When a major storm is imminent
4. Common Mistakes during Winter Storm Disasters
5. Additional Resources

Agenda
Be Sure to Consider all the Risks:

- Power Loss
- Communications Disruption
- Supply Chain Disruption
- Property Damage
- Employee Illness or Injury
- Transportation Interruption
- Automobile/other transportation accidents
- Compromised Access to Facilities
- Personnel Exhaustion, Hypothermia, and heart attacks
- Fires
- Floods
Planning Elements:

- Review Insurance Coverage (Flooding)
- Determine your greatest risk potential: loss of heat, frozen pipes, loss of access due to snow/ice
- Identify who is responsible for clearing snow/ice accumulation (business owner or landlord)
- Establish procedure for restoring electrical service on an item-by-item basis (know your electrical load demands ahead of time!)
- Determine if alternate access to your business is needed in the event of inclement weather
- Establish an inclement weather attendance policy for employees
- Meet with and discuss winter weather preparedness with your key vendors
Planning Elements:

• Stockpile emergency supplies as needed
  • Be sure to include rock salt (or kitty litter), sand, and snow removal equipment
  • Service generators & top off fuel reserves
  • Ensure all battery powered devices have new batteries or crank/solar chargers

• Establish shelter locations on your property for employees and stockpile supplies

• Know ahead of time what local broadcasters will publish the status of your business to the public

• Ensure redundant communications channels (phone lists including home #’s & relatives/spouses, backup email address, etc.)

• Establish remote access to your corporate website in order to update visitors as to your company’s status
• Stay Informed & Communicate Regularly
• Watch for rapidly changing weather conditions
• Ensure employee & customer safety and well-being
• Stay indoors as much as possible
• Work periodically to keep driveways, walkways and doorways clear of snow and ice
• Let faucets drip in order to keep water flowing in the event of extreme, prolonged cold temperatures
• Keep the contact information for your heating contractor, plumber, fire department, insurance agent and building owner accessible
• If your office will be vacant for long periods of time, assign someone to check indoor temperatures
• Never use a gas powered generator indoors or in a garage
• Do not overload circuits in your facility with space heaters and other large appliances
• Conserve fuel, if necessary
• Locate water, power and gas shut-off locations
• Locate your emergency weather radio

Planning: During the Storm
• Avoid driving until conditions are safe to do so
• Inspect the safety of your facility before returning. Be sure to check for:
  ➢ downed power lines,
  ➢ heavy snow/ice accumulation on the roof
  ➢ icy areas on drive and walkways
  ➢ frozen plumbing fixtures and pipes
• Notify all critical people of the next steps, based on any potential damage
• Update local media and your customers of the status of your business

Planning: After the Storm
Common Mistakes During Winter Storm Disasters

- Ignoring Warnings
- Being unprepared for long term power and communications outages
- Unprepared for generator connection (no transfer switch, no spider box, no fuel provider, and no knowledge of load requirements)
- Failure to prepare for supply chain disruptions (FUEL!)
- Failure to adequately stock emergency supplies
- Failure to communicate adequately
- Failure to obtain adequate insurance coverage for loss of use, loss of revenue, and added expense
- Failure to establish emergency procedures and providers for call forwarding, temporary power, communications provider, etc.

Common Mistakes
**ZERO Hour: When a Storm is Imminent**

- **Follow the Plan** (Be clear & decisive and trust the plan)
- Stay informed on the storm’s status (don’t get surprised)
- Alert 3rd Party Crisis Response Providers
- Enact Emergency Evacuation or Shelter-in-Place Plans for Employees
- Activate your Crisis Communication Plan
- Secure Facilities, Buildings and Inventories
- Don’t be complacent during downtime (losses can mount quickly)

**BE PREPARED TO SELF-SUSTAIN FOR 72 HOURS OR MORE**

When a Storm is Near
- Detailed Preparedness and Recovery Checklists:
  www.PrepareMyBusiness.org
American Red Cross Winter Storm Information & Checklist:

- [http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/winter-storm](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/winter-storm)
NOAA Winter Storm Preparedness Guide:

- **FEMA-Ready.gov Official Winter Weather Preparedness Information:**
  
  [http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather](http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather)

- **NOAA Winter Storms & Extreme Cold information:**
  

- **Winter Storms & Your Business (a preparedness checklist):**
  
Questions?

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