

Business Preparedness for Hurricane Season

PREPARING BEFORE A HURRICANE MAKES LANDFALL IS THE BEST WAY TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF YOUR EMPLOYEES AND TO MINIMIZE DAMAGE TO YOUR BUSINESS.

Planning

- Review hurricane coverage with your insurance agent so you understand what's covered.
- Gather insurance policies and financial records that will help expedite settlement of claims. Consider storing paperwork in a waterproof container.
- Take complete inventory of your business. Take photos and/or video of your business inside and out to aid in insurance or tax credit claims after the storm.
- Consider establishing a written hurricane preparedness procedure for the business property and its contents.
- Make sure you have a contact list of emergency responders.
- Establish plans for the protection of computer files (e.g., a backup system to secure data and safe storage). Consider storing checks, purchase orders, financial records, vehicle titles and other important documents at a separate location.
- Inform key employees or essential staff of their specific responsibilities under the established hurricane procedures.
- Determine and acquire emergency protective equipment and supplies (e.g., heavy plastic sheeting, duct tape, masking tape, sandbags, emergency generator, storm shutters, chain saw, large pieces of plywood, hand tools and other essential items).
- Establish a re-entry plan on when and how they employees will be notified to report back to work.
- Make sure employee emergency contact information is up to date for communications.
- Evaluate whether your company needs a generator and how much fuel is required for operation.

Preparation Before the Storm

BUILDING EXTERIOR

- Consider having drains, gutters and downspouts evaluated to ensure they are clear and able to drain.
- Consider strapping, anchoring or removing antennas and other objects located on the roof.
- Ensure all vent hoods, exhaust louvers, etc., are protected from wind and rain.
- Secure any outside objects and equipment. If possible, relocate these items inside.
- Consider securing any glass windows with protective materials.
- Consider securing first floor doorways against flood waters with sandbags or heavy plastic sheeting and duct tape.
- If applicable, service and test the building's emergency power generator under load to make sure it is operating.
- If applicable, fill the fuel tanks of generators, fire pumps and all company-owned vehicles.

BUILDING INTERIOR

- Relocate files, boxes, computers, office machines and other equipment to the innermost portion of the building or a safer location. Do not leave boxes or equipment on the floor; elevate them by placing items on desk or tabletops.
- Disconnect all electrical appliances and equipment (except for refrigeration) such as copiers, coffee makers, electric clocks, calculators, etc. so they do not create excessive surge when electric power is restored.
- If applicable check the integrity of the uninterruptible power supply (UPS). Move the UPS to the highest level possible above the floor.
- Consider covering merchandise, office machines, specialized equipment, file cabinets, copy machines, computer terminals, etc., with tarpaulins or plastic sheeting and secure with sturdy tape.

- Check out all equipment, utilities, fire equipment and first aid materials. Repair and replace faulty items as necessary.
- Prepare a portable hurricane kit that you can take with you once you have secured your business. This could include copies of essential documents such as site maps, building plans, and insurance policies; a battery-powered radio; batteries; a hardline telephone; a laptop; camera; and anything else essential to keeping your business running.

General

- Stay up to date on the storm's progress and listen to local officials.
- Allow your employees adequate time to secure their homes and make personal preparations.
- Alert a third party about your company's relocation plan in the event the storm makes your location inaccessible.
- Have cash on hand for post-windstorm needs.

During the Event

- During the height of the storm, personnel should remain in a place that has been identified as safe from wind and flood.
- During a power failure, turn off electrical switches to prevent re-activation before necessary checks are completed.
- Consider monitoring any equipment that must remain online.
- Report a power outage.** You can text, go online or call to report an outage.
VIA TEXT: *Text **OUT** using our text code **27079**; or
ONLINE: Visit tampaelectric.com/outage or
BY PHONE: Call **877-588-1010**.

**For new registrations, please have your 12-digit account number and 5-digit zip code available.*

After the Event

- Stay away from downed power lines.** Always assume that a downed power line is energized. Move and stay a safe distance away and call 911 and then call **877-588-1010** to report to Tampa Electric.
- If you smell gas (rotten egg odor), call us immediately at 877-TECO-PGS (877-832-6747)** to report a potential natural gas leak.
- Do not turn on computer equipment if there are indications of low voltage power fluctuations, low air conditioning output, water under raised floor, broken windows or damaged equipment.
- Take pictures of your facility inside and out to aid in insurance or claims.
- Consider making temporary repairs as needed to prevent any further damage. Cover broken windows and torn roof coverings immediately.
- Separate damaged goods but beware of accumulating too much combustible debris inside a building.
- Consider inspecting roof drains and removing debris from roof to prevent drainage problems.
- If you own equipment that could be useful after the storm, notify local emergency management officials.

For additional information please visit any of the following sites:

[Tampa Electric Storm Center](#)

[Peoples Gas Storm Safety](#)

[Florida Disaster - Division of Emergency Management](#)