



Prepare Now for Hurricane Season

The Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1 to November 30, with the peak activity during September through November. Effective planning is the key to maintaining your organization's operations and being able to provide for your community. Everyone has a role to play to prepare for a hurricane. Public-sector employers also play an essential role in helping individuals and the community as a whole to be more prepared. This Bulletin will concentrate on better preparing your employees, facilities, and operations so you can continue to serve your community before, during and immediately after a hurricane.

One of the most effective ways to share information about personal and organizational preparedness is to talk to your staff. Add preparedness discussions to the agenda of your staff meetings ahead of the storm season. Consider the following discussion points, as provided in FEMA's booklet, *Prepare your Organization for a Hurricane Playbook*.

https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1409933369110-5d82e4e75ba272f6cfd656ff190c422/prepareathon_playbook_hurricane_final_090414_508.pdf

- Share the potential impact of hurricanes – New Jersey has recently had to deal with a series of hurricanes and a superstorm and we have learned a lot. But as the years pass, those with the experience and firsthand knowledge are leaving. It is important to share the lessons learned with newer leaders in the organization. Even more effective is to write them down. These notes become the genesis of a response and recovery plan that is tailored to your community.
- Review the National Weather Service terms; advisory, watch and warning. Relate them in terms of timelines and severity of approaching storms.
- Outline your organization's emergency communication plan. Routine lines of authority and communication often need to be modified during emergencies as people and electronic communication modes become unavailable. Lines of authority and communication can further change when an official state of emergency is declared. Review routine, emergency, and back-up plans for communications now.
 - Inventory routine, emergency and back-up equipment. Evaluate on-hand inventory against your needs assessment.
 - Test emergency and back-up equipment. Ensure they are in operational readiness.
 - Verify contact information of all responders. Distribute updated information to stakeholders.
- Review your organization's preparation, response, and recovery procedures with elected officials and department leaders. Consensus, cooperation, and coordination between leaders are needed for effective preparation, response, and recovery operations. Get them now. Focus on priorities and capabilities.
 - Distribute any written plans and discuss past operations' successes and challenges
 - Adjust plans and procedures according to lessons-learned and changes in your community
 - Encourage department leaders to continue the discussions with their supervisors and employees. Readiness starts with the employee. If he or she has not made preparations for their families and homes, they cannot be ready to serve their community. Consider distributing the Red Cross's Family Disaster Plan fillable form to assist with their planning.

http://www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA_CustomProductCatalog/m12140360_ARC_Family_Disaster_Plan_Template_r083012.pdf

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