

Florida United Methodist Conference
Risk Management Office
Designed to Assist, Advise and Advocate for the Local Church



Pre-Storm Preparation For Building and Structure

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Pre-Storm Preparation for Building and Structure

When preparing for a disaster, a checklist should be developed indicating the order in which processes are to be shut down and the facility secured. The length of time needed- expressed in hours or days- to accomplish these tasks should be determined in advance so that appropriate actions can be initiated at the proper time. Then, as each task is completed during either a disaster watch or disaster warning, check it off and move on to the next one.

	Facility Shutdown	Time Needed	Done
1.	Have doors, windows and ventilators been closed and battened?		
2.	Have all processes been shut down?		
3.	Have sandbags been placed at vulnerable facility openings and around critical exterior equipment?		
4.	Have all flammable and combustible gas lines been shut off at their source?		
5.	Has exposed piping been properly secured and supported to minimize breakage?		
6.	Have all vent pipes been extended to a point above the anticipated high water line?		
7.	Have utility gas and electric power lines been shut off?		
8.	Have all stationary equipment and machinery been liberally oiled and greased for added protection?		
	Business Interruption	Time Needed	Done
1.	Have contractors been engaged to provide service regarding emergency equipment (e.g., sand bags, emergency generators, pumps, lighting, lumber, cleanup tools)?		
2.	Have offsite locations been selected for transport of movable machinery, equipment, records and files, stock, furniture, etc.?		
3.	Have manufacturers and vendors of critical machinery and equipment been contacted to establish a contract for priority support with backups?		
4.	Have "critical" employees been identified to participate in the recovery process, including salvage, security, data recovery, communication, transportation, etc.?		
	Physical Protection	Time Needed	Done
1.	Has access to existing and emergency water supplies been established for use by the fire department?		
2.	Have all operations involving spark and flame (e.g., cutting, welding, soldering, heating been terminated?		
3.	Is there an adequate supply of portable fire extinguishers available, with plans in place for procurement of additional units if needed?		
4.	Have all utility gas and electric shut down procedures been assigned only to qualified personnel?		
5.	Has communication been established between church and local emergency response authorities (e.g., police, fire, rescue)?		
6.	Has a continuous fire watch been established for the facility using qualified personnel?		
7.	Has combustible debris been removed from the premises as much as is feasible?		

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	Life Safety	Time Needed	Done
1.	Have formal emergency procedures been developed and implemented for safe and orderly evacuation of personnel via established safe routes?		
2.	Have adequate provisions been made for the protection and safety of recovery, security and fire watch crews, including first aid, sanitation, drinking water, blankets, non-perishable foods, etc.?		
3.	Have plans been developed to secure the facility and its perimeter against lookers and trespassers?		
4.	Has a chain of command been established to order a full evacuation and facility shutdown in the event of an emergency?		
	Action	Time Needed	Done
1.	Make sure above and below ground tanks are properly anchored to prevent flotation. Fill empty tanks with water or product, and extend vent lines on active tanks above the anticipated maximum water level.		
2.	Latch down portable containers of flammable or combustible liquids.		
3.	Assemble the following supplies and equipment at a central, secure location: Portable pumps and hose Emergency lighting Lumber and Nails Sandbags Mops and squeegees Tarpaulins Power and manual tools Shovels and axes		
4.	Ensure that the emergency crew remaining on the premises has the following: Nonperishable food First Aid equipment Lighting Radio receivers Stored drinking water		
5.	Fill emergency and fire pump fuel tanks		
6.	Inspect roof edging strips, gutters, flashing, covering, and drains		
7.	Inspect sign and stack supports, guy wires, and anchorages		
8.	Check for weak door and window latches or hardware or for insecure panel fastenings. Expedite repairs.		
9.	Protect vulnerable windows from flying debris.		
10.	Clean out drains and catch basins.		

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Maintaining Communications

Being able to contact key individuals is essential to completing specific tasks before, and after a disaster. During a disaster, communication links may be interrupted and conditions may be generally chaotic. The following information can assist you in determining if your communications links are adequate.

	Contingency Plan	Time Needed	Done
1.	Determine and secure the type of communications system(s) best for your location. UHF radio, cellular telephone, etc. Be sure to have a supply of spare batteries and battery chargers. Do not rely on battery chargers only, due to possible power outage.		
2.	If cellular telephones are used, contact your service provider to determine if there is a Priority Access Program for catastrophe operations. If this is the case, only the customers with a Priority Access number will be able to use the cellular phone airwaves after a disaster.		
3.	Develop and maintain a list of key individuals to be contacted before and after a disaster. Each key person should have the selected type of communication system.		
4.	Contact the communications carrier to determine estimated recovery time after a disaster.		
5.	Review the components of the disaster plan on a regular basis.		

Securing Yard Storage

	Facility Shutdown	Time Needed	Done
1.	Has non-movable equipment been secured?		
2.	Have yard storage, vehicles, sheds, etc., been anchored or relocated to higher ground?		
3.	Have all storage tanks been anchored to prevent flotation?		
4.	Have all empty and semi-filled tanks been filled with water or product to increase stability?		
	Physical Protection	Time Needed	Done
1.	Have portable containers of flammable and combustible liquids been relocated to higher elevations or anchored to prevent floating?		
2.	Have tank cars holding chemicals and/or flammable or combustible liquids been relocated to a higher elevation?		
3.	Have containers of water-reactive chemicals been relocated to a higher elevation and/or tanks adequately anchored and secured?		

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	Action	Time Needed	Done
1.	Fill aboveground tanks to capacity with product or water to minimize wind damage.		
2.	Anchor structures in the yard that can be moved by high winds, such as trailers, lumber or any loose yard storage. Move stored materials inside where practical.		
3.	Take extraordinary measures to secure outdoor traveling cranes and bridges. Besides setting rail clamps, secure with wedges and cable anchors.		

Electronic Data Processing

If you operate data processing equipment, you must consider what you will do if your facility experiences a disaster which leaves your system inoperable. Ask yourself what will happen to your operations if critical pieces of computer equipment were damaged, destroyed, stolen or if power were lost. Can you relocate your processing operations? Where? Are there other areas or buildings that would meet your needs for such things as space, electrical power, communications and air-conditioning? If you cannot interrupt your data processing for any length of time, you might want to set up one of the following contingency Plan alternatives.

	Contingency Plans	Time Needed	Done
1.	Contract alternative data processing and computer facilities that can run your data programs without persons from your operation being on site.		
2.	Lease computer rooms at a facility that does nothing but rent this type of space.		
3.	Obtain a written contract to use the computers of a neighboring firm/or church whose equipment is compatible with your own programs and needs.		
4.	Development of a records backup plan that insures proper storage and duplication of records.		
5.	Obtain a means to protect against power outages and/or power surges.		
6.	Is an on-site backup power unit and associated equipment feasible?		
	Business Interruption	Time Needed	Done
1.	Have data processing software, files, records, etc. been properly backed up and transported offsite? (Note: This should be done daily.)		
2.	Has a listing of vendors, suppliers, church members, contractors, etc., been developed for communication on the facility's damage and operational status?		
	Physical Protection	Time Needed	Done
1.	Has data processing equipment been covered with waterproof covers to help prevent contamination by water or debris?		
2.	Has electrical power been disconnected to help prevent damage due to electrical spikes?		
3.	Has the data processing equipment been de-energized to help prevent damage due to power abnormalities that can be expected during storms?		

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Fire Protection Systems

	Contingency Plans	Time Needed	Done
1.	Have all fire protection system control valves been secured in the open position?		
2.	If water for the fire protection system is drawn from a tank or other impounded water supply, is the supply full?		
3.	If there is a fire pump, has the maintenance staff made sure the pump is on and functional? If a diesel fire pump, is the fuel tank full?		
4.	Have the special extinguishers such as a CO2 been inspected?		
5.	Have all fire extinguishers been inspected and recharged if need be?		
6.	Are extra fire sprinkler heads or wood wedges and wrenches in supply in the event of sprinkler leakage or fused heads?		
7.	If an anti-freeze sprinkler system is in use, is the anti-freeze solution adequate?		
	Action	Time Needed	Done
1.	In the event of a fire, only authorized persons should close the control valve(s) to the fire sprinkler system. The fire sprinkler system should not be shut off until ordered to do so by the fire department.		
2.	If located in an area subject to freezing and there is a loss of heat, a wet-pipe sprinkler system should be drained and tagged to indicate the valve is closed. A 24-hour fire watch should be imposed.		
3.	After the cold weather has ended or heat restored to the building, a visual inspection of the entire sprinkler system should be made looking for cracked or leaking pipes. The fire sprinkler system should be returned to service if damage was not sustained.		
4.	If damage to the fire sprinkler system is sustained and water leakage occurs, the fire protection system should be removed from service. A 24-hour fire watch should be implemented until repairs are completed.		
5.	If the fire protection system is a dry pipe system, drain all lower point drains and check for excessive priming water level.		

Inventory of Property

In the event of a disaster, a current inventory of your property will help determine the proper value of your loss. The inventory list should include raw product, finished product, machinery, furniture and any other items that can be damaged. When disaster strikes, it is very difficult to develop an accurate record of the inventory items and values.

	Checklist	Time Needed	Done
1.	A listing of all inventory and values is current?		
2.	Photographs of video pictures have been made of the premises?		
3.	Copies of all photographs, video pictures and inventory records are maintained off-site?		

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Valuable Papers

Valuable papers include items such as deeds, titles, certificates of deposit, corporate inventory records, administrative and procedural manuals, manuscripts, drawings, abstracts or any other papers that have intrinsic value to you or your corporation. Are your valuable papers secured in a safe place so they will not be damaged in a disaster?

	Checklist	Time Needed	Done
1.	Valuable papers should be segregated from other materials in storage for easy retrieval.		
2.	A plan should be developed for post-disaster security of the premises and valuable papers.		
3.	Valuable papers are stored in approximately rated fire resistive storage chests, vaults, or safes that will protect them from water, smoke and heat. File room doors should have insulated File Room Door Class 350. Filing devices are listed as: Class 350 for paper, Class 150 for magnetic computer tapes and photographic film, and Class 125 for flexible disks.		
4.	Store backup copies of administrative and procedural manuals in a safe location. Off-site storage is preferable.		