Hurricane Preparedness Checklist

Hurricanes generate a series of threats to lives and property. The most obvious is the threat posed to buildings, equipment, and people by the high winds which characterize such storms.

This checklist will help you prepare for a hurricane's effect on your organization, employees and community by highlighting activities you should undertake before, during, and following the event. When the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Hurricane Center issues a watch or warning, use the time available to begin taking the following steps.

✓	Before the Storm:
	Stay up-to-date on the storm's progress via radio, TV or NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards receiver.
	Determine safe evacuation routes inland as well as alternative routes.
	Review your Shelter-in-Place Plan, making sure your Disaster Kit is fully stocked and fresh batteries & supplies are included.
	Ensure you have an emergency communication plan in place prior to the storm, evacuation, or threat.
	Backup all data on servers and personal computers. If the backup site is within the area that may be affected by the storm, take backup tapes with you in the evacuation.
	Ensure remote access to your company website, and establish a team to manage updates to the site during and after the storm.
	Turn off all non-critical devices such as server monitors and workstations and other non-essential electrical equipment.
	Check the integrity of the uninterruptible power supply (UPS). Move the UPS to the highest level possible above the floor.
	Inspect and make emergency repairs to drains, gutters and flashing.
	Strap or anchor to the roof deck support assembly (e.g., the joists) all roof-mounted equipment such as HVAC units and exhaust vents.
	Call ServiceMaster Restore to go on Alert.
	Alert a third party about your company's relocation plan in the event the storm makes your location inaccessible.
	Protect/relocate vital records including your insurance policy. Be sure your risks are protected.
	Install windstorm shutters/plywood over windows and doors.

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	Take the following steps to ensure items outdoors will not blow away or cause damage:
	- Remove all loose debris
	- Anchor or relocate all nonessential equipment to a safe indoor location
	- Secure storage of flammable liquid drums, or move them to a sheltered area (but never into main facility areas)
	- Anchor all portable buildings (e.g., trailers) to the ground
	- Secure large cranes and other heavy equipment
	- Make sure outdoor signs are properly braced
✓	**During the Storm:**
	Patrol the property continuously and watch for roof leaks, pipe breakage, fire or structural damage. During the height of a windstorm, personnel should remain in a place that has been identified as safe from wind and flood.
	Constantly monitor any equipment that must remain on line.
	Consistently update employees when possible as part of the Communications Plan.
	During power failure, turn off electrical switches to prevent reactivation before necessary checks are completed.
✓	**After the Storm:**
	Keep listening to radio, TV or NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards to make sure the storm has passed.
	Wait until an area is declared safe before entering to secure the site and survey damage.
	Secure 24 hour security if needed.
	Watch for closed roads. If you come upon a barricade or a flooded road, turn around, don't drown.
	Call ServiceMaster Restore and move forward from alert or stand down.
	Survey for safety hazards such as live wires, leaking gas or flammable liquids, poisonous gases, and damage to foundations or underground piping.

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	Continue to communicate with all key audiences until the crisis has passed. Consistency is important, especially with members of the media.
	Call in key personnel and notify contractors to start repairs. Make sure safety systems are fully implemented before work is allowed to begin. This means controlling smoking and other open flame sources. Require contractors to share responsibility for establishing fire-safe conditions before and during the job.
	Clean roof drains and remove debris from roof to prevent drainage problems.
	Begin salvage as soon as possible to prevent further damage:
	- Cover broken windows and torn roof coverings immediately
	- Separate damaged goods, but beware of accumulating too much combustible debris inside a building
✓	**Your People:**
	Have all employees, vendors, client contact information on hand.
	Use the Alert Notification System to keep all parties posted on status updates and next steps.
	During evacuation have a central point of contact for all employees, and ensure you know where your people are located.
	During evacuation consider your phones lines - redirection to cell phones, answering service, Google Voice, or Agility lines could be critical.
	Following the storm, notify all critical people of next steps, based on damage.

If you have additional questions feel free to contact ServiceMaster recovery specialist at 866.969.6653 or visit www.servicemaster247.com

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Storm Threat Details:

In flat areas, storm surges and extremely high tides may force water many miles inland. Hurricanes can also generate heavy rainfall, causing severe flooding over a wide area. A rare, but sometimes deadly effect of Hurricanes is tornadoes spawned by the larger storms. Though coastal regions are always the most vulnerable to a Hurricane's effects, flooding and tornadoes may affect areas well inland.

The National Weather Service rates hurricanes by their intensity, using the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale of one to five. The scale categorizes storms according to their sustained winds, the storm surges produced, and expected damage. Businesses located within areas of risk should have a hurricane preparedness plan. It is a good idea to develop a plan of action for your business and your staff to be ready for this type of interruption.

Know the Terms:

Tropical Depression: An organized system of clouds and thunderstorms with a defined surface circulation and maximum sustained winds of 38 MPH (33 knots) or less. Sustained winds are defined as one-minute average wind measured at about 33 feet (10 meters) above the surface.

Tropical Storm: An organized system of strong thunderstorms with a defined surface circulation and maximum sustained winds of 39–73 MPH (34–63 knots).

Hurricane: An intense tropical weather system of strong thunderstorms with a well-defined surface circulation and maximum sustained winds of 74 MPH (64 knots) or higher.

Storm Surge: A dome of water pushed onshore by hurricane and tropical storm winds. Storm surges can reach 25 feet high and be 50–1000 miles wide. Storm surge is by far the greatest threat to life and property along the immediate coast.

Storm Tide: A combination of a storm surge and the normal tide (i.e., a 15-foot storm surge combined with a 2-foot normal high tide over the mean sea level created a 17-foot storm tide).

Hurricane/Tropical Storm Watch: Hurricane/tropical storm conditions are possible in the specified area of the watch, usually within 48 hours. Tune in to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for information.

Hurricane/Tropical Storm Warning: Hurricane/tropical storm conditions are expected in the specified area of the warning, usually within 36 hours of the onset of tropical storm force winds. Complete storm preparations and immediately leave the threatened area if directed by local officials.

Extreme Wind Warning: Extreme sustained winds of a major hurricane (115 mph or greater), usually associated with the eye wall, are expected to begin within an hour. Take immediate shelter in the interior portion of a well-built structure.

Short Term Watches and Warnings: These warnings provide detailed information about specific hurricane threats, such as flash floods and tornadoes.