



Partners in Prevention

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Michigan Resolves to be Resilient for Cascading Disasters

Benton Harbor, MI, and Berrien County businesses attended the June 28 FEMA [*Ready Business Power Outage & Severe Wind/Tornado Preparedness Workshop*](#). Unique to the workshop was that it addressed two events that require preparedness—power outages and severe winds—and the impacted geographic area includes parts of Michigan and Indiana.

During the workshop, businesses and organizations learned to identify risk, develop a plan, and take action to mitigate impacts using the new [*Ready Business Toolkits*](#). The daylong event addressed staff, space, systems, and community service steps for businesses and organizations to become disaster resilient.

Berrien County Commissioner Jeanette Leahey said, "We have been working very hard to engage and prepare our business community through our Local Emergency Planning Committee. We were proud to partner with FEMA and FLASH to bring Ready Business as another tool in these preparedness efforts."

Capt. Rockey Adams and Lt. Kenneth High explained the impacts of a severe wind and power outage event, and the potential impact it can have on a community. Capt. Adams said, "We need to change the definition of first responders, first responders are not professional responders. First responders in a large disaster are ordinary citizens. This is why CERT training, first aid training, and building emergency kits are so important."

Partners for the workshop included FLASH Legacy Partner Simpson Strong-Tie Co., along with FEMA's Individual and Community Preparedness Division, FEMA Region V, the Berrien County Sheriff's Department, the Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce, Kinexus, the Local Emergency Planning Committee, Ottawa Kent Insurance, ServPro, Vail Rubber Inc., and the Lakeland Health Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce.