

ARE YOU READY FOR THE NEXT SEVERE WEATHER EVENT?

It is vitally important to prepare in advance and to protect your employees as well as for your facility for the likelihood of a severe weather event. Outlined below are basic guidelines that should be implemented along with available resources and references.

Before The Storm:

- Evacuate all personnel well ahead of any forecasted flooding or storm surge.
- Have a severe weather emergency plan in place. Review the plan with all employees, including seasonal and part-time. Perform drills, demonstrations, and observations to make sure everyone is aware of their duties. Revise and update the plan as needed.
- Develop a timeline/schedule to direct preparation activities as the storm approaches.
- Test all mechanical and electrical equipment and emergency back-up systems.
- Secure all loose equipment, materials, and fixtures and remove any other objects (or debris) that could be affected by the storm. Secure doors, windows and loose structural components.
- Have all personal protective equipment and foul weather gear available.
- Have all emergency equipment and supplies available. This includes first aid kits, fire extinguishers, flashlights, and communication equipment (two-way radios, cell phones, etc.)
- Move critical equipment (travel lifts, forklifts, and vehicles) to safer areas as applicable.
- Advise employees of the company's notification system and evacuation procedures. Identify storm refuge areas.
- Remember that employees have families and homes that may be affected by the weather system. They will need time to tend to their personal needs as well as your facility.



During The Storm:

- All personnel should be in safe, protected areas, or off-site.
- No work should be completed outside. Work on ladders, scaffolds, travel lifts, cranes, vessels, and structures should be suspended.
- No attempts should be made to repair storm-related building/property/vessel damage.

After The Storm:

- Assess all physical site and structural facility conditions before allowing employee access.
- Make certain employees use all appropriate PPE and safety gear.
- Assess employee safety hazards from damage and debris. Employees should not enter areas where there is major debris accumulation, flooding conditions, down electrical wires or areas where the conditions are uncertain. This should be left to first responders, utility company personnel or other trained professionals. Employees should only perform clean-up and repair tasks for which they are trained and experienced.
- Maintain communications with emergency management and first responder agencies.
- Advise customers and employees when it will be safe to return to the premises so that they will not interfere with clean-up and repairs.
- Assess the effectiveness of the emergency preparedness plan. Revise or update it as necessary, at least annually.

Additional resources and references are listed below:

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/emergencypreparedness/index.html>

<http://training.fema.gov/>

<http://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/index.cfm>

It must not be assumed that every unsafe condition or procedure has been covered in this correspondence. Our consultation is intended to assist management. It does not include the identification of every possible loss potential, violation of law, code, statute or regulation, and is not a substitute for the establishment of risk management programs by your management.