

After the Disaster

This year we have been looking at ways companies can prepare themselves for emergencies, severe weather, and disasters. After a disaster, many companies have trouble figuring out where to start in rebuilding their business and restoring safety and security to their employees. In fact, estimates show that up to 40% of small businesses never reopen following a disaster. This quarter's newsletter will help in assessing and assuring your business' safety while picking up the pieces after a disaster.

Back to Business Checklist:

- Review the copy of your Emergency Preparedness Plan you created after reading this year's Nextep Safety Newsletters. Put your plan into action to keep your business secure and to keep in touch with your employees during the critical hours.
- Reestablish contact with employees, vendors, and clients.
- Call your insurance agent to report the damages and loss in income.
- Call Nextep for assistance with workers' compensation claims that may arise, payroll distribution, and health benefits questions.
- Contact alternate vendors if your usual one is unable to function after the disaster.
- Employees may be eligible for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) for wages lost during the disaster. Instruct them to contact the state's Employment Commission for further information.
- Have the premises professionally inspected to ensure the structural integrity of the building.
- Scout locations for a new building if necessary.
- Make any temporary repairs needed to ensure safety until the bigger repairs can be completed.
- Hire a professional clean-up crew if required, or make sure personal protective equipment is worn by those performing the clean up.
- Test atmosphere for asbestos or other toxic gasses.
- Check for proper ventilation.
- Replace fire and smoke alarms as well as the fire sprinkler system.
- Inspect furniture and equipment to make sure it is still operable. If not, replace it. Keep pictures and receipts for insurance purposes.
- Assess your existing emergency plan and create a new one. Distribute it to employees and keep copies off-site.

Sources and Additional Resources:

Federal Emergency Management Agency at www.fema.gov

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health at www.cdc.gov/NIOSH

American Red Cross at www.redcross.org/services/disaster



**TAKE SAFETY
PERSONALLY.**

**MAKE IT PART
OF YOUR DAILY
ROUTINE.**

THINK SAFETY!

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