



Hurricane Survival Toolbox Kit: Preparation Tools



Virgin Islands Division of Occupational Safety and Health

OSHA requires employers to protect workers from anticipated hazard and provide a safe and healthful workplace.

OSHA's role is to assure the safety and health of America's workers by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach, and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health.

This Hurricane Survival Toolkit provides a general overview of particular topics related to current OSHA standards. It does not alter or determine compliance responsibilities in OSHA standards or the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, or the equivalent State Plan standards and requirements. Because interpretations and enforcement policy may change over time, you should consult current OSHA/State Plan administrative interpretations and decisions by the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission and the courts for additional guidance on OSHA compliance requirements. Employers should modify their procedures as appropriate when additional, relevant information becomes available.

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PREPARATION IS KEY

How to Make Sure Your Office
Is Hurricane Ready



Six (6) Critical Steps to Prepare Your Workplace for Hurricane Season

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Hurricane Preparedness Guide for Workplaces: PUBLIC SECTOR

1. Determine Your Risk
2. Develop a Hurricane Disaster Plan
3. Assemble Disaster Supplies
4. Strengthen Your Workplace Facility
5. Stay Informed
6. Complete Your Written Hurricane Plan



Start with a Risk Assessment



Understanding the risks to your workplace is a vital first step of your disaster recovery planning. A thorough risk assessment will identify specific vulnerability spots that your organization needs to address. It will help to prioritize the most urgent parts of your planning and thus also guide the content of your hurricane disaster recovery plan.



1. Determine Your Risk

Here are just a few basic examples, and it is not enough to answer a simple “Yes” or “No.” Your risk assessment must provide a deep analysis of your organization’s most critical vulnerabilities, along with thorough documentation on what’s needed to eliminate those gaps.



Can your organization operate without any of the following: computers, servers/data, inventory or industry-specific equipment?



Can employees operate if your building is damaged, flooded or inaccessible?
Can operations continue without electricity, water, internet?



Can staff work remotely from home or other locations? If so, what equipment do they need and how will they be able to obtain it?



What operations are highest priority for recovering after a storm?
Which systems come first, second, third and so on?



TOOLBOX:

Ready Business Hurricane Toolkit

https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/ready_business_hurricane-toolkit.pdf



2. Develop an Evacuation Plan

- An Evacuation Plan should be written down and reviewed annually. An Emergency Action Plan (EAP) is required by OSHA for many organizations, so planning for a hurricane can be considered as a part of your EAP planning and review each year. This is especially important for workplaces with essential functions and employees during times of hurricane disasters.
- Your EAP should address policies and procedures for employee safety, business continuity and contingency plans in the event of damage to the facility. It should also outline policies for dealing with employees, customers and vendors.
- The basic framework of a hurricane disaster plan should focus on 4 central areas. These 4 components help to plan for all stages of a disaster: before, during and after. They identify the steps and systems needed to prevent a major disruption from a hurricane as well as procedures for keeping employees safe and recovering operations.

Prevention

Restoration

**Emergency
Response**

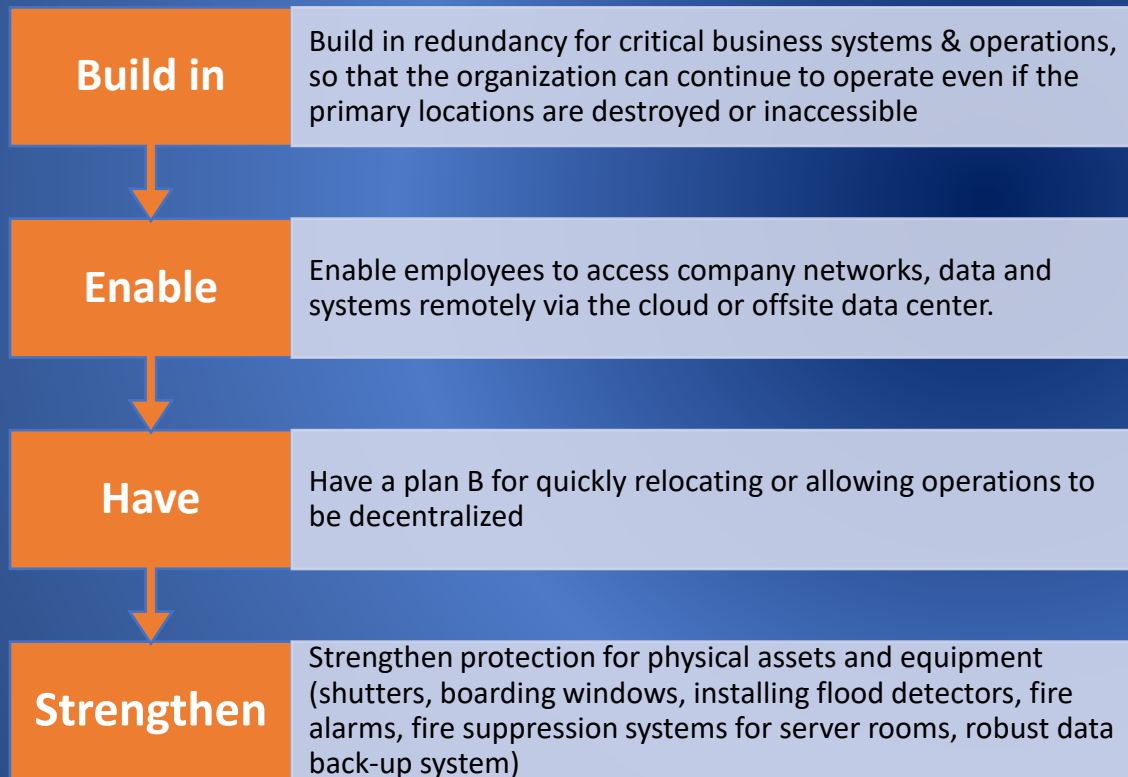
Recovery



**DISASTER
PLAN**

Preventative Planning

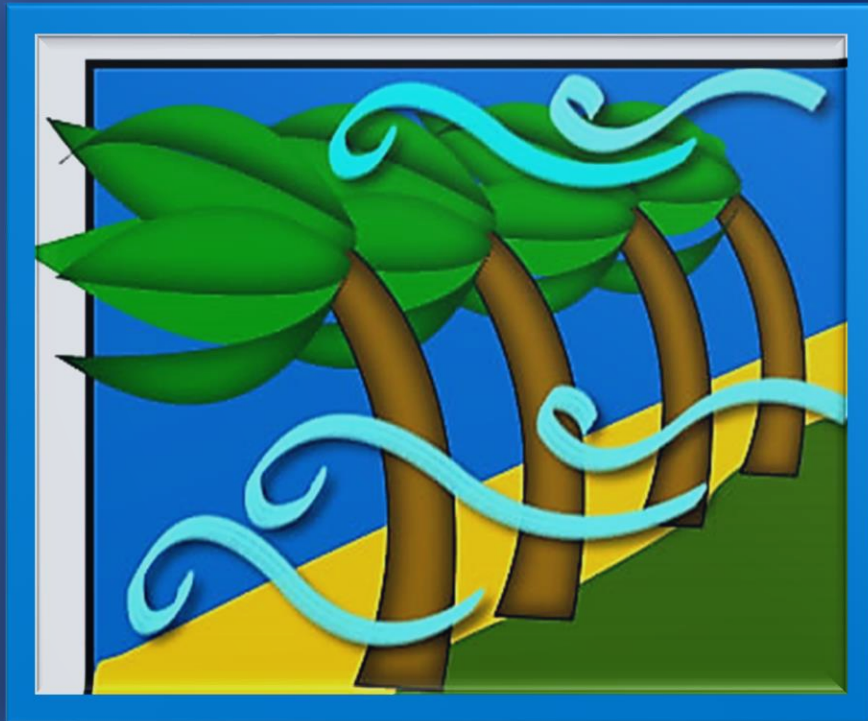
A crucial component of any hurricane disaster recovery plan is the preventative planning. No, you can't stop a hurricane, but you can prevent it from destroying your organization. You need to protect every aspect of your workplace.



Preparing Your Workplace for a Hurricane

OSHA requires employers to protect workers from anticipated hazard and provide a safe and healthful workplace.

Each employer should have a plan in place that should include:



- Conditions that will activate the plan
- Chain of command
- Emergency functions and who will perform them
- Evacuation procedures for essential workers
- Procedures to account for personnel and clients
- Equipment for personnel
- Test emergency evacuation and communication plans



Tools to Create an Emergency Action Plan and Checklist

TOOLBOX:



Create Your Own Emergency Action Plan (EAP)


[eTool : Evacuation Plans and Procedures - OSHA's Expert Systems - Create Your Own Emergency Action Plan \(EAP\) - Create Your Own EAP | Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#)



Emergency Action Plan Checklist

<https://www.osha.gov/etools/evacuation-plans-procedures/eap/develop-implement/checklists>



An American Red Cross emergency preparedness kit is shown, featuring a red and black bag with the text "Emergency Preparedness" and the Red Cross logo. Various supplies are laid out in front of the bag, including two white water bottles, a box of "Emergency Poncho", a flashlight, a whistle, a first aid kit, and other emergency supplies. The background is a light blue gradient.

3. Assemble Disaster Supplies



Disaster Supply Kit

- Water (one gallon per person, per day for at least 7-10 days)
- Non-perishable foods (at least 3 days worth)
- Flashlights
- Battery Powered Radios
- Batteries
- Important Documents
- OTC/prescribed medications (at least 3 days worth)
- First Aid Supplies
- Satellite phones



4. Strengthen Your Workplace Facility

Make

Make sure your facility is in good repair. Inspect roof and building. Prioritize any repairs that need to be made. Turn off and secure any gas tanks prior to storm arrival.

Remove

Remove any obstructions to gutters, drains and nearby storm drains to prevent blockage.

Install

Install window shutters, removable covers on windows, or board up glass exposures. Secure locks and make sure door frames are sturdy enough to handle high winds.

Place

Place sandbags at low points of the facility and door thresholds to prevent flooding.

Reduce

Reduce windborne debris such as nearby trees, shrubs and loose landscaping materials. Take down any signs, banners and flags, bring them indoors.



Hurricane Preparedness Tips

Sandbag Safety

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Filling Sandbags

Fill sandbags 2/3 full. Do not overfill, as it will be too heavy to carry. Use sturdy gloves when handling sandbags. To avoid injury, use proper lifting techniques when filling and lifting sandbags. Distribution sites are at VI Dept. of Public Works locations.



Safe Handling

Lay sandbags like brickwork. Do not tie the top of sandbag. Overlap bags to ensure the unfilled part of the bag is covered by the next bag. At the end of the row, tuck flaps under the last bag. Stagger rows so the ends of the bags do not line up.



Placement

Place a small wall across doorways to the height of expected water level. Be careful not to trap yourself inside. Plastic sheeting or tarps may be used under sandbags to reduce water seepage.



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Sandbag Safety

TOOLBOX:

Filling, Moving and Placing Sandbags



OSHA Sandbagging Fact Sheet

[OSHA FACTSHEET PPE](#)



OSHA Sandbagging Quick Card

[Filling, Moving and Placing Sandbags During Flooding Disasters \(osha.gov\)](#)



5. Stay Informed!

Identify your trusted sources of information for a hurricane event



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Weather Service



NOAA National Hurricane Center



weather.gov/safety/hurricane

5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT WHERE TO GET HURRICANE INFO

- 1** Television - Tune in to your trusted local news source.
- 2** Phone - Access mobile.weather.gov on your mobile phone and get Wireless Emergency Alerts.
- 3** Radio - Receive forecast information and news on your NOAA Weather Radio.
- 4** Social Media - Follow official government agencies, trusted media partners, and share critical info with friends and family.
- 5** Computer - Access information from weather.gov, ready.gov and flash.org.

For more Hurricane Safety Information, visit weather.gov/hurricanesafety



6. Complete Your Written Hurricane Plan

Hurricane Plan



Take the time now to write down your hurricane plan. Being prepared before the threat of a hurricane makes your workplace resilient and ready to bounce back much sooner after the catastrophic impact of hurricanes.



TOOLBOX:



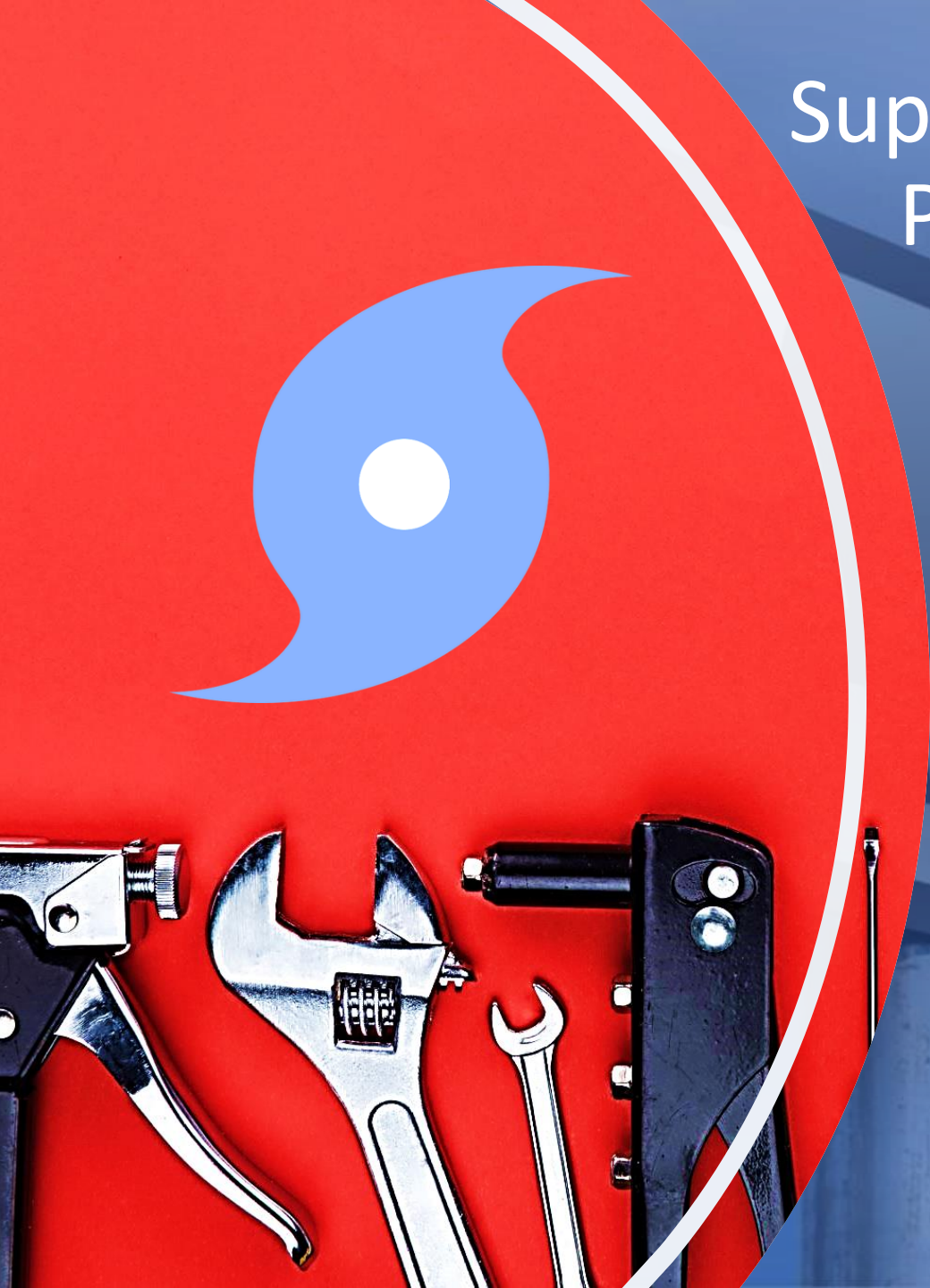
Prepare Your Organization for a Hurricane – FEMA Playbook
[Prepare Your Organization for a Hurricane - Playbook \(fema.gov\)](https://www.fema.gov/prepare-your-organization-for-a-hurricane-playbook)



OSHA Hurricane Preparedness Webpage
[Hurricane Preparedness and Response - Preparedness | Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(osha.gov\)](https://www.osha.gov/hurricane-preparedness-and-response-preparedness)



Supplemental Preventative Planning & Hurricane Preparedness Tools



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Additional Tools for Your Toolbox



OSHA Hurricane Preparedness Page

[Hurricane Preparedness and Response - Preparedness | Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(osha.gov\)](#)



Preparing for a Hurricane or Tropical Storm (CDC)

[Preparing for a Hurricane or Tropical Storm \(cdc.gov\)](#)



Hurricane Preparedness Quiz (American Red Cross)

[Hurricane Safety Quiz | American Red Cross](#)



FEMA Proper Emergency Kit Essential to Hurricane Preparedness

[Proper Emergency Kit Essential to Hurricane Preparedness | FEMA.gov](#)



FEMA Mobile App: Personalized Disaster Resource

[FEMA Mobile Products | FEMA.gov](#)



Onsite Safety Hurricane Safety Procedures: How to Keep Workers Safe

[Hurricane Safety and Procedures: How To Keep Workers Safe \(onsitesafety.com\)](#)



Hurricane Safety Tips and Resources (NOAA)

[Hurricane Safety Tips and Resources \(weather.gov\)](#)



What's in Your Toolbox?



ARE YOU PREPARED?

All your hurricane planning should occur long before a storm is on its way. The more proactive you are, the less down time you will face as a department. Even if there is significant physical destruction, aggressive preventative planning can ensure continuity of your operations soon after the storm has passed.

WHEN IT COMES TO HURRICANE SAFETY, PREPAREDNESS IS EVERYTHING!

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