

## Disaster Planning Guide

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## Continuity Planning

1. Carefully assess **how your company functions**, both internally and externally, to determine which staff, materials, procedures and equipment are absolutely necessary to keep the business operating.
  - Review your **business process flow chart** if one exists.
  - Identify **operations critical to survival** and recovery.
  - Include **emergency payroll, expedited financial decision-making and accounting systems** to track and document costs in the event of a disaster.
  - Establish procedures for **succession of management**. Include at least one person who is not at the company headquarters, if applicable.
2. Identify your **suppliers, shippers, resources and other businesses** you must interact with on a daily basis.
  - Develop **professional relationships** with **more than one** company to use in case your primary contractor cannot service your needs. A disaster that shuts down a key supplier can be devastating to your business.
  - **Create a contact list** for existing critical business contractors and others you plan to use in an emergency. Keep this list with other important documents on file, in your [emergency supply kit](#) and at an off-site location.
3. Plan what you will do if your **building, plant or store is not accessible**. This type of planning is often referred to as a continuity of operations plan, or COOP, and includes all facets of your business.
  - Consider if you can run the business from a different location or from your home.
  - Develop relationships with other companies to use their facilities in case a disaster makes your location unusable.
  - **Enroll in Wilmot Modular Structures' Emergency Planning Program**
4. **Plan for payroll continuity.**

5. Decide **who should participate** in putting together your emergency plan.
  - Include co-workers from all levels in planning and as **active members** of the emergency management team.
  - Consider a **broad cross-section** of people from throughout your organization, but focus on those with expertise vital to daily **business functions**. These will likely include people with technical skills as well as managers and executives.
6. Define **crisis management procedures** and **individual responsibilities** in advance.
  - Make sure those involved know what they are supposed to do.
  - Train others in case you need back-up help.
7. Coordinate with others.
  - Meet with **other businesses in your building** or industrial complex.
  - Talk with first responders, emergency managers, community organizations and utility providers.
  - Plan with your suppliers, shippers and others you regularly do business with.
  - Share your plans and encourage other businesses to set in motion their own continuity planning and offer to help others.
8. **Review your emergency plans annually**. Just as your business changes over time, so do your preparedness needs. When you hire new employees or when there are changes in how your company functions, you should update your plans and inform your people.

## Emergency Planning

1. **Two-way communication is central** before, during and after a disaster.
  - Include emergency preparedness information in **newsletters, on company intranet, periodic employee emails** and other **internal communications** tools.
  - Consider setting up a telephone calling tree, a **password-protected page** on the company website, an email alert or a **call-in voice recording** to communicate with employees in an emergency.
  - Designate an out-of-town phone number where employees can leave an **"I'm Okay"** message in a catastrophic disaster.
  - Provide all co-workers with **wallet cards** detailing instructions on how to get company information in an emergency situation. Include telephone numbers or Internet passwords for easy reference.
  - **Maintain** open communications where co-workers are free to bring questions and concerns to company leadership.
  - Ensure you have established **staff members who are responsible for communicating** regularly to employees.
2. **Talk to co-workers with disabilities**. If you have employees with disabilities ask about **what assistance is needed**. People with disabilities typically know what assistance they will need in an emergency.
  - **Identify** co-workers in your organization with **special needs**.
  - Engage **people with disabilities in emergency planning**.
  - Ask about communications difficulties, physical limitations, equipment instructions and medication procedures.

- Identify people willing to help co-workers with disabilities and be sure they are able to handle the job. This is particularly important if someone needs to be lifted or carried.
  - Plan **how you will alert people who cannot hear** an alarm or instructions.
3. **Frequently review and practice** what you intend to do during and after an emergency with [drills and exercises](#).

## Emergency Supplies

1. **NOAA weather radio**
  - With tone-alert feature, if possible, that automatically alerts you when a **watch or warning** is issued in your area. Tone-alert is not available in some areas.
  - Include extra batteries.
  - It is recommended that you have both a battery-powered commercial radio and a NOAA weather radio with an alert function. The NOAA weather radio can alert you to weather emergencies or announcements from the Department of Homeland Security. The commercial radio is a good source for news and information from local authorities.
2. Keep copies of **important records** such as site maps, building plans, insurance policies, employee contact and identification information, bank account records, supplier and shipping contact lists, computer backups, emergency or law enforcement contact information and other priority documents in a waterproof, fireproof portable container. Store a second set of records at an off-site location.
3. Talk to your co-workers about what **emergency supplies** the company can feasibly provide, if any, and which ones individuals should consider keeping on hand.

Recommended emergency supplies include the following:

- **Water**, amounts for portable kits will vary. Individuals should determine what amount they are able to both store comfortably and to transport to other locations. If it is feasible, store one gallon of water per person per day, for drinking and sanitation
- **Food**, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- **Battery-powered radio and extra batteries**
- **Flashlight and extra batteries**
- **First Aid kit**
- **Whistle** to signal for help
- [Dust or filter masks](#), readily available in hardware stores, which are rated based on how small a particle they filter
- **Moist towelettes** for sanitation
- **Wrench or pliers** to turn off utilities
- **Can opener** for food (if kit contains canned food)
- **Plastic sheeting and duct tape** to "[seal the room](#)"
- **Garbage bags and plastic ties** for personal sanitation

## Deciding To Stay or Go

Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the disaster, the first important decision after an incident occurs is **whether to shelter-in-place or evacuate**. Understand and plan for both possibilities in advance by developing clear, well thought out plans.

- Have an [Evacuation Plan](#) and a [Shelter-in-Place Plan](#). Go to
- In any emergency, local authorities may or may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, you should **monitor TV or radio news reports for information or official instructions** as they become available.
- If you are specifically told to evacuate, shelter-in-place or seek medical treatment, do so immediately.
- Use **common sense and available information** to determine if there is immediate danger. For example, if your building is damaged you will typically want to evacuate

## EVACUATION PLANNING

Some disasters will require employees to leave the workplace quickly. The ability to evacuate workers, customers and visitors effectively can save lives. People who plan and practice how they will get out of the building in an emergency are better prepared than those who do not have an exit strategy.

If feasible, develop a system for **knowing who is in your building, including customers and visitors**, in case there is an emergency.

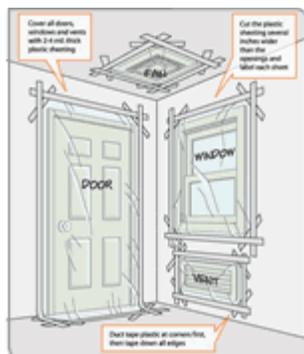
1. **Decide in advance who has the authority to order an evacuation.** Create a chain of command so that others are authorized to act in case your designated person is not available. If local officials tell you to evacuate, do so immediately.
2. Identify **who will shut down critical operations and lock the doors**, if possible, during an evacuation.
  - Choose employees most able to make decisions that emphasize personal safety first.
  - Train others who can serve as a back-up if the designated person is unavailable.
  - Write down, distribute and practice evacuation procedures.
3. Locate and make copies of **building and site maps** with critical utility and emergency routes clearly marked.
  - **Identify and clearly mark entry-exit points** both on the maps and throughout the building.
  - **Post maps** for quick reference by employees.
  - Keep copies of building and site maps with your crisis management plan and other important documents in your emergency supply kit and also at an off-site location.
  - Make copies available to first responders or other emergency personnel.
4. **Plan two ways out** of the building from different locations throughout your facility.
5. Consider the feasibility of installing **emergency lighting** or plan to use flashlights in case the power goes out.
6. Establish a **warning system**.
  - **Test systems** frequently.
  - Plan to communicate with **people who are hearing-impaired or have other disabilities** and those who do **not speak English**.

7. Designate an **assembly site**.
  - Pick one location near your facility and another in the general area in case you have to move farther away.
  - Talk to your people in advance about the importance of letting someone know if you cannot get to the assembly site or if you must leave it.
  - Be sure the assembly site is away from traffic lanes and is safe for pedestrians.
8. Try to **account for all workers, visitors and customers** as people arrive at the assembly site.
  - Take a head count.
  - Use a prepared roster or checklist.
  - Ask everyone to let others know if they are leaving the assembly site.
9. Determine **who is responsible for providing an all-clear** or return-to-work notification. Plan to cooperate with local authorities responding in an emergency.
10. Conduct employee **training, exercises and drills** including procedures for evacuating **high-rise buildings** on a regular basis.
11. Plan for **people with disabilities** who may need help getting out in an emergency.
12. If your business operates out of more than one location or has more than one place where people work, establish **evacuation procedures for each individual building**.
13. If your company is in a high-rise building, an industrial park, or even a small strip mall, it is important to **coordinate and practice with other tenants or businesses** to avoid confusion and potential gridlock.
14. If you **rent, lease or share space with other businesses** make sure the **building owner** and other companies are committed to coordinating and practicing evacuation procedures together.
15. Make a **Shelter-In-Place Plan**.

## Make a Shelter-In-Place Plan

There may be situations when it's best to stay where you are to avoid any uncertainty outside. There are other circumstances, such as during a tornado or a chemical incident when specifically **how** and **where** you take shelter is a **matter of survival**. You should understand the different threats and **plan for all possibilities**.

**If you are instructed by local authorities to take shelter, do so immediately.**



### Seal The Room diagram

[Click here](#) to view, download or print with graphics.

1. If feasible, develop a system for knowing **who is in your building** in case there is an emergency.
2. Establish a **warning system**.
  - **Test systems** frequently.
  - Plan to communicate with **people with hearing impairments or other disabilities** or who do **not speak English**.
3. **Account for all workers, visitors and customers** as people arrive in the shelter.
  - Take a head count.
  - Use a prepared roster or checklist.
  - In general, **employees cannot be forced to shelter**, however there are circumstances when local officials will order that everyone stay put. It is important to **speak with your co-workers** in advance about sheltering to avoid confusion and **allow for cooperation** in the event you need to shelter-in-place.
4. **Assign specific duties** to employees in advance; **create checklists** for each specific responsibility. Designate and train employee alternates in case the assigned person is not there or is injured.
5. Get emergency supply kits and keep them in your shelter locations.
6. **Practice** your shelter-in-place plan on a regular basis.

Determine where you will take shelter in case of a [Tornado Warning](#).

1. Storm cellars or basements provide the best protection.
2. If underground shelter is not available, go into an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor possible.
3. In a high-rise building, go to a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor possible.
4. Stay away from windows, doors and outside walls. Go to the center of the room. Stay away from corners because they attract debris.
5. Stay in the shelter location until the danger has passed.

**"Seal the Room"**. If local authorities believe the air is badly contaminated with a chemical, you may be instructed to take shelter and "seal the room."

The process used to seal the room is considered a temporary protective measure to create a barrier between your people and potentially contaminated air outside. It is a type of sheltering that requires preplanning.

1. **Identify a location to "seal the room" in advance.**
  - If feasible, **choose an interior room**, such as a break room or conference room, with as **few windows and doors** as possible.
  - If your business is located on more than one floor or in more than one building, **identify multiple shelter locations**.
2. **To "seal the room" effectively:**
  - **Close** the business and bring **everyone inside**.
  - **Lock** doors, **close** windows, air vents and fireplace dampers.
  - **Turn off** fans, air conditioning and forced air heating systems.

- **Take your emergency supply kit** unless you have reason to believe it has been contaminated.
- **Go into an interior room**, such as a break room or conference room, with few windows, if possible.
- **Seal** all windows, doors and air vents with plastic sheeting and duct tape. Measure and cut the sheeting in advance to save time.
- Be prepared to **improvise** and use what you have on hand to **seal gaps** so that you create a barrier between yourself and any contamination.
- Local authorities may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, you should **watch TV, listen to the radio or check the Internet often for official news** and instructions as they become available.

If you are in the process of expanding, changing locations or building new facilities you may want to consider constructing a special shelter-in-place room. For more information see <http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/saferoom/index.shtm> and contact Wilmot Modular Structures to discuss your building needs. Wilmot can help you re-build fast so your business can continue to thrive after disaster strikes.

## Make Fire Safety Part of the Plan

Fire is the most common of all business disasters. Each year fires cause thousands of deaths and injuries and billions of dollars in damage.

1. Have your office, plant or facility **inspected for fire safety**; ensure compliance with **fire codes and regulations**.
2. Install **smoke detectors** and **fire extinguishers** in appropriate locations.
3. Consider an **automatic sprinkler system**, fire **hoses** and **fire-resistant** doors and walls.
4. Establish a **system for warning** your employees. Plan how you will communicate with people with hearing impairments or other disabilities and those who do not speak English.
5. Put a process in place for **alerting the fire department**.
6. Plan and practice how people will evacuate in a fire.

## Prepare for Medical Emergencies

Workplace medical emergencies vary greatly depending on the disaster, type of job and the worksite. Heavy equipment operators face different safety risks than do office workers or food service personnel. Regardless of the type of work, there are steps which can give you the upper hand in responding to a medical emergency.

1. Encourage employees to take basic **First Aid** and **CPR** training. Offer on-site classes for your co-workers.
2. Keep First Aid supplies **in stock** and easily accessible.
3. Encourage employees to **talk about medical conditions** that may require support or special care in an emergency.
4. Keep **employee emergency contact information** on file and up-to-date. Store a copy with other vital records in your emergency kit and another at an off-site location.

## **Recover and Rebuild**

### **ASSISTANCE:**

Go to [www.FEMA.gov](http://www.FEMA.gov) to find out if you qualify for assistance and how to apply for it.

Apply by Phone:

- Call (800) 621-3362.
- Call TTY (800) 462-7585 for people with speech or hearing disabilities.

Apply online through on their Disaster Assistance site for consolidated disaster information.

### **The Maryland Emergency Management Agency**

[www.mema.state.md.us](http://www.mema.state.md.us)

Phone: **877.636.2872**