

Preparing for Hurricanes

Risk Management for Public Entities



Emergency Preparedness: Before the Hurricane

- Establish an Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) that takes into consideration prevention, emergency response, and disaster recovery. If an EPP is already in place, review and update it as needed for hurricane readiness.
- Designate an Emergency Coordinator and an EPP Team. Assign responsibility to specific employees for advance arrangements to initiate the plan.
- Test emergency communications. This may include notification emails or text alerts. To avoid confusion, please note "THIS IS A TEST" during the system test.
- Brace outside storage tanks and outer structures.
- Inspect all battery powered equipment and backup power.
- Inspect sewers and drains.
- Check all drainage pumps.
- Inspect the roof and flashing for serviceability.
- Check the landscaping; prune dead branches.
- Have a supply of plastic or tarpaulins on hand ready to cover water-sensitive equipment.

At the Approach of the Hurricane:

- Inspect roof drains and piping; are they clear of debris and fully functional?
- Check floor drains and sumps; are they clear of debris and fully functional?
- Check all storm water catch basins and grates to be sure they are clear of debris.
- Be sure that roof flashing is secure.
- Make sure that doors and windows will remain latched.
- Protect windows from flying debris.
- Walk the grounds; move objects inside that could become missiles in high winds.
- Anchor any equipment stored outside that could be moved by high winds.
- Move supplies stored outside to inside storage.
- Assemble supplies for the emergency crews and for emergency repairs.

- Protect vital records against flooding and wind.
- Secure backup records.
- Inspect fire protection equipment.
- Top off fuel in the emergency generators; test run.
- Evacuate non-essential personnel.
- Have remaining personnel take shelter.
- Check the supply and serviceability of sandbags.

Emergency Response: During the Hurricane

- Patrol the facility continuously, as long as it is safe to do so.
- Check for any damage to the structure.
- Check for leaks and fire systems impairment.
- Complete any emergency repairs that are possible and safe to perform.
- Shut off any valves where pipes have been broken.
- Watch for flooding. Use sandbags when necessary.
- Watch for reverse winds after the eye of the storm has passed. They will affect different areas and perhaps break trees that had been blown in the other direction.

Emergency Recovery: After the Hurricane

- Conduct a roll call of all personnel on the premises.
- Assess the damage.
- Check for safety hazards (downed trees, branches, downed power wires, leaking gas, blocked roof drains).
- Make temporary repairs to protect the structure and supplies. Keep accurate records of repairs. (Avoid making permanent repairs until your claims specialist has reviewed the damage.)
- Keep damaged property for inspection. Photograph and document property damage and report it to VACORP.

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