

Hurricane Preparedness & Response

Here are some steps to take to prepare and respond to a hurricane, and should not necessarily be limited to the following:

Make sure someone at your site is keeping tabs on the forecasted path and intensity of this weather event so that your plans and preparations can be implemented or changed, if needed. Have a plan for keeping communications in place, keeping in mind that the normal communications systems may be impacted. Identify and communicate with all of your locations that could be impacted so that they can be well prepared.

Inspect your property for conditions that could make it more susceptible to the impacts of the coming storm, such as high winds, heavy rainfalls, flooding, and wind-blown debris. Make permanent repairs if possible, temporary repairs if necessary. A partial list of items to check includes:

- Inspect roofs for damage, which could make them more susceptible to leaks, ponding of water and wind damage. Roof drains should be cleared of any debris, as should the general roof area where debris could be washed into the roof drainage system. Flashings, copings, and membranes that are damaged or loosened should be properly secured to help prevent wind damage and subsequent water damage.
- Inspect building envelope openings, such as doors and windows, and siding materials for damage that could make them more susceptible to leaks and wind damage. Make permanent repairs if possible or take temporary measures to secure these.
- If your property is in a flood prone area and is equipped with flood gates or barriers, inspect these to ensure they are in proper working order. Make sure that responsibilities are assigned for personnel who are to track weather forecasts and to deploy flood proofing measures or plans and confirm they

understand of their responsibilities. If you have supplies and equipment to deal with flood problems, check these to ensure they are in good condition for use. If you suspect you will need more of these types of items, obtain them now. These items may include flashlights and chargers, emergency generators, sump pumps, sand bags, food and provisions for on-site staff, just to name a few.

- On the exterior of the facility, check storm drains and clear debris that could block them, removing or securing loose items that could be blown about by wind, and move portable equipment to areas where flooding or wind damage potential is as low as possible. Vehicles are often overlooked until flood waters make their movement impossible. Move these types of items now so that there is one less thing to be concerned about when the wind starts to blow. Don't overlook large trees and landscaping features around the facilities. If there are trees in poor condition, now might be the time to have them removed, trimmed, or otherwise stabilized.
- If building or site utilities such as fuel gas systems, electrical systems, and boilers are at risk and need to be shut down, make sure that there are procedures in place for safe shutdowns and securing, and safe restoration of service after the event. Make sure that those responsible are properly trained and equipped. If supplies or equipment are identified as needed for restoration, have plans in place to obtain them, or have these items on hand to speed recovery efforts.

Create a plan to deal with the aftermath of the event.

Supplies for clean up, tarps, fuel for vehicles, equipment in safe storage, and lists of emergency contacts are all items that you can plan for and supply now before the event. Make sure employees know their responsibilities and how emergencies will be communicated to them. If you have time-sensitive requirements that



could be impacted by the results of the possible event, discuss these ahead of time to formulate a plan on how to deal with them.

If you have contingency plans in place to deal with the potential loss of critical functions or operations, review them to see if the plans are current, and make sure that all personnel are aware of the plans and what their roles are. Make sure the plan will still work. If you have critical functions or operations that could be affected, and have not thought about contingency planning, now might be a good time to at least get the basics in place.

If you have construction activities underway, make sure the job site is secure before the storm hits your area. Make sure all contractors have plans in place, and that they execute them to secure their equipment, materials, and supplies. Cranes, scaffolding, and hoisting equipment should be secured against potential winds; unsecured equipment on roofs should be properly

secured in place or removed; and the same for any materials stored on the site. Any activities that could compromise site or roof drainage should be remedied before the storm hits.

If you have vehicles, it is recommended that you:

- Secure all vehicles away from physical structures that could be damaged during a hurricane/storm.
- Secure all vehicles on higher ground.
- Relocate and secure vehicles away from coastal areas and sources of local flooding.
- Curtail driving vehicles during storms and monitor routes to avoid driving in areas threatened by floods or high water.
- Avoid storing valuable items and inventory in vehicles that could be damaged.

Please refer to the Hurricane & Windstorm Preparedness Plan, which includes additional information and resources.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact your local PMA Risk Control Consultant or reach out to us at heretohelp@pmagroup.com.

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