

**GEAR  
UP**

**GET  
READY**

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READY**



# Private Sector

## Emergency Preparedness Resource Guide



**ILLINOIS-INDIANA-WISCONSIN COMBINED STATISTICAL  
AREA**



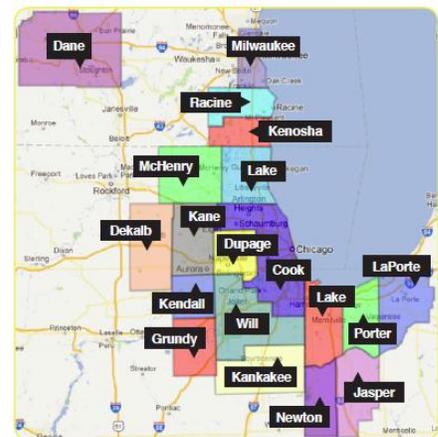
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# Purpose

This *Private Sector Emergency Preparedness Resource Guide (Guide)* is designed to help businesses (large and small), non-profits, faith-based organizations and other non-governmental entities prepare for emergencies. Everyone in the community has a role to play in an emergency. Private sector organization locations, computer systems, and assets might be directly impacted or damaged by an emergency. An emergency might also impact personnel or customers, indirectly affecting the organization. By preparing for emergencies, organizations can reduce the loss of lives, equipment, and assets when an incident happens, making the whole community more resilient.

Gear up, Get Ready (GUGR) is a community preparedness campaign established to increase awareness and drive action by preparing community members for all-hazard emergencies and catastrophic events. The campaign is a product of the Illinois-Indiana-Wisconsin Combined Statistical Area (IL-IN-WI Region) Regional Catastrophic Planning Team (RCPT) Citizen Preparedness Subcommittee and covers the City of Chicago and nineteen counties across the Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin Region.



#### Illinois

Cook	Dekalb	DuPage	Will	McHenry
Lake	Kendall	Kankakee	Kane	Grundy

#### Indiana

Lake	Jasper	LaPorte	Newton	Porter
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#### Wisconsin

Kenosha	Dane	Milwaukee	Racine
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To help increase the preparedness of the private sector and other non-governmental organizations, this Guide is divided into the following sections:

- 1. Considerations for Private Sector Preparedness and Emergency Plan Development.** This section provides a general overview of developing an Emergency Response Plan for non-governmental organizations. It includes guidance and tools to walk users through the basics of emergency planning.
- 2. Hazard Specific Considerations for the Private Sector in the Illinois-Indiana-Wisconsin Region.** This section provides additional preparedness considerations for hazards, such as fires, floods and acts of violence.

- 3. Resources, Tools, and Templates.** This section provides additional resources that might be used to develop emergency plans and increase preparedness. It includes web links to tools, information, and resources.

# Considerations for Private Sector Preparedness and Emergency Plan Development

## DEFINITION: PRIVATE SECTOR

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines the private sector as: Organizations and entities that are not part of any government structure. The private sector includes for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, formal and informal structures, commerce and industry, private emergency response organizations, and private voluntary organizations.

Private sector collaboration at the local, state, tribal, and federal level has profound long-term benefits to the entire nation. FEMA recognizes that the nation's vast network of businesses, industry, academia, trade associations, and other non-governmental organizations are equally responsible partners in every phase of emergency management which includes preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. Together, government entities and the private sector can learn from one another and what works well in the field, offering relevant lessons learned and best practices.

Source: FEMA

Emergencies in your community may impact your store or office, cause utility outages, or prevent employees from being able to commute to work. While every emergency is unique, organizations are better prepared by planning for emergencies, putting procedures in place, and practicing those procedures. After a disaster, the private sector, non-governmental and faith-based organizations provide critical resources to communities that help save lives and protect property. Following a disaster, these organizations provide critical resources to help facilitate community and economic recovery. The best way to protect your business or organization and help your community is to have a plan and to prepare your business and employees.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Congress has found that 43% of businesses that close following a natural disaster never reopen. An additional 29% of businesses close down permanently within two years. This loss of jobs and decrease in tax revenues impacts the entire community. Organizations should prepare for disasters ahead of time in order to reduce the overall loss to the business, provide safety for visitors and employees, and reduce delays of service.

### **Gulf Coast Back to Business Act of 2007**

Having an emergency plan for your organization will significantly increase your preparedness for all types of emergencies. As your organization begins developing your emergency plan, conducting a business impact analysis or developing a continuity of operations plan, key considerations include human resources, business continuity and physical resources. Human resources include those personnel and customers, and take into account how the disaster can impact their lives, which will ultimately impact your organization. Business continuity considers what steps an organization can take to continue serving your customers or clients. And finally, physical resources considers how services can be provided if your place of business or facility is closed. Considerations for each of these areas are included in the preparedness steps outlined below.



## STEPS FOR DEVELOPING AN EMERGENCY PLAN FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish an emergency team
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine the hazards and risks for your organization
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop an emergency action plan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Conduct a business impact analysis
<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan for continuity of operations within your organization
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare and train your employees and volunteers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Create an emergency go-kit for your business
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop a communications strategy

### Establish an Emergency Team

The first step to developing an emergency plan for your organization is to establish an emergency team. The size of this team may vary depending on your organization's operations, number of facilities, and available resources. It should be big enough to represent the operations of your organization, but small enough to allow close collaboration. Most importantly, emergency teams should be empowered by leadership personnel and be provided with the authority to implement safety plans and take protective actions. Consider including the following on your planning team:

- Representatives from each of your organization's departments. If your organization has multiple departments, such as customer service, human resources and sales, consider having someone from each department or area of your organization represented on the emergency team. This will expand the perspective of the team and ensure that your plan considers the impact of a disaster on all areas of our business.
- Representatives from local first responders, such as the fire department. If possible, have someone from your local government on the team. They will be able to provide additional information specific to local plans and hazards and additional subject matter expertise to refine the plan.
- Individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. Consider having someone on your planning team that has a disability or has some other access or functional need, such as an elderly employee or stakeholder. This diverse representation on the planning team will ensure that your plan considers the needs of customers, clients, or congregation members in an emergency.
- Organizations with multiple facilities or multiple floors should consider establishing safety coordinators at each facility and on each floor to ensure that proper protective actions are being taken across every aspect of the organization.

Varied representation on your emergency planning team will expand the perspective on emergency issues for your organization. If a disaster occurs that impacts your organization, this emergency team will also be vital in implementing your plan.

## **Determine the Hazards and Risks for Your Organization**

An important step in developing an emergency plan or program is to understand the different types of risks and hazards that might impact your organization. Your community's local emergency management agency or fire department will have a clear idea of what might impact the community, and will have a strong grasp on what your organization can do to minimize the impact of those risks. For example, they will know if your facility is located in an area that frequently floods, and will be able to provide information on how to minimize or mitigate against the impact of flooding. These local officials will also be able to provide you with details on how your community has been impacted by past disasters, and provide you with real-time information during an emergency event. Requesting a copy of the local hazard mitigation plan

for the area surrounding your organization will allow you to more fully understand what hazards your organization is at risk for and how you can take steps to be more prepared. Hazards that may affect private sector organizations in the IL-IN-WI Region and specific protective steps are detailed in the next section of this document.

## Develop an Emergency Action Plan

A basic way to prepare your organization for an emergency is to develop an emergency action plan. This plan outlines the things your organization needs to do to protect employees, volunteers, customers and others who might be at your physical location for an emergency. If you have more than one physical location, each site should have an emergency action plan. An emergency action plan is designed to help your organization both during and immediately following a disaster.

In order to develop this plan, first consider what hazards might impact your organization and what you would do if those disasters happened during your organization's business hours. For a business or a non-profit, this might mean that customers or clients are at your location. For a faith-based organization, this might mean when a service is being held or when services are being provided to the community. All organizations should consider the following:

- How to report an emergency. Your emergency action plan should identify how an emergency is reported, and to whom. In addition, it should also provide information on how that notification will be provided to individuals at your location.
- Policies for evacuation and sheltering in place. Consider what conditions would result in an evacuation of your facilities, and what conditions would result in the need to shelter in place. For all emergencies, identify who will give the instructions to evacuate or shelter in place. Identify staff or volunteers who will help facilitate evacuation. In addition, identify how you will account for staff, volunteers, customers or others who were at your facility. If you need to shelter in place because the hazardous conditions outside would put employees, volunteers and customers in harm's way, ensure that you are able to support all persons who might be at your facility. Remember that an emergency can happen when your facility is at peak capacity. If that were to happen, your organization may need to keep many people safe for hours or days.

- Evacuation routes. For an evacuation, consider all possible routes from your facility. If you are in a multi-story building, consider working with your building manager to identify the best evacuation routes. Identify accessible routes as well for individuals with disabilities or who may have limited mobility. Identify an area outside of your facility that can be designated as a safe meeting place where employees can be accounted for.
- Internal and external communication. Every organization should understand how to obtain situational awareness from public safety agencies during a disaster or emergency. This could include turning on a radio or television to get more information. Additionally, each organization should establish a communication plan to guide their internal communication with staff and organizational stakeholders.

The United States Department of Labor Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) provides additional information on developing emergency action plans. This guidance can be found at <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/evacuation/eap.html>.

## Conduct a Business Impact Analysis

After you have understood what hazards might impact your organization, it is important to conduct a Business Impact Analysis (BIA). A BIA helps organizations understand the potential results of a disaster. Non-profits and faith-based organizations also benefit from conducting a BIA because it looks at the overall impact of the disaster how your organization works. Organizations should take into consideration what types of impact an emergency can have, and use the analysis to determine the best strategies for recovery. The analysis should look at both financial considerations and process considerations in the BIA.

### Financial Considerations

- What is your organization's cash reserve?
- How many payroll periods can your organization meet with no income?
- How many vendors can you pay with no income? Which vendors?
- How might your expenses increase? Will you be able to pay overtime for the labor required to recover your business?

### Business Process Considerations

- What are the key resources necessary for your organization to be operational (i.e. power, water, sewer, computers, internet, databases, phones, etc.)?
- Within how many hours following an emergency does your organization want to operational again?
- What equipment or resources are necessary to keep your organization operational?
- Make sure your business has redundancy in place with your suppliers. If your outside suppliers are impacted by a disaster or emergency, what plans do you have to prevent your supply chain from being interrupted?

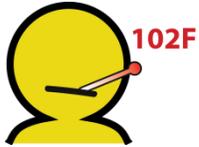
Remember when conducting this analysis that there is a time-based element to every disaster. This includes when the event happens, and for how long it occurs. For example, a retail small business might be impacted by a severe winter storm that stops your store from receiving goods during the holiday season. While this is a short-term issue, the timing might have a significant impact on the business as it will decrease or interrupt sales. In another example, a severe summer storm could have a significant impact on a non-profit that facilitates summer programs for children. To the greatest extent possible, organizations should use this analysis to quantify the overall impact on the organization to help identify strategies to return to normal. A tool to help facilitate conducting a BIA can be found on [www.ready.gov \(http://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/BusinessImpactAnalysis\\_Worksheet.pdf\)](http://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/BusinessImpactAnalysis_Worksheet.pdf).

## Plan for Continuity of Operations Within Your Organization

Continuity of Operations (COOP) is defined as activities that occur to help the essential functions of an organization continue. When a disaster happens, the day-to-day operations of the organization can be interrupted. COOP planning helps ensure that, when those interruptions occur, the organization can still continue to provide the goods and services it needs to and that the organization can more quickly recover. A COOP plan is designed to address three types of disruptions:



Denial of access to a facility / building damage



## Reduced workforce



## Equipment or systems failure

A COOP plan will help your organization develop work around strategies when facilities, employees, or systems are impacted by a disaster. When developing your organization's COOP plan, it is imperative that the following planning considerations are addressed:

- **Identify your organization's essential functions.** Essential functions are those functions that enable your organization to remain operational and provide services in times of an emergency. If you are a private sector manufacturing organization, essential functions might include your physical location, equipment, and the technology necessary to operate that equipment. If you are a faith-based organization, essential functions might include the physical location, assets and furniture, and key staff.
- **Establish delegations of authority.** Delegations of authority specify who is authorized to make decisions or act on behalf of senior leaders within the organization. Delegations are used for specific purposes during emergencies and may require legal and/or board review. This includes how your organization will delegate the authority required to fulfill organizational key activities such as payroll and signing checks and hiring and firing employees.
- **Determine orders of succession.** Orders of succession are an essential part of your organization's ability to ensure that your employees know who assumes the authority

and responsibility for leadership positions within the organization if current leadership is incapacitated or becomes otherwise unavailable during disaster or emergency situations. Having pre-defined orders of succession in place, allows for predefined and seamless transition of leadership, when necessary.

- **Determine continuity locations.** During an emergency, key facilities may be damaged or severely impacted to where they cannot be immediately re-opened. Therefore, it is critical that your organization determine ahead of time a continuity location or multiple locations that can be accessed and used for up to 30 days following an emergency. It is imperative to select a continuity facility in advance and to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the vendor or company providing the space. This will allow your organization the ability to continue providing necessary essential functions and services to keep the organization operational and lessen the overall impact to your business. Some organizations allow employees to telecommute from home until the primary worksite is available. This may or may not be an option for your organization, but if so make sure to work with your information technology department to ensure that your system can adequately handle the proper number of telecommuters at any given time.
- **Ensure interoperable communications.** Interoperable communications are communications that provide your organization the capability to perform essential functions until normal operations can be resumed. Interoperable communications also provide the ability to communicate with personnel, other agencies, and organizations. Any location being considered as an alternate facility must have interoperable communications so that employees can perform normal and assigned job functions. Your organization should consider the following: internet and email, landline phones, cellular phones, texting, satellite phones, ham radio operators, and carriers.
- **Safeguard vital records.** Vital records are those electronic and hardcopy documents, references and records needed to support an organization's essential functions during an emergency situation. Vital records consist of emergency operating records, legal/financial and human resources records. Hard copy vital records should be stored in a safe location such as a fire-proof filing cabinet or vault and elevated off the ground in case of a flooding event. Your organization should ensure that all vital records are available in electronic format, as well, in case the original hard copies are damaged, destroyed, or inaccessible following an emergency.

- **Protect human capital.** Human Capital Management (HCM) is the sum of talent and knowledge of all employees. HCM ensures that employees have a clear understanding of what is expected of them during and following an emergency, impacting the organization. It is recommended that your organization's Human Resources Department develop standard operating procedures for your employees to follow related to specific protocols, policies, and procedures during such events.
- **Conduct testing, training, and exercises (TT&E).** Testing, training, and exercising your organization's emergency plans and protocols is extremely important. It ensures that your employees are capable of supporting the continued execution of the organization's essential functions during and following an emergency. Provide your staff with basic emergency preparedness training to ensure that they are prepared to handle such situations both at home and on the job. It is also recommended that your organization conduct annual drills and exercises to validate plans, policies, and procedures. Following the exercise, complete an after action report and improvement plan to document valuable lessons learned, areas of success or strength, and areas for improvement.
- **Plan for reconstitution.** Reconstitution is the process by which an organization resumes normal organizational operations after a sustained emergency event. Before normal operations can occur, all staff should participate in a company-wide debriefing to address unanswered issues that arose during the emergency and discuss how reconstitution will occur.

In addition to these key items that should be considered and included in your COOP plan, additional considerations and tips include:

- **Make plans for suppliers.** Maintain a contact list for your organization's suppliers. Determine ahead of time, how the supplier will plan to provide materials and resources to your organization during an emergency. Maintain a list of alternate suppliers in case your primary suppliers are unable to continue to provide service.
- **Maintain an inventory of all equipment.** Develop an inventory list of all equipment owned and operated by your organization. Develop a maintenance schedule for all equipment, as well as manufacturer and service contact information. Keep this

information updated, in case equipment is damaged or inoperable during an emergency.

- **Develop a backup schedule for computer files.** Keep an electronic backup of all tax, accounting, payroll and production records, and customer and supplier data off-site. Make sure to also keep copies of all paper and computer files in an accessible but off-site location. Install anti-virus and firewall software on your organization's computers to improve cyber security.
- **Contact your insurance agent.** Review your insurance coverage ahead of time to make sure your organization has adequate coverage. Get additional coverage for "all-hazard" situations like flooding events or hail damage. Maintain copies of critical documents, such as finance records and receipts of major purchases.
- **Make plans regarding customers.** Determine the likelihood of customers being present at your business during a disaster situation. Develop an emergency evacuation plan for customers and review it regularly with employees. Correctly label all exit locations for the building with proper signage and posted evacuation routes.

A template for the development of a COOP plan can be found at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/BusinessContinuityPlan.pdf) (<http://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/BusinessContinuityPlan.pdf>).

## Prepare and Train Your Employees and Volunteers

Your employees and volunteers play a key role in the preparedness of your organization. A disaster that impacts your organization will also impact employees and volunteers. In some cases, they may be at your location when the disaster occurs. In other cases, the emergency event may impact the entire community, which means that employee and volunteer homes and families are also impacted.

Training is essential to ensure that everyone knows what to do when there is an emergency, or disruption of operations. Everyone needs training to become familiar with protective actions for life safety (e.g., evacuation, shelter, shelter-in-place and lockdown). Review protective actions for life safety and conduct evacuation drills ("fire drills") as required by local regulations. Sheltering and lockdown drills should also be conducted. Employees and volunteers should receive training to become familiar with safety, building security, information security and other loss prevention programs.

- Develop a basic training plan that considers who will be trained, who will do the training, what training activities will be used, when and where each session will take place, and how the session will be evaluated and documented.
- General training for all employees and volunteers should address: Individual roles and responsibilities; Information about threats, hazards and protective actions; Notification, warning and communications procedures; Means for locating family members in an emergency; Emergency response procedures; Evacuation, shelter and accountability procedures; Location and use of common emergency equipment; and Emergency shutdown procedures.
- Communicate regularly with employees, volunteers and clients before, during, and after an emergency. Use newsletters, staff meeting and other internal communication tools to communicate emergency plans and procedures. Use informal communication, such as short staff briefings or coffee break discussions, to teach employees and volunteers about the plan and protective actions.
- Consider providing training annually, as new employees are hired, or as new equipment is acquired. If you update your plans on an annual basis, ensure that training is provided on any changes to the plan.

In order for an employee to be ready to respond to an emergency impacting your organization, they need know that their families are safe and taken care of. Therefore, promoting a culture of personal and family emergency planning and preparedness benefits the whole organization. Encourage your employees to develop a family emergency plan and to develop emergency kits for their home. The reality of an emergency situation is that your employees and volunteers and their families will likely not have access to everyday conveniences. To plan in advance, ask your employees to think through the details of their everyday life and the resources they will need for sustainment for up to 72 hours. Resources for promoting preparedness within your organization can be found on [www.gearupgetready.org](http://www.gearupgetready.org) under “Get Ready.”



In your workplace, you can also encourage your employees and volunteers to assemble an office emergency kit (go-kit) for themselves – a collection

of items they may need in the event of an emergency or if required to evacuate the office facility. The emergency kit should be easily accessible and packed in a sturdy, easy-to-carry container such as a backpack. It should be stocked with necessary personal supplies and ready to go at all times in case of an emergency. Remind employees to account for personal items such as a change of clothes, hygiene items, medications, as well as keep a list of medications, including dosage information and their physician's contact information in their kit.

## Create an Emergency Go-Kit for Your Business

One additional step that your organization can take to be prepared for an emergency is to develop a go-kit specific to your organization. A go-kit is a self-contained, portable stockpile of emergency supplies. For a business, this may include hard copies of critical business information, key contacts, and backups of important files, in addition to an offsite electronic backup system. For a faith-based organization, this may include contact information for a congregation and insurance information. This kit should include a copy of any emergency plans developed, including continuity of operations plans, communication plans, and call-down lists. Additional items and considerations for this kit can be found at [www.preparemybusiness.org](http://www.preparemybusiness.org) (<http://www2.agilityrecovery.com/assets/evacplansba.pdf>).



Go-kits for administrators and other high-level staff should include information on how to turn off utilities, a calling tree, a whistle, a reunification plan, and a first-aid kit. Examples of go-kit checklists may be found at [www.gearupgetready.org](http://www.gearupgetready.org) and [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov). Go-kits are often stored in backpacks or duffle bags and placed in readily accessible and secure locations. The Emergency Response Team should select the supplies that are necessary in each kit. Emergency plans should reference the supplies and identify who is responsible for stocking and replenishing items.

In addition to developing go-kits for your business, consider creating a crisis box. A crisis box provides critical information to the Emergency Response Team. These should include relevant information and resources, including:

**CRISIS BOX RECOMMENDED ITEMS**

1. Incident Command System key responders' phone numbers	2. Staff roster
3. Facility layout	4. Keys
5. Emergency data cards	6. Aerial photos of the facility
7. List of individuals at the facility with special needs	8. Maps of the surrounding neighborhood

**Develop a Communications Strategy**

Write a crisis communication plan that details how your organization will communicate with employees, local authorities, suppliers, customers, and others during and after a disaster. This communications strategy should include phone trees or other methods of notification, such as automated alert messaging systems. When developing this strategy, it is important to identify the targets for communication. This will vary depending on your organization. Additional information and a checklist for consideration can be found on [www.preparemybusiness.org](http://www.preparemybusiness.org) (<http://www2.agilityrecovery.com/assets/SBA/emercomsba.pdf>).

# Hazard Specific Considerations for the Private Sector in the Illinois-Indiana-Wisconsin Region

In addition to maintaining a general action plan, organizations can take specific steps to prepare for the hazards that might impact day to day operations. This may include natural hazards, like floods and tornadoes, widespread illness, and human-caused hazards like acts of violence. In the IL-IN-WI Region, every community is vulnerable to natural and human-caused disasters such as severe storms (thunderstorms, lightning, hail, and snow), tornadoes and floods. Communities that have nuclear power plants, chemical plants or that are in proximity to the plant, such as Will County, Grundy County, and surrounding jurisdictions, will be directly impacted by an event at these plants. All communities may experience acts of violence in the workplace. Additionally, the City of Chicago—which anchors many of the nation’s economic banking, commerce, and industry entities—is home to major landmarks (for example, Willis Tower, Navy Pier, and Millennium Park), also making it a possible terrorist target.

For all of these hazards, remember that these disasters can occur when your organization is at peak hours – meaning that you have the most customers, clients, or members of the public in your facility. When developing plans, consider how these events might impact employees and volunteers as well as others who might be in your facility. Specific steps your organization can take to prepare for or reduce the impact of disasters that may occur in the IL-IN-WI Region are listed below.

HAZARDS THAT MIGHT IMPACT YOUR ORGANIZATION	
Earthquake	Tornadoes
Extreme Heat	Chemical and Hazardous Materials

Fires	Cybercrime and Cyber Terror
Floods	Nuclear Power Plants
Foodborne Illness	School and Workplace Violence
Pandemic Influenza	Terrorism
Winter Storms	Radiological Attack
Thunderstorms	

## Earthquake

Earthquakes happen throughout the United States, occurring suddenly and without warning. Many private organizations in the Region are unaware that they are vulnerable to earthquakes due to proximity with the New Madrid Seismic Zone. Earthquakes can seriously damage buildings and their contents, disrupt gas and electric services, and trigger landslides, avalanches, flash floods, and fires. Aftershocks can occur for weeks following an earthquake. In many buildings, the greatest danger to people in an earthquake is when equipment and non-structural elements such as ceilings, partitions, windows and lighting fixture shake loose.

- Inspect your facility for any item that could fall, spill, break or move during an earthquake and take steps to reduce these hazards. Hang heavy items away from where people work, secure fixed equipment and heavy machinery to the floor, and secure shelves, filing cabinets, desktop equipment, light fixtures, and tall furniture.
- Assess your organization’s vulnerability to earthquakes and ask local government agencies for seismic information for your area.
- Ask your insurance carrier about earthquake insurance and mitigation techniques.
- Establish procedures to determine whether an evacuation is necessary after an earthquake.
- Designate areas in the facility away from exterior walls and windows where occupants should gather after an earthquake if an evacuation is not necessary.
- Conduct earthquake drills and provide your personnel with general safety information.

- In an earthquake, if indoors, stay there. Take cover under a sturdy piece of furniture or counter, or brace yourself against an inside wall. Protect your head and neck.
- If outdoors, move into the open, away from buildings, street lights and utility wires.
- After an earthquake, stay away from windows, skylights and items that could fall. Do not use the elevators.
- Use stairways to leave the building if it is determined that a building evacuation is necessary.

## Fire

Fires are one of the most common of all the hazards. Every year fires cause thousands of deaths and injuries and billions of dollars in property damage. Consider the following when developing your plan:

- Meet with the fire department to talk about the community's fire response capabilities. Talk about your operations. Identify processes and materials that could cause or fuel a fire, or contaminate the environment in a fire.
- Have your facility inspected for fire hazards. Ask about fire codes and regulations.
- Ask your insurance carrier to recommend fire prevention and protection measures. Your carrier may also offer training.
- Distribute fire safety information to employees and volunteers: how to prevent fires in the workplace, how to contain a fire, how to evacuate the facility, where to report a fire.
- Instruct personnel to use the stairs — not elevators — in a fire. Instruct them to crawl on their hands and knees when escaping a hot or smoke-filled area.
- Conduct evacuation drills. Post maps of evacuation routes in prominent places. Keep evacuation routes, including stairways and doorways, clear of debris.
- Assign fire wardens for each area to monitor shutdown and evacuation procedures.
- Establish procedures for the safe handling and storage of flammable liquids and gases. Establish procedures to prevent the accumulation of combustible materials.
- Provide for the safe disposal of smoking materials.
- Establish a preventive maintenance schedule to keep equipment operating safely.
- Place fire extinguishers in appropriate locations.
- Train employees in use of fire extinguishers.

- Install smoke detectors. Check smoke detectors once a month, change batteries at least once a year.
- Establish a system for warning personnel of a fire. Consider installing a fire alarm with automatic notification to the fire department.
- Consider installing a sprinkler system, fire hoses and fire-resistant walls and doors.
- Ensure that key personnel are familiar with all fire safety systems.

## Flooding

Floods are one of the most common and widespread of all natural disasters. Most communities in the United States can experience some degree of flooding after spring rains, heavy thunderstorms, or winter snow thaws. Most floods develop slowly over a period of days but flash floods caused by intense storm or dam failure can develop in a matter of minutes. At least 25 percent of businesses that close after events, like a flood, never reopen. From 2007 to 2011, the average commercial flood claim was over \$75,000. Flood insurance is the best way to protect your organization from devastating financial loss.

- Determine if your organization is located in a flood prone area by visiting <http://www.floodsmart.gov> or asking your local emergency management office. Learning the history of flooding in your area and the elevation of your facility in relation to streams, rivers, and dams will help.
- Have proper flood insurance. If your risk assessment and vulnerability assessment determined that you are at risk for flooding and not properly insured, contact your insurance agent and the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Review the community's emergency plan and be familiar with evacuation routes and where to find higher ground in case of an emergency.
- Identify records and equipment that can be moved to a higher location and make plans to move them in case of a flood.
- Consider using backup systems in case of a flood. These include portable pumps to remove water, alternative power sources like generators or gasoline power pumps, and battery powered emergency lighting.
- Use emergency flood proofing measures. These include building walls with sandbags and constructing levees to keep flood waters away.

## Tornadoes

Tornadoes are incredible violent local storms that extend to the ground with whirling winds that can reach up to 300mph. Tornadoes can uproot trees and buildings and turn harmless objects into deadly missiles in a matter of seconds. Damage paths can be in excess of one mile wide and 50 miles long. They occur with little to no warning.

- Be familiar with the terms used to describe a tornado. A tornado watch means tornadoes are likely and be ready to take shelter. A tornado warning means a tornado has been sighted in the area or is indicated by radar and to take shelter immediately.
- Establish procedures to inform personnel when tornado warnings are posted and how to respond.
- Make plans for evacuating personnel and volunteers away from lightweight modular offices or mobile home size buildings. These structures offer no protections.
- Ask your local emergency management office about the community's tornado warning system.
- Designate shelter areas in your facility. The best protection is usually in an underground area, small interior rooms without windows, rooms with reinforced concrete or block with no windows and a heavy concrete floor, or protected areas away from doors and windows.
- Avoid sheltering in auditoriums, cafeterias, and gymnasium-type rooms with flat, wide-span roofs because they are not considered safe.
- Conduct tornado drills with your employees and volunteers and ensure they know where shelter areas are located.

## Winter Storm

Severe winter storms bring heavy snow, ice, strong winds, and freezing rain. Winter storms can prevent employees and customers from reaching the business, non-profit or faith-based organization, leading to a temporary shutdown until roads are cleared. Heavy snow and ice can also cause structural damage and power outages.

- Understand the terms used to describe winter storms. A Winter Storm Watch means severe winter weather is possible, a Winter Storm Warning means severe winter

weather is expected, a Blizzard Warning means severe winter weather with sustained winds of at least 35 mph is expected and a Traveler's Advisory means severe winter conditions may make driving difficult or dangerous.

- Establish procedures to shut down your organization and release employees and volunteers if severe winter weather is expected.
- Provide a backup power source for critical operations, like a generator.
- Arrange for snow and ice removal from parking lots, walkways, loading docks, and other important areas.
- Store an emergency kit with food, water, blankets, battery powered radios, extra batteries, and other emergency supplies for employees, volunteers and customers that may become stranded at your facility.

## Chemical and Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials are substances that are flammable, combustible, explosive, toxic, corrosive or radioactive. A hazardous material spill or release can pose a serious risk to life, health or property. An incident can result in the evacuation of a few people, a section of a facility or an entire neighborhood and even off-site incidents have the potential to affect your operations as well.

- If your organization works with materials that are hazardous, train employees to recognize and report hazardous material spills and releases. Train employees in proper handling and storage of hazardous materials.
- Identify highways, railroads and waterways near your facility used for the transportation of hazardous materials. Determine how a transportation accident near your facility could affect your operations.
- Identify other businesses or organizations in your area that use hazardous materials. Determine whether an incident could affect your facility.
- Ask the local fire department for assistance in developing appropriate response procedures if your organization uses chemicals or hazardous materials.
- Establish a hazardous material response plan with procedures for notifying management, emergency response organization and employees of an incident. It should also establish evacuation procedures.

## Technological

Technological emergencies include any interruption or loss of a utility service, power source, life support system, information system, or equipment needed to keep the business in operation.

- Identify all critical operations including utilities, security and alarm systems, elevators, lighting, HVAC systems, manufacturing equipment, communication systems and transportation systems.
- Determine the amount of impact of service disruption the business would face from an interruption or loss of service.
- Ensure that key safety and maintenance personnel are thoroughly familiar with all building systems.
- Establish procedures for restoring systems. Determine the need for backup systems and act accordingly.
- Establish preventative maintenance schedules for all systems and equipment.

## Workplace Violence

Acts of violence could happen within your organization or at your facility. These may include physical altercations to active shooter situations. Acts of violence may be targeted to organizational management or staff. They may also be targeted against a domestic partner or spouse. In addition, acts of violence could be incidental to the organization, meaning that the hazard occurs because of something happening in the neighborhood or at a nearby facility. It is important to be familiar with and include acts of violence in your overall workplace emergency preparedness policies and plans.

- **See It.** The level of emergency response preparedness required will depend on the type of incident and how much risk it puts customers, employees, and others. Strong consideration for overall safety must always be given. The first step is to consider the range of potential emergency situations that may occur.
- **Assess It.** When assessing the risk, look at how likely it is that someone will get hurt, how badly they will get hurt and how many people may get hurt.

- **Fix It.** When possible, address issues that might result in violence in the workplace and develop action plans to minimize or eliminate risk.
- **Evaluate It.** Once the appropriate fix has been implemented, it is important to evaluate whether it has been successful in controlling the incident, or potential threat to the safety and security of others.

When preparing for the possibility of active violence or an active shooter situation at your organization's facility, consider the following:

- Ensure your facility has at least two evacuation routes and post evacuation routes in conspicuous locations throughout the facility to increase youth awareness.
- Institute controls to entry ways, such as keys or security pass codes.
- Develop an active shooter training plan (recognizing the sound of gunshots, reacting quickly when gunshots are heard and/or when a shooting is witnessed, evacuating the area, hiding out, acting against the shooter as last resort, calling 911 and reacting when law enforcement arrives).
- Create an evacuation and hide out plan for active shooter situations. Taking action against the shooter is a last resort option if you are in imminent danger and cannot evacuate or hide out.

When a hostile person(s) is actively causing deadly harm, posing imminent threat of deadly harm, or is barricaded within a building, the following procedures should be followed:

- Initiate HARD Lockdown procedures.
- If communication is available, call 9-1-1 or other appropriate emergency numbers.
- Do not stay in open areas.
- Do not sound the fire alarm. A fire alarm would signal the occupants in the rooms to evacuate the building and thus place them in potential harm as they attempted to exit.
- Lock all hallway doors, and barricade doors to the best of your ability using furniture.
- Raise blinds to exterior windows.
- Attempt to hide from the interior hallway door/window as much as possible.
- Try to stay calm and be as quiet as possible.

- Should an active shooter gain access to your facility: **FIGHT** and/or attempt to evacuate out of an exterior door if possible.
- If for some reason you are caught in an open area, such as a hallway or main congregation area, you must decide what action to take.
  - You can try to hide, but make sure it is a well hidden space or you may be found as the intruder moves through the building looking for victims.
  - If you think you can safely make it out of the building by running, then do so. Keep any objects you can between you and the hostile person(s) while in the building. When away from the immediate area of danger, summon help any way you can and warn others.
  - The last option you have, if caught in an open area, may be to fight back. This is dangerous, but depending on your situation, this could be an option.
  - If you are caught by the intruder and are not going to fight back, follow their directions and don't look the intruder in the eyes.
- Responding Police will have their weapons drawn and ready for use. They do not know exactly who the shooter is and will probably point weapons at you. Remain calm and follow any directions they may give you. You may be asked questions, patted down, and given orders to exit.
- Responding Police are there to stop the active shooter as soon as possible. They will bypass injured people and will not help you escape. Only after the shooter is stopped will they begin to provide other assistance.
- If you come into possession of a weapon, do NOT carry or brandish it! Police may think you are the active shooter.
- Be prepared to provide first aid. Think outside the box. Shoes laces and belts can be used to secure tourniquets. The actions you take immediately to treat victims may save their life.
- Once law enforcement arrives, obey all commands. This may involve your being handcuffed or made to put your hands in the air. This is done for safety reasons, and once circumstances are evaluated by law enforcement, they will give you further directions to follow.

# Resources, Tools, and Templates

There is an abundance of resources available to help you and your organization become better prepared for emergencies. These resources include informational brochures, planning documents for workplace emergencies and evacuations, self-assessment tools that evaluate your level of preparedness and offer improvement tips, and step-by-step advice on how to create and maintain emergency management plans tailored to your needs.

## **American Red Cross Ready Rating Website**

- Ready Rating is a program that helps businesses; schools and organizations become prepared for disasters and other emergencies. All in one place, Ready Rating members have access to one-of-a-kind tools, resources and information for evaluating and improving their ability to withstand disaster, maintain operations, and protect lives and property. Whether you are taking your first steps or have a fully functioning emergency management program, the Ready Rating program can help you achieve a higher level of preparedness. This website is available at: [www.readyrating.org/lobby.aspx](http://www.readyrating.org/lobby.aspx)

## **American Red Cross Emergency Preparedness Checklist for Small Businesses**

- Developing an emergency preparedness plan is one of the most important strategic decisions a small business owner will make. Consider how a natural, human-caused or public health disaster could affect employees, customers and the workplace. The checklist is available at: [http://www.osha.gov/dte/grant\\_materials/fy07/sh-16618-07/sm\\_business\\_emergency\\_checklist.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/dte/grant_materials/fy07/sh-16618-07/sm_business_emergency_checklist.pdf)

## **American Red Cross Safe and Well Website**

- After a disaster, letting your family and friends know that you are safe and well can bring your loved ones great peace of mind. This website is designed to help make that communication easier. The Safe and Well website can be accessed at: <https://safeandwell.communityos.org/cms/index.php>

## FEMA Emergency Management Guide for Business and Industry

- This guide provides step-by-step advice to organizations on how to create and maintain a comprehensive emergency management program. The guide can be accessed at: <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=1689>

## Ready.gov Website

- The Ready.gov website ([www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)) includes a section for business that includes information on program management, planning, implementation, testing and exercises, program improvement, and testimonials. These resources can be accessed at: <http://www.ready.gov/business>

## OSHA - How to Plan for Workplace Emergencies and Evacuations

- Designed to help you, the employer, plan for that possibility. The best way to protect yourself, your workers, and your business is to expect the unexpected and develop a well-thought out emergency action plan to guide you when immediate action is necessary. This can be accessed at: <http://www.osha.gov/Publications/osha3088.pdf>

## Small Business Administration

- The US Small Business Administration provides resources specifically for small businesses to increase preparedness. These resources can be found at: <http://www.sba.gov/prepare>

## Prepare My Business

- Prepare My Business provides information and resources on business emergency preparedness. Prepare My Business is a collaborative effort between the Small Business Administration, American Red Cross, Ready.gov and Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.preparemybusiness.org/>

## University of Wisconsin



- The University of Wisconsin provides additional guidance and resources for emergency preparedness for agricultural organizations. These resources can be found at: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/agemergency/preparedness/>

**Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans for Houses of Worship**

- Developed in collaboration with FEMA, the guide provides recommendations in the development of plans not only to respond to an emergency, but also outlines how organizations can plan for preventing, protecting against, mitigating the impact of and recovering from these emergencies. The guide can be found at: <http://www.fema.gov/plan>

**CMAP 2040 - Chicago Regional Planning Report**

- The CMAP Go To 2040 Project is a long-range planning effort by the Chicago Community Trust (The Trust) and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) covering key regional issues for: Economic development, Human and Community Development, Environment, Land use, Housing, Transportation. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/2040/main>

Group	Purpose	Key Activities	Scope (County, State, National)
American Red Cross of Greater Chicago	Ready Rating Ready When the Time Comes	School Business Preparedness benchmarks Corporate Volunteers	Regional - Chicagoland
RILA	Retail Industry Leaders Association	Private/Private Networking and Benchmarking	National
FEMA SAVER-2	Situational Awareness Tool	GIS mapping and sharing of private sector location data and status information	National

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BRPA	Business Resumption Planners Association	Private/Private Networking, Excellent Presentations	National
CUSEC Central US Earthquake Consortium	Earthquake preparedness planning	8 states on Access and Information Sharing Policies and Platforms	8 states, Central US
Regional Catastrophic Planning Team (RCPT)	Membership, Regional Hub and Private Sector Committees	Catastrophic Planning	16 Counties, Northern IL, NW Indiana, Southern WI
FEMA Public/Private Partnerships	National Business Continuity issues	Badging, Saver 2, Information sharing	National
IEMA BEOC	Statewide Business Continuity	Training, exercises, business integration in statewide emergencies	Illinois
LCRCIP- Lake-Cook Regional Critical Incident Partnership	Membership, committees, public private collaboration	Private-public corporation networking, educational opportunities	Northern Cook, Lake Counties
Great Lakes Hazard Coalition	Public/Private Collaboration	Meetings, webinars, table top exercises focused on homeland security, emergency management, or other hazards	Regional, affiliated with FEMA Infrastructure Protection
BOMA – Building Owners and Managers Association	Primary source on building management and operations	Publish BOMA's <i>Experience Exchange Report</i> (EER), holds nationwide audio conferences, seminars, and workshops on emergency preparedness	Local, National and International

<b>Group</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Key Activities</b>	<b>Scope (County, State, National)</b>
Chicago FIRST:	Chicago FIRST is a nonprofit association of private-sector critical infrastructure firms	Promote the resilience of its members and the Chicago business community.	Illinois
Business Executives for National Security (BENS):	A nationwide, nonpartisan organization, is a channel through which senior business executives can help enhance the Nation's security	Members use their business experience to help government leaders implement solutions to the most challenging national security problems.	National

# Acronyms

Acronyms	
<b>BIA</b>	Business Impact Analysis
<b>CMAP</b>	Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
<b>COOP</b>	Continuity of Operations
<b>FEMA</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency
<b>GUGR</b>	Gear Up. Get Ready
<b>HCM</b>	Human Capital Management
<b>IL-IN-WI Region</b>	Illinois-Indiana-Wisconsin Combined Statistical Area
<b>OSHA</b>	Occupational Health and Safety Administration
<b>RCPT</b>	Regional Catastrophic Planning Team
<b>TT&amp;E</b>	Testing, Training, and Exercises