EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Communication in the aftermath of an interruption is vital – and creating an Emergency Communications Plan is an important step in assuring your business is able to communicate both internally and externally no matter what the scenario.

✓	**Determine Roles and Responsibilities**
☐	Appoint primary decision maker/coordinator.
☐	Appoint back-up decision maker(s).
☐	Outline roles and responsibilities for additional participants.
✓	**Determine Entities With Which You Communicate**
☐	Employees
☐	Stakeholders
☐	Shareholders
☐	Clients/Customers
☐	Regulatory Agencies
☐	Media
☐	Other:
✓	**Document When to Activate Plan, Using Criteria Such As:**
☐	Length of time of outage/interruption.
☐	Severity of interruption.
☐	Percentage/Number of employees, departments impacted.
☐	Prolonged loss of contact with clients and/or vendors.
☐	Other:

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

✓	**Determine, document and publicize a emergency communications plan:**
☐	Phone/email tree (include spouse/family information for employees).
☐	Employee evacuation plan
☐	Website emergency messaging system
☐	Phone/Voice mail emergency messaging system
☐	Plan for multiple forms of communication: text, email, voicemail, etc.
✓	**Educate employees about the communications plan**
☐	Document in hardcopy and electronic formats.
☐	Train current and new employees.
☐	Remind employees about emergency communication plan, including pocket cards, fold-out cards, brochures and booklets.
☐	Update information regularly and re-educate employees.
☐	

WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS

Impacts of a wildfire include direct property damage, cost of suppression and damage to personal property and natural resources. The severity of effects is directly related to the intensity and extent of the wildfire.

Below is a checklist of just some of the things to consider to prepare your business for such an event as well as to ensure the safety of the people within your organization.

✓	Before the Onset of a Wildfire
☐	Keep an adequate number of appropriate fire extinguishers in strategic locations (such as near loading docks and waste collection areas) and maintain them properly.
☐	Train employees on how to use extinguishers correctly.
☐	Consider maintaining a water supply at your facility to control small fires until emergency personnel can arrive. You might install a water tank or install hoses and pumps to an existing pond, river or lake. Be sure the hoses are long enough and inspect them regularly.
☐	If your business is located in an area subject to freezing temperatures, be sure that water outlets and pumps are protected.
☐	Evaluate water levels in extreme hot and cold weather conditions.
☐	If your water pump uses electrical power, consider obtaining a gasoline- or diesel-powered pump or generator in case electricity is cut off during a fire. However, be aware of the risk of storing a large quantity of fuel. Use an appropriate storage facility that is protected against vehicle impacts and fire.
☐	Have appropriate tools, such as rakes, axes, saws, buckets and shovels, available to help control small fires while waiting for emergency personnel to arrive.
✓	During a Wildfire
☐	Go to a pre-designated shelter area such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck. Do not open windows. Evacuation orders will often be swift and accurate for affected areas. However, if unable to evacuate, stay inside and away from outside walls. Close doors, but leave them unlocked in case firefighters require quick access into your area.
☐	Turn on battery operated radio to get latest emergency information

WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS

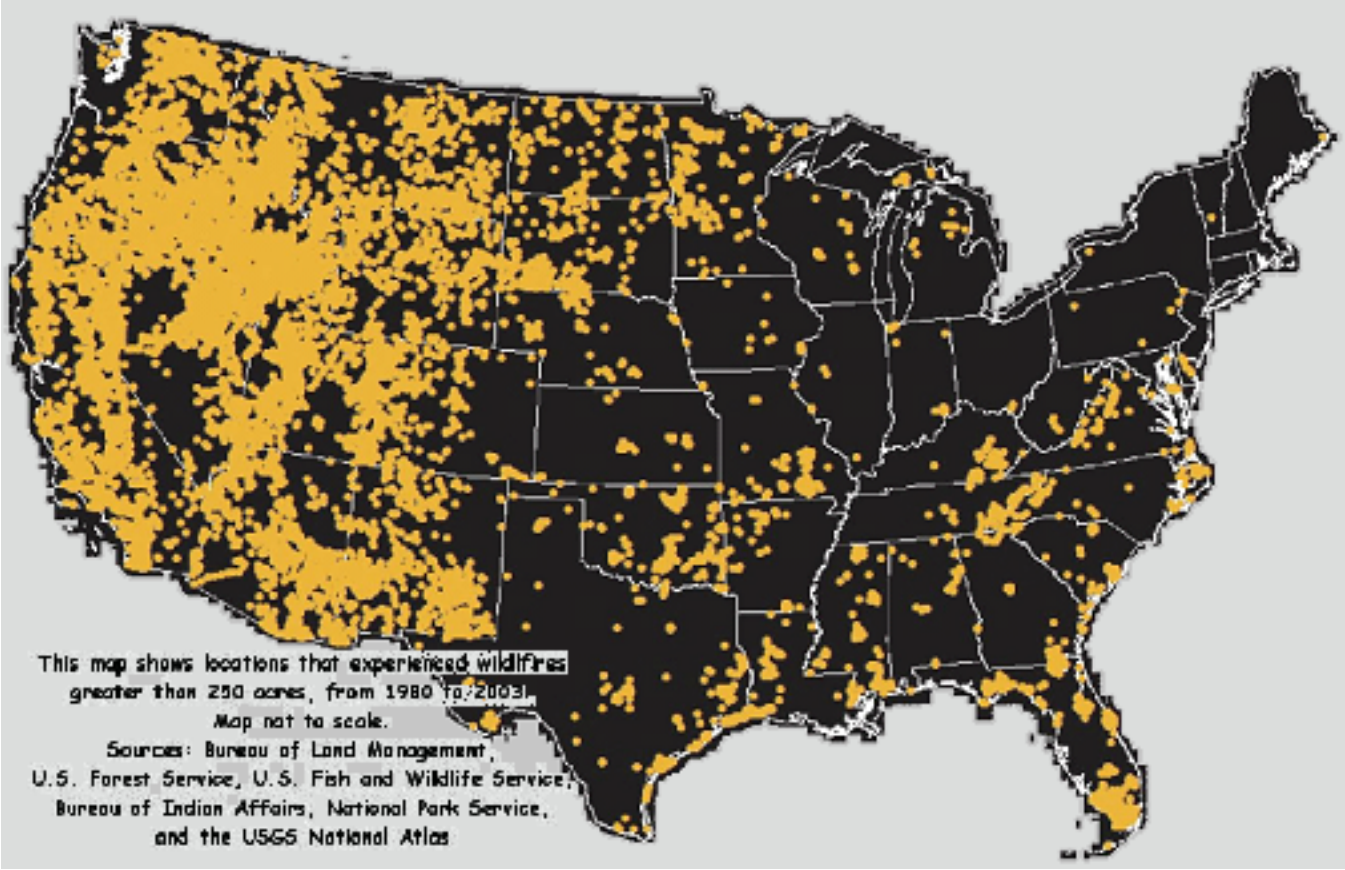
☐	If your office roof is accessible by ladder, prop it against the building so you and firefighters have access to the roof.
☐	Mark your position clearly with anything that may signal rescue workers to your presence inside the building. This could be articles of clothing or bright colored material attached to the outside of your location.
☐	Close windows, vents, doors, blinds, etc. Shut off gas meters, pilot lights and propane tanks. Turn on all lights in the building to increase visibility in heavy smoke.
✓	## After a Wildfire
☐	Immediately check the roof, put out any fires, sparks or embers (if accessible).
☐	If there is no power, check to make sure the main breaker is on. Fires may cause breakers to trip. If the breakers are on and power is still not available, contact the utility company.
☐	ALWAYS contact 911 if any danger is perceived upon re-entry and contact local experts before finally moving back in.
✓	## Your Employees
☐	Train your employees in general fire safety, especially for tasks with a high fire risk, such as welding and cutting, fueling vehicles, working with flammable liquids, etc.
☐	Teach employees about the importance of good housekeeping and grounds maintenance in preventing and controlling fires.
☐	Have an adequate number of appropriate fire extinguishers and maintain them properly.
☐	Train key employees in when and how to use fire extinguishers.
☐	Consider when and how to evacuate employees if a wildfire threatens.
☐	Establish an evacuation plan and keep it up to date.

WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS

☐	Hold evacuation drills regularly so all employees will know who is in charge and so that they become familiar with evacuation routes and routines.
☐	Make sure all employees can get out of the building, find shelter and communicate with a responsible person.
☐	Plan primary and secondary exits from your buildings. Consider how employees will escape if doors or windows are blocked by an exterior fire.
☐	Plan two evacuation routes out of your neighborhood. Consider how employees will evacuate on foot if roads are closed or impossible to use, such as if they are blocked by emergency personnel.
☐	Remember that ponds, lakes, rivers and landscaping or swimming pools can serve as safety zones.
☐	Keep appropriate emergency supplies on hand, including flashlights, battery-powered portable radio, extra batteries, first-aid kit, manual can opener, non-perishable foods and bottled water. If designated employees will be working to protect the property, have appropriate clothing available, such as work boots and gloves, personal protective equipment and sturdy work clothes.
☐	Teach employees about wildfire risks and preparedness. Provide information to help employees protect their homes, too.
☐	If you are located in a wildfire area, consider advising employees to keep personal disaster supplies and copies of important documents at work in case they need to evacuate from work without being able to get home.

WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS

A wildfire, or forest fire, is an uncontrolled fire that occurs where natural vegetation is the predominant ground cover. Though wildfires usually occur in less developed, rural areas, they can threaten urban environments if they are not brought under control, and they are geographically widespread.



FLOOD PREPAREDNESS

Floods are one of the most common and widespread of all disasters, and continue to grow in frequency and severity. Businesses are more likely to flood than burn down, so it is vital to prepare now.

The following checklist will help keep your business afloat even if the worst happens. Most businesses can save between 20% and 90% on the cost of stock and movable equipment by taking action to prepare in advance of flooding. The following resources and tools will help mitigate your risk and protect not only your business, but also the most critical element of your business – your people.

✓	Before the Flood
☐	Review Emergency Plan with team, and key employees
☐	Take all necessary steps to prevent the release of dangerous chemicals that might be stored on your property - locate main gas and electrical shut-offs and anchor all fuel tanks
☐	Postpone any receipt of goods- deliveries, couriers, etc.
☐	Contact insurance agent, discuss policy, etc.
☐	Establish emergency communication method (Alert Notification System, phone tree, etc.); identify meeting place and time for all key employees in Crisis Management Team; create voicemail for when evacuated, or out of office, etc.
☐	Update disaster recovery kits and begin crisis back-up procedures
☐	Maintain accurate inventory of product on site
☐	Use plugs to prevent floodwater from backing up into sewer drains, or install flood vents/or flood proof barriers
☐	Stay tuned to local media & community messaging
✓	During the Flood
☐	Life safety is paramount

FLOOD PREPAREDNESS

☐	Begin next phase of your business continuity plan
☐	Send non-critical staff home
☐	Raise elevators to the 2nd floor and turn off
☐	Stay tuned to local media- evacuate when required
☐	Take cell phones, charger, critical hardware, and emergency kits with you
☐	Unplug electrical items before leaving
☐	Consider your business phones and redirection to cell phones, an answering service, or Google Voice
✓	After the Flood
☐	Listen for news reports to learn whether the community's water supply is safe to drink
☐	Avoid floodwaters; water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage - water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines
☐	Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded, roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car
☐	Clean and disinfect everything that got wet, mud left from floodwater can contain sewage and chemicals
☐	Implement DR plan, and monitor local authorities' communication
☐	Contact employees via determined method of communication and discuss next steps

FLOOD PREPAREDNESS

☐	Contact your insurance agent
✓	Your People
☐	Ensure you have an emergency communication plan in place prior to the storm, evacuation, or threat
☐	Have all employees, vendors, and client contact information on hand
☐	During evacuation have a central point of contact for all employees, and ensure you know where your employees are located
☐	Following the flood, notify all critical people of next steps, based on damage

Helping to Mitigate your Risk for Flood Interruption:

Do You Know the Terms?

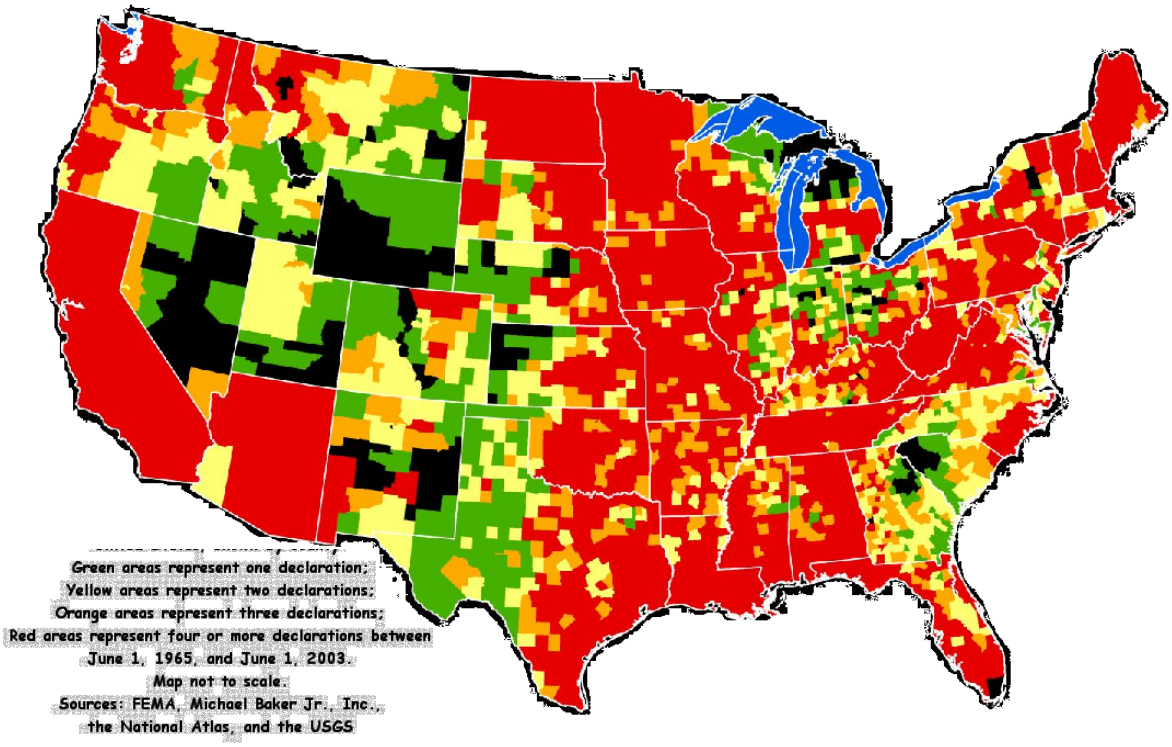
- Flood Watch:
  Flooding is possible. Tune in to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for information.
- Flash Flood Watch:
  Flash flooding is possible. Be prepared to move to higher ground; listen to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for information.
- Flood Warning:
  Flooding is occurring or will occur soon; if advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Flash Flood Warning:
  A flash flood is occurring; seek higher ground on foot immediately.

FLOOD PREPAREDNESS

Driving Flood Facts

The following are important points to remember when driving in flood conditions:

- Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars causing loss of control and possible stalling.
- A foot of water will float many vehicles.
- Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including sport utility vehicles (SUVs) and pick-ups.



Green areas represent one declaration;
Yellow areas represent two declarations;
Orange areas represent three declarations;
Red areas represent four or more declarations between June 1, 1965, and June 1, 2003.
Map not to scale.
Sources: FEMA, Michael Baker Jr., Inc., the National Atlas, and the USGS

WINTER WEATHER PREPAREDNESS

Winter weather brings concerns about heat and maximizing its retention, frozen pipes, and access to your place of business. The following checklist will help you identify the areas of your business that are most susceptible to winter hazards and to suggest ways to minimize damage. It is a good idea to develop a plan of action for your business and your staff to be ready for this type of interruption. Below you will find critical information and preparedness tools to assist in protecting your business and the most critical element of your business – your employees.

✓	Before the Storm
☐	Check your insurance coverage for protection against winter hazards.
☐	Develop a procedure for restoring electrical services on an item-by-item basis.
☐	Develop a procedure for relocating salvageable and undamaged stock and supplies.
☐	Add the following supplies to your disaster supplies kit: rock salt (to melt ice on driveways), sand (to improve traction), and snow shovels (or other snow removal equipment).
☐	Determine your greatest risk potential: loss of heat, frozen pipes, and/or loss of access due to snow/ice.
☐	Identify who is responsible for keeping heating equipment in good working order: business owner or landlord.
☐	Identify who is responsible for snow/ice removal: business owner or landlord.
☐	Determine what equipment needs to be protected from freeze-up, i.e. computers, telecommunications, manufacturing equipment, etc.
☐	Are portable heaters or other emergency equipment needed?
☐	If snow and/or ice prohibit access to your business, are there alternative ways to enter your premises?
☐	Seal all openings with caulking and insulation where cold air can enter.

WINTER WEATHER PREPAREDNESS

☐	Repair walls and roofs to prevent drafts; inspect roof drains for debris.
☐	Make sure storm windows are effective, if appropriate.
☐	Make sure heating and heat-producing process equipment is in good condition and operating efficiently.
☐	Arrange for snow removal from driveways, doorways, and roofs.
☐	Drain all idle pumps and compressors, making sure jackets are vented.
☐	Provide proper lubrication on equipment for cold weather operation (i.e., emergency generators, snow blowers).
☐	Test cold weather equipment.
☐	Clean and inspect boilers and firing mechanism/controls.
☐	Maintain automatic sprinkler protection in idle buildings; promptly handle sprinkler system impairments; notify local fire department.
☐	Monitor building temperature especially in hard-to-heat areas containing vulnerable equipment. Keep temperatures above 40°F.
☐	Mark hydrants near your business for ease in locating and clearing after a heavy storm.
✓	During the Storm
☐	Heaters, snow blowers, generators, and cold-weather equipment should be located where it is most likely to be used.
☐	Keep driveways, walkways, and doorways clear of snow and ice.

WINTER WEATHER PREPAREDNESS

☐	Open water faucets slightly to let them drip in order to keep water flowing through the pipes that are vulnerable to freezing. Ice may still form, but the open faucet helps prevent the pipe from bursting by allowing relief for any built up pressure.
☐	Names and phone numbers of your heating contractor, plumber, fire department, insurance agent, and building owner should be easily accessible.
☐	Have someone assigned to check indoor temperatures should your place of business be vacant for long periods of time.
✓	Your Employees
☐	Ensure you have an emergency communication plan in place prior to the storm, evacuation, or threat.
☐	Have all employees, vendors, and client contact information on hand.
☐	During evacuation consider your phones lines- redirection to cell phones, answering service, or Google Voice could be critical.
☐	Following the storm, notify all critical people of next steps, based on damage.

Winter storms may range from a moderate snow in a short amount of time to a blizzard lasting for days. Some storms are regional and may affect several states, while others are more localized, depending upon geography and terrain. Common characteristics of winter storms are dangerously low temperatures, strong winds, ice, sleet, and freezing rain.

Know the Terms:

- Winter storm watch --- be alert, a storm is likely
- Winter storm warning --- take action, the storm is in or entering the area
- Blizzard warning --- snow and strong winds combined will produce blinding snow, near zero visibility, deep drifts, and life-threatening wind chill--seek refuge immediately!
- Winter weather advisory --- winter weather conditions are expected to cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous, especially to motorists
- Frost/freeze warning --- below freezing temperatures are expected and may cause damage to plants, crops, or fruit trees

EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS

EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST

Most people would associate the risk of earthquakes with well-publicized and seismically active areas like California, parts of Washington State, and some areas of Nevada and Utah. However the risk of earthquakes covers a much larger area of the United States and Canada.

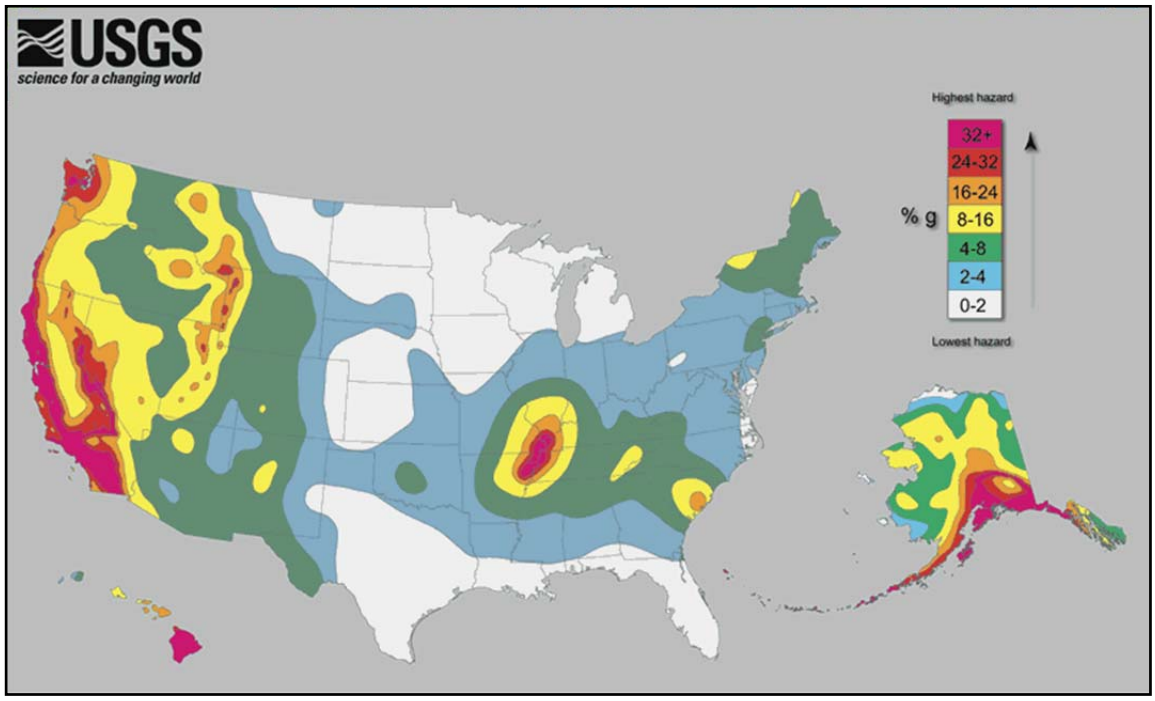
The following checklist covers some basic points to consider in preparing for an earthquake, which will help you recover more effectively in the aftermath. In the event of an earthquake, these steps will prove vital in minimizing any damage to your business and resources.

✓	Before the Earthquake
☐	Be aware of your risk level. Add a map to your Preparedness Plan and make sure everyone is aware of the earthquake risk level in your region.
☐	Think about communications, since the phone company and cell towers may go down. Your disaster recovery/response team will need to be in immediate contact with one another to ensure that your plan is activated and moving forward as quickly as possible. Think about two-way radios or text messages. An Alert Notification System is also an invaluable communication resource.
☐	Develop a plan around communication, and deliver this to your team. Be sure to clearly identify each individual's roles and responsibility prior to the earthquake.
☐	Implement structural and non-structural hazard mitigation actions: bolting furniture to walls, ensure hardware and technology are secure, safety latches for cabinet doors, install fire sprinklers, use hook and loop fasteners to keep computers and other equipment from falling.
☐	Discuss coverage with your insurance provider. Understand your extra expense and business interruption policies before the interruption occurs.
☐	Contact your property owner or facilities manager and ask about having a laminate or plastic film placed on the inside of the windows to prevent glass shattering and endangering employees.
☐	Assemble and store emergency supply kit- for 3 days minimum (see checklist for emergency supply kit at www.PrepareMyBusiness.org).
☐	Assemble building site maps and floor plans identifying exits, fire escapes, stairways, utility valves and shutoffs, fire extinguishers, hydrants, and standpipes, hazardous materials, and locked or restricted areas. Include these in your plan.
☐	Prepare your building for an extensive power outage and look at power options, particularly generator requirements.
☐	Review your current data backup procedures and consider contracting with a data center or colocation facility that is in a different part of the country (one not prone to earthquakes, hurricanes or any other kind of aggressive natural events). Back up all your data to them on a daily (or at least every other day) basis, so that in the event you lose your networks and servers you can be back up and running and restoring your saved data to replacement equipment.
☐	Practice the below 'During the Earthquake' items regularly with new and existing employees.

EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS

✓	During the Earthquake
☐	**If you are indoors,** duck or drop down to the floor. Take cover under a sturdy desk, table or other furniture. Hold on to it and be prepared to move with it. Hold the position until the ground stops shaking and it is safe to move. Stay clear of windows, fireplaces, woodstoves, and heavy furniture or appliances that may fall over. Stay inside to avoid being injured by falling glass or building parts. If you are in a crowded area, take cover where you are. Stay calm and encourage others to do likewise.
☐	**If you are outside,** get into the open, away from buildings and power lines.
☐	**If you are driving,** stop if it is safe, but stay inside your car. Stay away from bridges, overpasses and tunnels. Move your car as far out of the normal traffic pattern as possible. If possible, avoid stopping under trees, light posts, power lines, or signs.
☐	**If you are in a mountainous area,** or near unstable slopes or cliffs, be alert for falling rock and other debris that could be loosened by the earthquake.
☐	**If you are at the beach,** move quickly to higher ground or several hundred yards inland.
✓	After the Earthquake
☐	Employees should immediately check for injuries among fellow workers and render first aid. Seriously injured persons should not be moved unless they are in danger of further injury.
☐	Check for fire hazards, gas leaks, or damaged electrical wiring. Make sure main valves are turned off.
☐	Use flashlights (in emergency supply kit) vs. matches/lighters, due to potential gas leaks.
☐	Be prepared for aftershocks – these can come for several days after the main quake and can frequently topple already weakened structures.
☐	Consider relocation during recovery, depending upon damage to structure.
☐	Bring all vital records with you to your recovery site: data, employee lists, vendor lists, etc.
✓	Your People
☐	Ensure you have an emergency communication plan in place prior to the earthquake and that employees are aware of their part in the plan
☐	Determine who is certified in CERT, CPR, etc. and what their responsibilities will be in the event of an earthquake.
☐	Use an Alert Notification System or internal employee hotline to keep all employees posted on status and next steps.
☐	During evacuation have a central point of contact for all employees, and ensure you know where your people are located.
☐	During evacuation consider your phones lines- redirection to cell phones, answering service, Google Voice, or Agility lines could be critical.
☐	Following the earthquake, notify all critical people of next steps, based on damage.

EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS



Earthquakes are measured by the Richter magnitude scale. This is used to express the level of seismic energy released by the earthquake. The scale is theoretically limitless, although the highest magnitude so far recorded was 9.5 in 1960.

Intensity Scale	Description	Effects
less than 2	Micro	not felt
2-3	Very Minor	not felt but recorded
3-4	Minor	often felt, no damage
4-5	Light	shaking observed
5-6	Moderate	Some damage
6-7	Strong	damaging over a 100 mile area
7-8	Major	serious damage over wider area
greater than 8	Great	Serious damage over several hundred miles

TORNADO PREPAREDNESS

A tornado is arguably one of the most destructive types of storms imaginable. Unlike a hurricane or tropical storm, a tornado may develop almost without warning, appearing within minutes and leaving little time to react accordingly. Winds can get up to and exceed 200mph causing enormous damage in its path. Therefore, the importance of being prepared beforehand cannot be conveyed strongly enough.

The following is a checklist to prepare your business in the event of such an occurrence.

✓	Before the Tornado
☐	Have a weather alert radio in the office.
☐	Have a plan to provide emergency notification (warning system) to all employees, clients, visitors and customers in an emergency.
☐	Put your crisis management plan in writing and give it to all employees.
☐	Conduct drills regularly to prepare employees for the real thing.
☐	When you establish your timeline for workplace preparation and closure, consider that employees will need to prepare their families and take care of personal matters as well. Allow enough time for them to execute their personal preparedness plans.
☐	Identify critical employees, and make sure they understand what is expected of them during a disaster. For example, you may need certain employees responsible for IT functions to work during a disaster to protect and reestablish your technology systems. If you need those employees to work remotely, make travel, hotel, and meal arrangements in advance, and ensure they know what equipment and support they will need to perform their duties.
☐	Develop a plan to allow your payroll, benefits, and HR functions to operate during a disaster, after a disaster, or during any period in which access to your workplace is restricted.

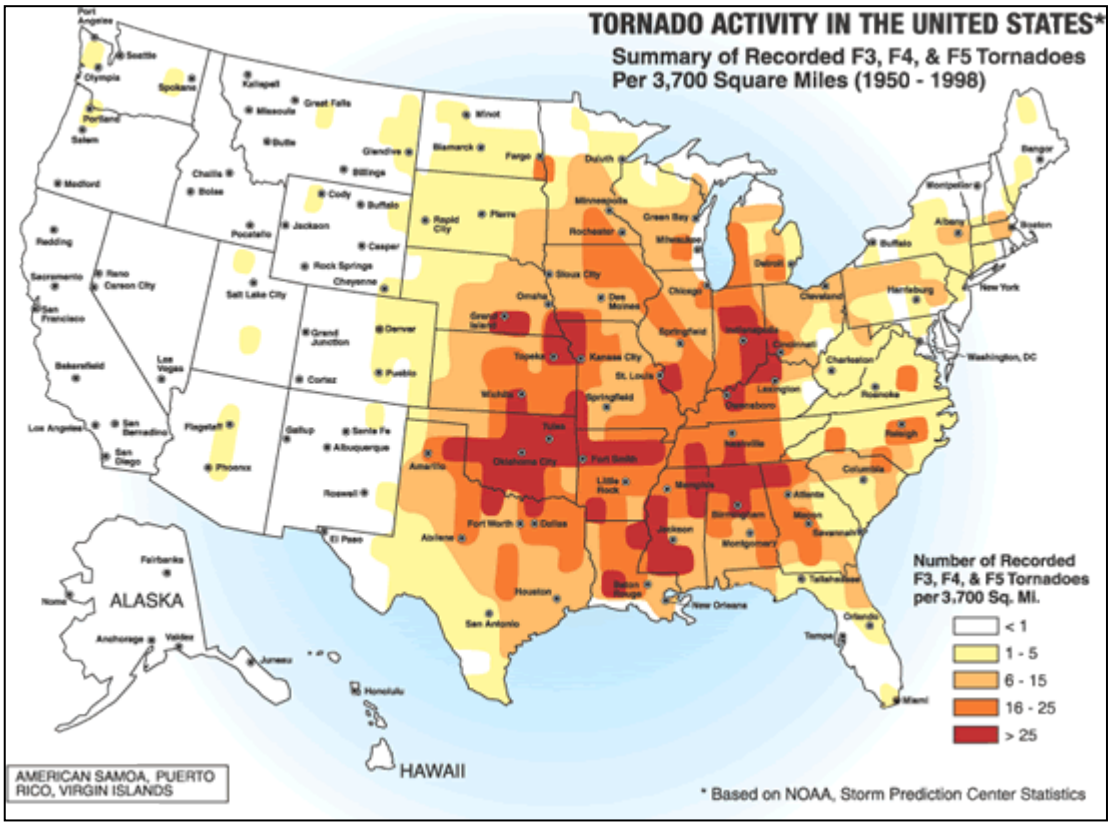
TORNADO PREPAREDNESS

☐	If employees will be required to return to the workplace to assist in the recovery process before all services are restored, obtain an adequate supply of water, nonperishable food, first-aid supplies, generators, cleaning supplies, batteries, flashlights, and other necessities.
☐	Update your employee contact information regularly and at the beginning of any season during which natural disasters are more likely.
☐	Look for the following danger signs: dark, often greenish sky, large hail, dark, low-lying clouds, and/or loud roar (similar to a freight train).
✓	During the Tornado
☐	Move to an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor. If possible, get under a heavy piece of furniture.
☐	Stay away from windows.
☐	Mobile homes/ work trailers, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes and should be abandoned.
☐	Go to a pre-designated shelter area such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck. Do not open windows.
✓	After a Tornado
☐	Ensure the site is safe for re-entry. A third-party inspector may be necessary to achieve proper safety protocol.

TORNADO PREPAREDNESS

☐	Communication following a disaster is critical. In advance, establish a communication plan that will work regardless of the nature of the disaster. For example, consider setting up a toll-free number or website, make sure they are operated out of areas that aren't disaster-prone and are located away from your workplace, and give employees instructions on when, how, and what to communicate through those methods following a disaster.
✓	Your Employees
☐	Ensure you have an emergency communication plan in place prior to the storm, evacuation, or threat.
☐	Have all employees, vendors, and client contact information on hand.
☐	During evacuation have a central point of contact for all employees, and ensure you know where your people are located.
☐	During evacuation consider your phones lines- redirection to cell phones, answering service, Google Voice, or Agility lines could be critical.
☐	Following the tornado, notify all critical people of next steps, based on damage.

TORNADO PREPAREDNESS



Tornadoes are classified using the “Fujita Scale”, the intensities shown in the chart below:

Category	Wind Speed (MPH)	Intensity
F0	< 73	Gale
F1	73-112	Moderate
F2	113-157	Significant
F3	158-206	Severe
F4	207-260	Devastating
F5	261-318	Incredible