



## In Honor of September – National Preparedness Month, let's talk about **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FOR BUSINESS**

Large and small employers should prepare for possible disasters. Whether a corporation with multiple locations and thousands of employees, or a small partnership with two employees, businesses can do much to prepare for the impact of the many hazards they face in today's world. While many aspects of a disaster are unpredictable, that does not mean preparations should not be completed in advance. During major disasters, it is clear that those businesses that prepared in advance suffered less downtime and loss of revenue. Here are some of the key areas to consider when conducting emergency preparedness:

- **Be Informed** – know the type of emergencies that might affect your business. Plan for what you will do in an emergency.
- **Develop a Business Continuity Plan** – determine what bare essentials you need to keep the business running. Develop back-up plans for all essential functions like your supply chain, and not just for IT. Decide in advance what you will do if your facility(s) is not accessible or does not have utilities.
- **Prepare an Emergency Plan** – this should include at a minimum: evacuation plans, shelter-in-place plans, means to communicate with your employees when they are not at work, instructions for how employees should handle emergencies (including medical emergencies), and site maps with utility and evacuation locations marked.
- **Practice the Emergency Plan** – during an emergency is NOT when you should be opening the plans to figure out what to do. Actors would not open the script on opening night. Athletes would not open the playbook for the first time on the field. Training and practice will help make sure everyone knows what to do and the execution of the plan is a success.
- **Review Insurance Coverage** – many businesses have been surprised after disasters to learn how little is covered. Review your insurance now and adjust it if appropriate.
- **Secure Your Facility and Equipment** – Make sure your people, products, supplies, building, and IT are secure.
- **Promote Family and Individual Preparedness** – This is the right thing to do and is good for business. If people and their families are secure and safe, they are more likely to return to work.

Visit [ready.gov/business](http://ready.gov/business) for more information, templates and instructions on how to develop plans, as well as other resources.

**“It wasn't hard to put together a plan, you just have to make it a priority.”**

— Cathy Anderson-Giles,  
President and CEO

**“We had trained in advance and knew what to do”**

— Donna Childs,  
Founder and CEO

**“And because we were ready, our customers never knew the difference”**

— Jonathan Harlan,  
CEO

Quotes downloaded from FEMA's [ready.gov/business/business-testimonials](http://ready.gov/business/business-testimonials) on August 26, 2014.