Flood Preparedness and Response Checklist

Statistically, businesses are more likely to be flooded than to burn down. Although floods cannot be predicted, you can prepare for them by using the checklist below. (Source: OHS Insider, with information compiled from the US Small Business Administration and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA.)

Planning for a Flood

- ❑ Find out if your facility is in a flood plain
- ❑ Learn the history of flooding in your area
- ❑ Find out about the elevation of your facility in relation to streams, rivers and dams
- ❑ Review your community's emergency plan and evacuation routes and where to find higher ground
- ❑ Establish warning procedures for your facility
- ❑ Establish emergency communication procedures, e.g., alert notification system, phone tree, etc.
- ❑ Establish and practice evacuation procedures for your facility
- ❑ Inspect the parts of your facility that are subject to flooding
- ❑ Identify records and equipment that can be moved to a higher location

- ❑ Make plans to move records and equipment if a flood occurs
- ❑ Purchase a radio that picks up Environment Canada’s Weather radio broadcasts (NOAA Weather Radio in the US) and use it to listen for flood watches and warnings
- ❑ Talk to your insurance agent about your policy and coverage

Before the Flood

- ❑ Review your Emergency Plan with your response team and key employees
- ❑ Take all necessary steps to prevent the release of dangerous chemicals stored on your property
- ❑ Locate main gas and electrical shut-offs
- ❑ Anchor all fuel tanks
- ❑ Postpone scheduled deliveries of goods
- ❑ Identify meeting place and time for all key employees on your Crisis Management Team
- ❑ Create voicemail for evacuation or out of office
- ❑ Update disaster recovery kits
- ❑ Activate 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

- ❑ Remember that life and safety take precedence over everything else
- ❑ Implement next phase of your business continuity plan
- ❑ Send non-critical staff home
- ❑ Raise elevators to the second level and turn off power
- ❑ Stay tuned to local media and evacuate as instructed or when circumstances require
- ❑ Take cell phones, charger, critical hardware and emergency kits with you
- ❑ Unplug electrical items before leaving
- ❑ Consider redirecting business phones to your cell phones or an answering service
- ❑ Have a central point of contact for all employees so you can find out where they’re located during and after the flood

After the Flood

- ❑ Listen to news reports to verify the community water supply is safe to drink
- ❑ Avoid floodwaters, which may be contaminated or electrically charged

- [ ] Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded, roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of your car
- [ ] Clean and disinfect everything that got wet
- [ ] Implement Disaster Recovery Plan
- [ ] Assess damage
- [ ] Notify key people of next steps on basis of damage assessment
- [ ] Contact employees via determined communication method and discuss next steps
- [ ] Contact your insurance agent