



**FEMA**

# News Release

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## **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS IS GOOD BUSINESS FOR NEW JERSEY**

**LINCROFT, N.J.** — The restoration of businesses hit hard by Superstorm Sandy was essential to beginning New Jersey’s recovery. But with almost four months to go before the end of this hurricane season, businesses without disaster plans are skating on thin ice.

“History has proven the sooner local businesses recover following a disaster, the faster the community begins recovering,” said Gracia Szczech FEMA’s federal coordinating officer for New Jersey recovery. “Which is why having an emergency, or disaster operations plan is crucial.”

Having a continuity and preparedness plan is just the beginning, though. Implementation and regular practice of the plan enhances the resilience of a business and its capability to jumpstart the recovery process. Being the first business of its kind – or the first on the block – to return following a disaster could catapult revenues at a time when needed the most.

The New Jersey Office of Emergency Management, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Small Business Administration all encourage businesses to prepare for future severe weather events.

Businesses with thorough disaster preparedness plans generally have less damage, less economic loss and less down time following a disaster. A plan also will assist a business’ community recovery more quickly following a disaster.

“Prepared businesses can really help minimize the impact a disaster has on a community,” said Bill Vogel, FEMA’s deputy federal coordinating officer. “Local businesses are vital resources and economic engines so it’s a huge step toward recovery if they’re able to reopen quickly after a disaster.”

Businesses should consider several elements in preparing for a disaster. Detail how you will be in contact with employees, customers and others. Employees should be encouraged to stay informed of potential emergencies and make a family emergency plan. An employee with a good plan at home will be back on the job quicker, free from home anxiety due to a disaster and will be more productive on the job.

Not only is it important to protect the staff, building, data and company inventory during a damaging event; it also is critical to prepare a plan to continue operations in case most everything is destroyed.

A good plan may include provisions to relocate to a pre-identified site, retrieve business records, and a way to operate efficiently with a smaller staff of key individuals.

(MORE)

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FEMA provides a step-by-step approach to emergency planning, response and recovery for companies of all sizes at [www.ready.gov/business](http://www.ready.gov/business).

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