

WEATHER DAMAGE

HOW TO PREPARE THE CONSTRUCTION SITE FOR SEVERE STORMS

EVERY CONSTRUCTION site needs a storm preparedness plan to ensure a safe environment during hazardous weather. It is important to take the necessary time to develop a good plan several months before the storm season begins.

Contractors and builders lose millions every year from storms because of a lack of preparedness. But a plan can be executed in just a couple of hours, and the investment is very small.

When you compare the invested amount to the potential losses, it is easier for any contractor to get started with making a plan.

The following checklist should be completed far before the start of the storm season.

Storm preparedness checklist

- ✓ Clean the construction site daily.
- ✓ Take photos of the site daily to record project progress.
- ✓ Complete current jobs before starting new ones.
- ✓ Conduct regular maintenance for electrical and mechanical equipment.
- ✓ Maintain an adequate number of sandbags or water-detention systems.
- ✓ Secure staging areas and trailers one month before storm season.
- ✓ Store small items that can be blown or washed away in buildings.
- ✓ Include subcontractors' supplies, property and workers in the plan.
- ✓ Ensure all electronic devices have battery power backup.
- ✓ Give the emergency power generator system a checkup and tune-up.
- ✓ Check all of the batteries in emergency exit signals and emergency lights.
- ✓ Stock offices with emergency kits, flashlights and other safety gear.
- ✓ Buy enough bottled water to last all site workers at least five days.
- ✓ Make sure there are always enough office supplies to last several days.
- ✓ Keep important documents in a safe place where water cannot damage them.
- ✓ Educate key workers about what steps they must take if there is an oil spill.
- ✓ Provide employees with phone numbers for all state and local emergency agencies.
- ✓ Give all workers specific assignments to help execute the plan.
- ✓ Develop a system to inform workers about when to come back to the site.
- ✓ Carefully review the building insurance policy for storm damage details.
- ✓ Find out how many extension days the contract allows for weather interruptions.
- ✓ Post the completed plan in a location where it is easy for all workers to see.

- Personnel must assess and clean the site to remove debris or hazardous objects.
- Dismount and secure all scaffolding.
- To prevent damage from sand accumulation, protect underground drains and pipes.
- If there are scheduled deliveries, postpone them for at least two days.
- Disable all of the power lines and remove any temporary connections.
- Any hazardous or contaminating materials should be covered and secured properly.
- Secure and cover every window or glass feature with storm shutters.
- If time allows, booms can be laid down or the load line can be hooked to a low point.
- If dumpsters cannot be removed from the site, cover and secure them.
- If there are any open excavations, close them to prevent water from accumulating.
- Disassemble every temporary structure or fence that might be swept up by the wind.
- Make sure all catch basins and storm water inlets are free of debris.
- Secure all of the heavy equipment in a safe area.
- Designate in advance all crews for shifts, relief, cleaning and standby.



If you have any questions regarding your coverage or our products, please call us at one of our offices:

Walnut Creek
Los Angeles
San Jose
Portland
Bakersfield
Philadelphia

Cypress
Petaluma
Phoenix
Truckee
St. Louis
London

San Francisco
Irvine
San Mateo
Seattle
Woodland Hills

Phone: 800-234-6787
CA License No.: 0564249

Action plan

After the preparedness plan is in place, it is important to develop the plan of action. Workers should understand the difference between the two plans, and they should know that the action plan is only implemented when a severe storm is imminent.

Produced by Risk Media Solutions on behalf of Heffernan Insurance Brokers. This newsletter is not intended to provide legal advice, but rather perspective on recent regulatory issues, trends and standards affecting insurance, workplace safety, risk management and employee benefits. Please consult your broker or legal counsel for further information on the topics covered herein. Copyright 2025 all rights reserved.