

VIRGINIA BUSINESS EMERGENCY SURVIVAL TOOLKIT

**MAKE A PLAN.
GET READY.**



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Every business has one thing in common - they are equally susceptible to emergency situations. Your organization needs to be ready for an emergency, whether it is a hurricane or a bomb threat, terrorist activity or a chemical spill. Make sure that you and your colleagues are prepared.

This guide is a tool to help you plan and prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. It is not meant to override any policies, procedures, rules, regulations, and protocols. It is not an absolute guide for every situation and does not relieve the receipts of responsibility for any standing policies, procedures, rules, regulations, and protocols.



Hazards & Threats

Natural Hazards

Hurricanes

Tropical depressions, tropical storms and hurricanes are low pressure areas that develop in the tropical regions of the ocean, creating masses of thunderstorms that organize and rotate, producing high winds, torrential rain, and storm surge. Though it might seem that only the shoreline is vulnerable to the effects of hurricanes, all of Virginia can be affected by tropical systems. A hurricane produces torrential rains and sometimes tornadoes. A foot or more of rain could fall in less than a day, causing flash floods and mudslides. Rivers in the hurricane's path may still be flooding for days after the storm has passed. Driving winds can topple trees, utility poles, and damage buildings. Communication and electricity might be lost for days, and roads are often impassable due to fallen trees and debris.

Hurricane season lasts from June 1 through November 30.

Hazards & Threats

 A **tropical depression**, the lowest intensity, is given a number once it has a counterclockwise spin and winds of 35 mph.

 A **tropical storm** is born when wind speeds reach 39 mph. At this time, the storm is given a name from a pre-determined list. While a tropical storm does not produce a high storm surge, its thunderstorms can still pack a dangerous and deadly punch. In 1972, a tropical storm dropped torrential rains that led to devastating floods in Virginia. Sixteen people died and damage was estimated at \$222 million.

 A **hurricane**, the most intense tropical event, has winds ranging from 74 mph to 155 mph or greater. Storm surge is a major concern with hurricanes. The extremely high winds cause ocean water to pile up, creating higher than normal sea levels with waves up to 40 feet in open water. Storm surge can devastate a coastline and bring ocean water miles inland.

Hazards & Threats

Hurricanes are rated on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale according to the storm's intensity and estimated property damage. Hurricanes reaching Category 3 and higher are considered major hurricanes because of the potential for loss of life and damage, though Category 1 and 2 storms are still very dangerous and should not be taken lightly.

Category 1 (winds 74-95 mph): Expect **minimal damage:** Trees, shrubbery, foliage and unanchored mobile home damage. Low-lying coastal roads inundated, minor pier damage. Storm surge 4-5 feet above normal tide level.

Category 2 (winds 96-110 mph): Expect **moderate damage:** Considerable damage to shrubbery and trees, with some trees uprooted. Major damage to exposed mobile homes. Some damage to roofs. Coastal roads/low-lying escape routes inland cut by rising water 2-4 hours before arrival of hurricane center. Considerable damage to and flooding of piers/marinas. Storm surge of 6-8 feet above normal tide level.

Hazards & Threats

Category 3 (winds 111-130 mph): Expect **extensive damage:** Some large trees blown down. Moderate damage to roofing and buildings. Mobile homes destroyed. Serious coastal flooding, small structures near coast destroyed. Larger structures near coast damaged. Major erosion of beaches with low-lying escape routes inland cut by rising water 3-5 hours before hurricane center arrives. Storm surge 9 to 12 feet above normal tide level.

Category 4 (winds 131-155 mph): Expect **extreme damage:** Shrubs, trees and signs blown down. Complete failure of roofs on small homes. Flat terrain 10 feet or less above sea level flooded inland up to 6 miles. Flooding and floating debris cause major damage to lower floors of structures near shore. Major beach erosion. Storm surge 13 to 18 feet above normal tide.

Category 5 (winds > 155 mph): Expect **catastrophic damage:** Total destruction of roofs. Major damage to lower floors of all structures less than 15 feet above sea level within 500 yards of shore. Storm surge greater than 18 feet above normal tide level.

Tornadoes

A **tornado** is a violently rotating column of air extending from a thunderstorm to the ground. Tornadoes are highly unpredictable, appearing separately or in clusters and varying greatly in length, width, direction of travel and speed. Though tornadoes can strike at any time, in Virginia they most commonly occur from April to October.

Virtually every region of Virginia has reported at least one tornado over the last 50 years. However, some areas are more susceptible than others. It is essential to listen to local Emergency Alert System stations or to a NOAA weather radio during thunderstorms and to know the difference between a tornado watch and a tornado warning.

The Fujita Scale rates a tornado's intensity is rated according to the damage it causes along its path .

Hazards & Threats

F0—Light damage:< 73 mph. Damage to chimneys; branches broken off trees; shallow-rooted trees pushed over.

F1—Moderate damage:73-112 mph. Damage to roofs; mobile homes pushed off foundations or overturned; autos blown off roads.

F2—Considerable damage:113-157 mph. Roofs torn off frame houses; mobile homes demolished; boxcars overturned; large trees snapped or uprooted; light-objects carried by wind.

F3—Severe damage:158-206 mph. Roofs and some walls torn off well-constructed houses; train engines overturned.

F4—Devastating damage: 207-260 mph. Well-constructed houses leveled; structures with weak foundations blown some distance.

F5—Incredible damage: 261-318 mph. Strong frame houses leveled and swept away; car-sized objects fly through the air in excess of 100 yards; trees debarked.

Hazards & Threats

Thunderstorms

Thunderstorms can occur any time of day year round but are most common in the summer afternoons and evenings. Virginia averages 35 to 45 thunderstorm days per year.

Large Hail

Every year, portions of Virginia are impacted by severe thunderstorms producing large hail measuring penny size or larger.

Downburst Winds

Downburst winds annually affect many areas of the Commonwealth. In general, these sustained winds of 50 mph or greater are strong enough to down large limbs or trees. Winds exceeding 60 mph can cause structural damage to buildings and isolated and sporadic damage to trees and power lines.

Lightning

Lightning is random, unpredictable, and second only to flash floods in causing deaths in the United States.

Hazards & Threats

Wildfire

A **wildfire**, or **forest fire**, is an uncontrolled fire that occurs where natural vegetation is the predominant ground cover.

Wildfires occur all across Virginia, and no area is without risk. 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.

A **Red Flag Warning** is issued when sustained winds average 15 mph or greater, the relative humidity less than or equal to 25 percent and a temperature of greater than 75° F.

Floods

Flash flooding is the Number 1 weather-related killer and causes 90 percent of all natural disaster damage. Flooding can happen anytime, anywhere in the Commonwealth.

A **flash flood** is a rapidly rising and rapidly flowing surge of water resulting from runoff from excessive rainfall or the failure of a dam or levee. Flash floods most often occur within a few minutes or hours of excessive rainfall or a dam or levee failure.

Flash flood watch: Flash flooding is possible in the area. Be alert to signs of flooding and be ready to evacuate on a moment's notice.

Flash flood warning: Flash flooding is already occurring or will occur very soon in your area. Evacuate immediately. Move to higher ground away from rivers, streams, creeks and storm drains. **Do not drive around barricades.** If vehicle stalls in rapidly rising waters, abandon it immediately and climb to higher ground.

Hazards & Threats

Flood watch: Flooding is possible in your area. Be prepared to act quickly and move to higher ground if needed. Move furniture and valuables to higher floors of buildings, and put important documents in a waterproof container.

Flood warning: Flooding is already occurring or will occur soon in your area. Be alert to signs of a flood, and if floodwaters are threatening your business, evacuate quickly to higher ground. Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or local radio or television stations for recommended evacuation routes. If you are driving and come upon rapidly rising waters, turn around and find another route.

Hazards & Threats

Winter Storms

Winter storms can cause harmful circumstances including power outages, loss of heat and telephone services, strong damaging winds, fallen trees, flooding, icy roadways and freezing temperatures.

Occasionally more damaging than hurricanes, Nor'easters have a deserved reputation as Virginia's worst winter storms. These storms can erode low-lying coastal areas with damaging surf, glaze the land with thick layers of ice or blanket wide swaths of the state under snow. Although nor'easters usually form from November through April, they are often at their worst in January and February.

Hazards & Threats

Frost/Freeze Warning—Below-freezing temperatures are expected.

Winter Weather Advisory—Winter weather conditions are expected to cause difficulty and might be dangerous.

Winter Storm Watch—Severe winter conditions, such as heavy snow or ice, are possible.

Winter Storm Warning—Severe winter conditions have begun or are about to begin in your area.

Freezing Rain Advisory—Hazardous driving conditions are taking place and/or up to 1/4 inch of freezing rain on tree branches and/or power lines have broken.

Ice Storm Warning—Issued if freezing rain/drizzle is occurring with a significant accumulation of ice or sleet.

Hazards & Threats

Earthquakes

Virginia has a moderate earthquake risk, similar to most other states on the eastern seaboard. Since 1774, 300 earthquakes have been recorded within or near the boundaries of the Commonwealth. Eighteen of these earthquakes had a magnitude of 4 to 4.5 or higher on the Richter scale.

Virginia has two named seismic zones: the Giles County Seismic Zone, centered along the New River, about 20 miles west-northwest of Blacksburg, and the Central Virginia Seismic Zone, extending west from Richmond toward Charlottesville and the Blue Ridge Mountains. Other recorded epicenters are scattered widely across the state. All parts of Virginia should be considered susceptible to earthquakes.



Geologic Events

Landslides—Landslides are Virginia's most widespread geologic hazard; they are most likely in areas of steep slope and occur in association with heavy rainfall. Certain man-made changes to the land, such as slope modification or drainage alteration, can increase the likelihood of landslides.

Sinkholes and Subsidence—Sinkholes form in areas with soluble rock. Many areas in the Virginia Valley and Ridge provinces and limited areas in the Piedmont province are susceptible.

Shoreline Erosion—Shoreline erosion is accentuated by heavy rainfall and the increased wave activity associated with severe storms, such as tropical storms and hurricanes.

Other Geologic Hazards—Expansive soils, frost heave, and radon emission are influenced by wet and dry cycles and freeze-thaw cycles. Information on expansive soils and frost heave distributions is available in soil reports or from localities.

Hazards & Threats

Man-Made Threats

Crime

According to the Virginia State Police, in 2005 some type of crime was committed every 1 minute, 9 seconds. Of those crimes, a Crimes Against Property was committed every one minute, 35 seconds. Businesses and industries have a stake in the safety of their community, employees and customers and should be aware of the dangers faced.

Crimes that can affect Virginia businesses include:

Arson: Unlawful and intentional damage or attempt to damage property by fire or incendiary device. *1,600+ incidents*

Burglary: Entering a building or other structure with the intent to commit a felony or theft. *36,200+ incidents*

Counterfeiting/Forgery: Presenting a copy as the original with the intent to deceive. *8,600+ incidents*

Hazards & Threats

Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property: Willfully or maliciously destroying, damaging, defacing or injuring property
92,219+ incidents

Embezzlement: A person is entrusted to control money, property or anything of value unlawfully misuses it. *3500+ incidents*

Extortion/Blackmail: Obtaining money, property or something of value, through the use or threat of violence, the misuse of position, a threat of criminal prosecution or the destruction of reputation or status. *70+ incidents*

Fraud: Intentional deception causing another person injury.
34,900+ incidents

Larceny/Theft: Property/possessions are unlawfully taken.
208,500+ incidents

Robbery: Taking anything of value by force/threat of violence from another. *10,600+ incidents*

Shoplifting: Theft of property from a retail business. *23,980+ incidents*

Terrorism

The U.S. Department of Justice defines terrorism as the “unlawful use of force or violence committed by a group or individual against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives”.

Examples of terrorism that could affect your business include:
Cyber-terrorism: One way for terrorists to damage our economy is to hack into businesses' networks to destroy vital documents, or to shut down e-mail communications or other computer-driven communications systems.

Chemical biological radiological: The anthrax attacks in 2001 showed the nation that terrorists can use the postal system to deliver deadly toxins right to our mailboxes.

Explosive devices: Car bombs in Oklahoma City, the World Trade Center and around the world are the most prevalent weapon in the terrorists' arsenal.

Hazards & Threats

Unintentional Events

Blackouts caused by overwhelming power demands, can knock out traffic lights, and shut down airports and subways, and cause electronic banking and telephone systems to crash.

Sags and brownouts involve a dip in the grid's voltage for short periods of time. *Sags*, caused by heavy equipment being turned on, being started and/or the switching of power mains, are sudden and last only a few seconds. *Brownouts* are a bigger dip in voltage and last a few minutes to a few days.

A **power surge** occurs when the grid voltage suddenly increases. Surges last only a few moments, but can have damaging effects. A power spike is an even larger increase in power in a shorter time span.

Line noise is disruption of the voltage traveling through power lines caused by lightning, transmitters, or electrical equipment that produce Radio Frequency Interference or Electromagnetic Interference. Line noise can cause a multitude of problems, from keyboard lock-ups to data crashes.

Unintentional Events

Radiological Events

Nuclear reactors cannot explode like a nuclear bomb; they use different materials and structures and are designed to prevent the release of radioactive materials.

State and local emergency officials along with Dominion Virginia Power have prepared nuclear emergency response plans for areas within 10 miles of the power stations. If your business is in a locality within 10 miles of a nuclear power station, contact your local emergency manager for information on preparing and responding to a radiological event.

Virginia's two nuclear power stations have four classes of radiological events, increasing from least to most serious. These terms are used in Emergency Alert System announcements.

Hazards & Threats

Unintentional Events

Notification of Unusual Event: There is a problem at the nuclear facility. No action is necessary.

Alert: There is a problem at the nuclear facility that has the potential for a radiological release. No action is necessary.

Site Area Emergency: A more serious problem has occurred at the plant, and small amounts of radiation might have or could leak into the environment. Area sirens might sound, and state and local officials will act to ensure public safety. Listen to your local EAS station.

General Emergency: A very serious problem has occurred at the plant, and radiation could leak outside the plant and off the plant site. Area sirens will sound. Listen to local radio or television stations for information. State and local officials will act to ensure public safety. Be prepared to follow instructions promptly and listen to your local EAS station.

Hazards & Threats

Unintentional Events

Fires

In 2003, Virginia had 21,846 fires resulting in 69 deaths and 493 injuries. Fires can dramatically affect a business' revenue and the lives of its employees. Eighteen percent of all Virginia fires in 2002 were business fires, causing 32 deaths and 461 injuries.

Electrical Hazards

Electrical fires kill more than 450 Americans each year and injure more than 2,300.

Safety measures include:

- Replace broken or frayed extension cords.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets.
- Routinely check the wiring of machinery.
- Purchase products that meet the Underwriter's Laboratory standard for safety.
- Check electrical tools for signs of wear.

Hazards & Threats

Unintentional Events

Natural Gas Hazards

Natural gas presents two types of hazards: an asphyxiant that robs the body of oxygen and an explosive that easily ignites. To reduce natural gas hazards, install a natural gas detector in your business, and locate and label the gas shutoff valve so employees will know how to turn off the valve from the outside of the building.

Flammable Liquid Hazards

To reduce fire hazards, read flammable product labels to identify how to store them properly in your business. Limiting, isolating or eliminating flammable liquids will help safeguard your workplace and employees' lives.



Hazards & Threats

Unintentional Events

Hazardous Materials Incidents

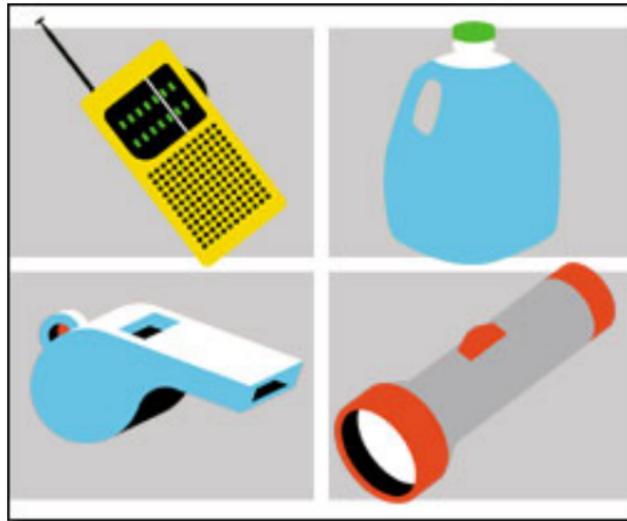
Hazardous materials are substances that, because of their chemical nature, pose a potential risk to life, health or property if they are released. A business might have to evacuate depending on the quantity and type of chemical released, or local officials might close a facility or area for hours, possibly days until a substance is properly cleaned up.

All jurisdictions in Virginia have a Local Emergency Planning Committee that identifies local industrial hazardous materials and keeps the community informed of the potential risks. Contact your local emergency management office to find out where hazardous chemicals are located in your area, as well as information about your Local Emergency Planning Committee.



Preparing

Making sure your employees are prepared ahead of time is one of the keys to reducing the negative effects of an emergency situation. A prepared employee will know what to do in an emergency and will panic less.



Preparing

- Mark emergency exits with large, bright signs that are easy to read. Include tactile indicators on emergency exits.
- Teach visually impaired workers how to get to emergency exits from various locations within the office.
- Make sure that disaster supply kits include any medications, food and water for service animals and other items that are unique to the needs of a person with a disability, such as an extra white cane or special batteries for medical devices.
- Make sure alerts can be communicated to all workers. While a combination of both flashing lights and audible alarms will work for most people, employees who are both blind and deaf might need another type of alert.
- Install emergency lights along the evacuation route that will come on if electrical service is interrupted.
- Implement a "buddy" system so that all employees with disabilities have an evacuation partner. Include this system in all emergency drills.

Planning

Step One: Form a Team and Define Roles

Include:

- Upper/Middle Management
- Human Resources
- Operations and Maintenance
- Finance/Purchasing
- Legal
- Sales/Marketing
- Public Relations
- IT/Systems Management
- Security
- Safety/Medical Personnel

Step Two: Conduct a Vulnerability Assessment

Evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that could potentially affect your organization.

Step Three: Develop Priorities

- Prioritize strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that could potentially affect your organization.
- List actions to take to get your organization up to speed in deficient areas and then prioritize this list.

Planning

Step Four: Write Your Plan

Include:

- Statement of Purpose and statement of the organization's emergency management policy
- List of authorities and responsibilities of key personnel
- List of types of emergencies the plan covers
- Statement of where response operations will be managed
- Communicate process to contractors and employees.

Step Five: Implement the Plan

- Integrate the plan into all aspects of operations and train your employees through workshops and drills.
- Evaluate the plan at least annually and after any disaster.

Responding

Tropical Storms/Hurricane

Stay alert and informed

Hurricane season runs from June 1 through November 30. Stay tuned to your local radio, TV, or NOAA alert radio for more information if a storm threatens your area.

Watch (Threat of tropical storm or hurricane conditions within 36 hours)

- Secure all doors and windows. Install hurricane shutters over doors and windows or use protective material such as plywood. Sandbag 1st floor doorways to protect interior from flooding.
- Bring in any objects that might be blown about by winds. Remove all outdoor signs. Secure items that cannot be brought inside.
- Keep vehicles fueled. Determine where they can be stored.
- Remove antennas and loose objects from roofs.
- Have a plan to continue business and safeguard essential employees and vital records.
- Execute your communication plan.

Responding

Warning (Threat of tropical storm or hurricane conditions in 24 hours or less)

- If the business is located in a designated evacuation area, **cease operations** and secure the facility.
- Dismiss all non-essential personnel and personnel living or working in designated evacuation areas.
- Turn off the circuit breaker for all electrical circuits except refrigeration, and lock all doors when you leave. Take into account how this might affect your alarm system. Turn off major equipment to reduce the power surge when electricity is restored.
- If you are not advised to evacuate, stay inside, away from windows, skylights and doors, even if they are covered.
- Have a supply of flashlights and extra batteries. Flashlights are the safest emergency lighting source.



Responding

Tornados

Stay alert and informed

Watch (Conditions are favorable for tornado development in your area)

- Stay tuned to your local radio, TV, or NOAA weather radio for further information and possible warnings.
- Be prepared to take cover if necessary.

Warning (A tornado has been sighted either by NWS Doppler RADAR or eyewitness account. SEEK SHELTER IMMEDIATELY!)

- **Buildings:** Try to get into the restroom or an interior hallway. Get against something that will support or deflect falling debris. Protect your head by covering it with your arms.
- **Automobiles:** Get out of your vehicle and find shelter inside a sturdy building. **Do not** take shelter under a highway overpass or bridge.
- **Outdoors:** Find shelter immediately in the nearest substantial building. If no buildings are close, lie down flat in a ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands.
- **Mobile homes:** Do not stay in mobile homes.

Responding

Thunderstorms

Stay alert and informed

During thunderstorms:

- Close windows and doors.
- Do not handle any electrical or telephone equipment.
- Avoid bathtubs, water faucets and sinks. Metal pipes can conduct electricity. Stay away from rivers, lakes or other bodies of water.
- Avoid tall structures, such as towers, telephone poles, fences and power lines.

If outdoors:

- Try to get to a building or car.
- If no structure is nearby, go to an open space. Squat low to the ground. Do **not** lie flat on the ground.

If in a car:

- Pull onto the shoulder of the road away from trees that could fall on the vehicle.
- Stay in the car with the windows up and avoid touching any metal in the car.

Responding

Floods

Stay alert and informed

Flood watch (conditions are favorable for flooding to develop)

- Be prepared to act quickly and move to higher ground.
- Get emergency supplies ready and move important items and documents to higher floors.
- Place important documents in waterproof containers.
- Instruct employees to fill their vehicles' gas tanks in case an evacuation is ordered.

Flood warning (flooding is imminent or is currently taking place)

- Evacuate as directed by local emergency officials.
- If driving, do not drive into water of unknown depth—TURN AROUND DON'T DROWN.
- Listen to TV, radio, and your NOAA weather radio for information on recommended evacuation routes and other information.

Responding

Flash flood watch (conditions are favorable for rapid and dangerous flooding in your area)

- Be alert to signs of flooding and be ready to evacuate at a moment's notice.

Flash flood warning (water is rapidly rising, and flooding is imminent or occurring)

- Evacuate immediately to higher ground.
- If driving, do not drive into water of unknown depth—TURN AROUND DON'T DROWN.
- Listen to TV, radio, and your NOAA weather radio for information on recommended evacuation routes and other information

Responding

Heat-Related Emergencies

Stay alert and informed

Sustained high temperatures can be harmful to your employees and detrimental to your business. Heat-related medical emergencies, drought, power outages, and wildfires can put your operations at risk. Monitor your local radio, TV or NOAA Weather Radio stations for updated information.

- Avoid strenuous activities.
- Take frequent breaks and stay indoors as much as possible.
- Drink plenty of water and avoid alcoholic beverages.
- Eat small meals and eat more often.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Use sunscreen and wear a wide-brimmed hat.

Responding

Wildfires

Stay alert and informed

Report any outdoor fire to emergency officials. Only attempt to control small, contained fires. Anything larger than a wastepaper basket fire should be left to firefighters.

- Keep lights on for visibility in smoky conditions. Distribute flashlights.
- Keep employees informed of the wildfire conditions, the company's response, and what actions the employee should take and when to take them.
- Be prepared to evacuate when ordered to do so by local officials. Because wildfires are unpredictable and can change speed and direction quickly, your planned escape routes might be blocked—follow evacuation routes provided by local officials.

Responding

Crime

Stay alert and informed

Crime affects businesses everyday, whether it is shoplifting, robbery, vandalism, employee theft, or fraud. Work with other businesses in your area to develop a Business Crime Watch group. Develop a relationship with your locality's police department crime prevention unit to get information on how to avoid becoming a victim.

If you are a victim of a crime:

- Immediately call your local law enforcement agency by dialing **9-1-1 or your local emergency telephone number**.
- You are dealing with a crime scene. Do not touch or remove evidence from the scene. A forensics team might be dispatched to the scene and will need access to all evidence.
- Communicate response procedures to employees.
- Be sure to tell your law enforcement agency if you have any video surveillance that might be helpful to their investigation.

Responding



Responding

Terrorism

Stay alert and informed

The Homeland Security Advisory System provides information about the current terrorist threat to federal, state, and local governments and the public. The guidelines that federal agencies use to implement protective measures to safeguard targets are defined by five colored threat levels.

LOW

Low condition (Green) Employees should receive preparedness training; employers should have a process to assess vulnerabilities and take precautions to mitigate them.

GUARDED

Guarded condition (Blue) Review and update emergency response procedures and coordinate preparedness efforts with your local law enforcement agency and surrounding community.

Responding

ELEVATED

Elevated condition (Yellow) Continue all precautions from lower threat levels, monitor information sources for warnings, update and test call down lists for emergency response teams and key employees, review employee training on security measures.

HIGH

High condition (Orange) Coordinate security measures and efforts with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. Consider alternate activities or even cancellation and prepare to execute contingency plans such as moving to an alternate location.

SEVERE

Severe condition (Red) Continue all precautions taken in lower levels, assign employees emergency response roles, monitor/redirect/evaluate internal & external business communications plans, consider closing your business facility.

Responding

Blackouts

Stay alert and informed

Be aware of weather in your area that could affect the power supply. Listen to your emergency alert, radio or TV station for further information.

If you know a blackout is coming:

- Backup all critical files.
- Unplug electrical equipment.
- Charge any batteries you need to run equipment.
- Ensure backup systems are ready and review plans to restore systems.

If a blackout hits your business

- Follow your emergency action plan.
- Use a flashlight only for emergency lighting.
- Unplug electrical equipment.
- Do not run a generator inside a building.
- Eliminate unnecessary travel, especially by car.
- Check to make sure backup systems are running.

Responding

Radiological Events

Stay alert and informed

- **Listen to your EAS radio or television station.** Local officials will tell you where to go for shelter, radiation tests and when radiation in the area has decreased to an acceptable level. Whether sheltering-in-place or at an evacuation site, stay there until told otherwise.
- **Shield yourself.** Put a barrier between the radiation and you. Go indoors.
- **Leave the area.** If instructed to do so, put as much distance between you and the release site as possible.
- **Leave quickly.** The less time you spend exposed to radiation the better. Wash off any dust particles on your skin, take off contaminated clothes and store them in a plastic bag.

Responding

Hazardous Materials Incidents

Stay alert and informed

Be aware of businesses that could use hazardous materials as part of their normal operation of business.

- If you witness (or smell) a hazardous materials release, **call 9-1-1 or your local emergency telephone number.**
- Listen to your local radio or TV for information.
- Stay away from the incident site to minimize risk of contamination.
- Follow all instructions given by emergency authorities.
- Know how to properly shelter-in-place.

If you are outside, stay up-stream, uphill and upwind.

If you are in a motor vehicle, Find shelter. If you must remain in your vehicle, close windows and vents and turn off the air conditioner/ heater.

If asked to evacuate, do so immediately. If authorities indicate there is enough time, close all windows, shut vents and turn off heating and air conditioning fans to minimize contamination.

Responding

Fires

Stay alert and informed

- Immediately contact the fire department by dialing **911** or **your local emergency telephone number**.
- Follow evacuation procedures specified in your plan.
- Stay low to the ground to avoid rising smoke.
- Close all doors upon exiting. When you leave your office, shut the door and leave a note or mark on the door indicating that the room is empty.
- Never open doors that are hot. Feel the bottom of the door with the palm of your hand. If it's hot, do not open the door. You will need to find another way out.
- Meet at a predetermined outside location that is located a safe distance from the building and out of the way of emergency responders and their vehicles.
- Report to managers or designated personnel for a head count. Remain at a safe distance from the building and follow emergency responders' instructions.

Recovering

Putting the pieces back together after an emergency

Step One: Contact your insurance agent

- Does my insurance cover all of the damage?
- Should I make temporary repairs and begin the clean-up process?
- Should I look for an alternate facility where I can run my business?
- Who will be my insurance adjuster and when will I be contacted?
- Should I take inventory? What will I need to verify my claim?
- If I do not have any property damage, but have lost revenue, can I claim that?
- I had to close my business due to the orders of civil authorities. Can I make a claim for the revenue I lost during that time?

Step Two: Determine if any assistance is available to your business.

Government Assistance

- Consult your tax preparer, local commissioner of revenue, or the State Tax Commissioner for information on Local Disaster Recovery Task Forces.
- Assist employees with Disaster Unemployment Assistance through the Virginia Employment Commission.
- Resources may be available through the U.S. Small Business Administration. Register and provide current and pre-disaster address, proof of residency, current telephone number, and insurance coverage information.

Non-Government Assistance

- Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster resources can help with clean-up, recovery, mitigation, and crisis counseling for employees. This group also provides resources through various faith-based organizations.

Recovering

After the hurricane/tropical storm:

- Stay alert for extended rainfall and subsequent flooding.
- Check for damage using a battery-powered flashlight.
- Communicate clean-up and recovery plans to employees.
- Do not turn on electrical equipment if there are indications of power fluctuations, low air conditioning output, water under raised floor, broken windows or damaged equipment.
- Check for gas leaks. If a leak is noted, turn off the gas, using the outside main valve, and call the gas company.
- If someone needs to be rescued, call professionals with the right equipment to help.
- Avoid loose or dangling power lines. Immediately report them to the power company, police or fire department.
- Check for sewer and water pipe damage. If you suspect sewage lines are damaged, avoid using the toilets and call a plumber. If water pipes are damaged, contact the water company and avoid using water from the tap.
- Check refrigerated food for spoilage. If in doubt, throw it out.

Recovering

After the Tornado:

- Continue listening to local radio/TV stations or a NOAA weather radio for updates.
- Watch for fallen power lines or broken gas lines and report them to the utility company immediately.
- Examine the exterior of the building and walls, floors, doors, staircases and windows to make sure that the building is not in danger of collapsing. Use battery-powered lanterns or flashlights when examining buildings.
- Communicate clean-up and recovery plans to employees. Initiate clean-up of work site, document damages and contact your insurance agent if necessary.
- If someone needs to be rescued, call professionals with the right equipment to help.
- Avoid loose or dangling power lines. Immediately report them to the power company, police or fire department.

Recovering

After the Thunderstorm:

- Continue listening to local radio/TV stations or a NOAA weather radio for updates.
- Watch for fallen power lines or broken gas lines and report them to the utility company immediately.
- Examine the exterior of the building and walls, floors, doors, staircases and windows to make sure that the building is not in danger of collapsing. Use battery-powered lanterns or flashlights when examining buildings.
- Communicate clean-up and recovery plans to employees. Initiate clean-up of work site, document damages and contact your insurance agent if necessary.
- If someone needs to be rescued, call professionals with the right equipment to help.
- Avoid loose or dangling power lines. Immediately report them to the power company, police or fire department.

Recovering

After the Flood:

- Continue listening to local radio/TV stations or a NOAA weather radio for updates.
- Stay away from floodwater. Drive only if absolutely necessary and avoid flooded roads and washed-out bridges.
- Communicate clean-up and recovery plans to employees. Initiate clean-up of work site, document damages and contact your insurance agent. Open doors and windows to ventilate and dry the building.

After a Debris Flow/Landslide:

- Stay away from the slide area; watch for flooding that could occur after a landslide or debris flow.
- Look for and report broken utility lines.
- Check your building, foundation and surrounding land for damage.
- Communicate clean-up and recovery plans to employees. Initiate clean-up of work site, document damages and contact your insurance agent.

Recovering

After a Winter Storm:

- Continue listening to local radio/TV stations or a NOAA weather radio for updates.
- Avoid driving and travel until conditions have improved.
- Communicate clean-up and recovery plans to employees. Initiate clean-up of work site, document damages and contact your insurance agent if necessary.
- Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow.
- Follow forecasts and be prepared for cold weather.



Recovering

After a Wildfire:

- Do not return to your property until local officials tell you that it is safe to do so.
- Avoid loose or dangling power lines.
- Watch out for ash pits.
- Communicate clean-up and recovery plans to employees. Initiate clean-up of work site, document damages and contact your insurance agent if necessary. Protect your employees from injury.
- Look for hazardous conditions, such as standing water (might be electrically charged if wires were damaged), sagging ceilings and damaged floors. Check roofs, attics and concealed spaces for hot spots, embers or sparks, and extinguish immediately.
- Carefully inspect heating systems. Repair or replace damaged or burned components before using the system.
- Have the water tested before using it.
- Use special caution when handling hazardous materials.

Recovering

After an Earthquake:

- Expect aftershocks. Get everyone outside if your building is unsafe. Exit via the stairs.
- Using battery-powered flashlights, examine the exterior of the building and walls, floors, doors, staircases and windows to make sure that the building is not in danger of collapsing.
- Check for and extinguish small fires. Exit via the stairs if there is fire.
- Communicate clean-up and recovery plans to employees. Initiate clean-up of work site, document damages and contact your insurance agent if necessary. Clean up spilled chemicals, gasoline or other flammable liquids immediately.
- Open closet and cabinet doors cautiously. Contents could have shifted during the shaking and could fall, creating further damage or injury.
- Check the telephones. Cellular telephone equipment is subject to damage by earthquakes and cell phones might not be able to get a signal, but land line phones might work.

Recovering

After a Blackout:

- Use a flashlight only for emergency lighting. Never use candles.
- Unplug electrical equipment until a steady power supply returns.
- Do not run a generator inside a building.
- Listen to your emergency alert, radio or TV station for further information.
- Leave one light turned on so you know when power is restored.
- Eliminate unnecessary travel, especially by car.
- Determine the extent of the outage. Check to make sure backup systems are running.
- If power is restored, be certain it is steady before you plug equipment into it.
- Communicate clean-up and recovery plans to employees. Initiate clean-up of work site, document damages and contact your insurance agent if necessary.

Recovering

After a Crime:

- Do not touch or remove evidence from the scene.
- Communicate response procedures to employees.
- Be sure to tell your law enforcement agency if you have any video surveillance that might be helpful to their investigation.
- Communicate clean-up and recovery plans to employees after advised to do so by law enforcement. Initiate clean-up of work site, document damages and contact your insurance agent if necessary.

After a Radiological/Terrorism Event:

- Do not touch or remove evidence from the scene.
- Listen to local officials for information and direction. Evacuate or shelter-in-place based on their direction.
- Be sure to tell your law enforcement agency if you have any video surveillance that might be helpful to their investigation.
- Communicate clean-up and recovery plans to employees after advised to do so by law enforcement. Initiate clean-up of work site, document damages and contact your insurance agent if necessary.

Recovering

After a Blackout:

- Use a flashlight only for emergency lighting. Unplug electrical equipment until a steady power supply returns.
- If power is restored, be certain it is steady before you plug equipment into it.
- Communicate clean-up and recovery plans to employees. Initiate clean-up of work site, document damages and contact your insurance agent if necessary.

After a Hazardous Materials Event:

- Communicate clean-up and recovery plans to employees. Initiate clean-up of work site, document damages and contact your insurance agent if necessary.

Contact Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
(800) 592-5482

prior to beginning clean up, once authorized by
emergency officials.

Recovering

Debris removal

Debris removal from commercial property is the responsibility of the business owner unless, in extreme circumstances, it is determined that removal benefits the general public's interest and the debris is in a federally-declared disaster area.

Debris removal contact information

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Recovering

Workplace Safety

Disasters can cause toxic and explosive materials to spill and contaminate water, soil and property. There are hazards that go along with cleaning up the seemingly innocuous debris in and around your business; fallen trees, building materials, personal property and sediment can present their own dangers.

- Avoid skin contact with contaminated surfaces.
- Don't walk through flowing water, and be cautious near standing water.
- Never drive through flooded areas.
- Stay away from power lines.
- Watch for displaced animals.
- Stay tuned to your local TV/radio stations or NOAA weather radio for information.
- Use alternate heat sources safely.

Recovering

Employee Needs

Payroll

Be sure that your Human Resources department has procedures and policies in place and keeps a backup of those documents for payroll. Consider creating a fund for employees and maintain a close working relationship with your banking institution, as it can provide helpful assistance to you following an emergency.

- How will the company pay staff if operations were affected by the disaster?
- Will staff wages and salaries continue to be paid if employees are unable to immediately return to work following a disaster?
- Will the business pay for personal time off to recover from a disaster?
- How soon should employees be required to return to work following an emergency?
- Will a program or relief fund be available to assist employees who are affected by a disaster?

Recovering

Time Off

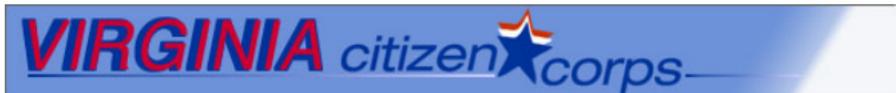
A disaster doesn't only affect your employees at their place of work; when they go home, they may face a personal disaster.

- Will you continue to pay employees salaries and wages during their time off?
- Will you provide a minimum or maximum amount of leave time?
- Will you allow employees time off to volunteer to help others in the community affected by the disaster?
- If employees do take time off to volunteer, will they continue to receive their salary or wage? Will they continue to accrue vacation or leave time?

Watch for Signs of Stress

Encourage employees to talk to counselors and contact your business' health care provider to find out what is available after a disaster.

For more tips and information on business preparedness and how to develop business recovery plans, please visit the Virginia Department of Emergency Management's Virginia Business Emergency Survival Toolkit.
www.vaemergency.com/business/index.cfm



Resources

Initial Recovery Resources

State Tax Commissioner	www.tax.virginia.gov/	(804) 367-8037
Virginia Disaster Recovery Task Force	www.dhcd.virginia.gov/ADMIN/ Va_Disaster_Recovery_Task_For ce.htm	
Disaster Unemployment Assistance	www.vec.virginia.gov/ vecportal/	(804) 786-1485
United States Small Business	www.sba.gov/disaster_recov/ index.html	(800) 659-2955
Virginia Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster	www.vavoad.com/	

Resources

Local Government

Virginia Community Hub Page www.vipnet.org/community/hub_page.htm

Local Government Web Sites www.vipnet.org/cmsportal/localgov_old.htm

State Government

Commonwealth of Virginia www.virginia.gov

Virginia Department of Business Assistance www.vdba.virginia.gov (804) 371-8200
(866) 248-8814

Virginia Department of Emergency Management www.vaemergency.com (804) 897-6510

Resources

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality	www.deq.state.va.us	(804) 698-4000
Virginia Department of Fire Programs	www.vdfp.state.va.us	(804) 371-3444
Virginia Department of Forestry	www.dof.virginia.gov	(434) 977-6555
Virginia Department of Health	www.vdh.virginia.gov	(804) 864-7026
Virginia Department of Labor and Industry	www.doli.virginia.gov	(804) 786-0139
Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy	www.mme.state.va.us	(804) 692-3200
Virginia State Police	www.vsp.state.va.us	(804) 674-4632

Resources

Federal Government

Center for Disease Control and Prevention	www.cdc.gov/niosh/ topics/prepared/	(800) 35-NIOSH (800) 356-4674
Citizen Corps	www.citizencorps.gov	
Department of Homeland Security	www.dhs.gov	(202) 282-8000
Federal Bureau of Investigation	www.fbi.gov	(202) 324-3000
Federal Emergency Management Agency	www.fema.gov	(800) 621-FEMA (800) 621-3362

Resources

National Weather Service	www.weather.gov	
Occupational Safety and Health Administration	www.osha.gov	(800) 321-OSHA (800) 321-6742
Ready Business	www.ready.gov/business/index.html	(202) 282-8010
Small Business Administration Disaster Recovery	www.sba.gov/disaster_recov/index.html	(800) 659-2955

Virginia Crime Reporting Hotlines

Auto Theft: 800-947-HEAT (800-947-4328)	Insurance Fraud: 877-62FRAUD (877-623-7283)
Drugs: 800-553-DOPE (800-553-3673)	Terrorism: 877-4VA-TIPS (877-482-2477)

Acknowledgments

Thanks to the following resources who helped establish the Virginia Business Survival Tool Kit Pocket Guide:

American Red Cross (www.redcross.org/services/disaster/0,1082,0_501_,00.html)

National Weather Service Wakefield Office (www.erh.noaa.gov/er/akq/)

Virginia Crime Prevention Association (www.vcpa.org/)

Virginia Department of Emergency Management
(www.vaemergency.com/business/index.cfm)

Virginia Department of Fire Programs (www.vdfp.state.va.us)

Virginia Dominion Power (<https://www.dom.com/customer/efficiency/bus/easysavers.jsp>)



For more information about this publication,
call (866) 782-3470 (toll free) or
e-mail VDEM at pio@vdem.virginia.gov.