



Emergency Preparedness Checklist for Floods and Flash Floods

Floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters. Most communities in the United States will experience some degree of flooding after spring rains, heavy thunderstorms, or winter snow thaws. Most floods develop slowly over a period of days. However, flash floods develop rapidly and are generally caused by intense storms, dam failures, etc.

Your business should have a written Emergency Action Plan which includes responding to floods and flash floods. The following checklist, based in part from flood preparedness checklists provided by the U.S. Small Business Administration, provides key considerations related to flood emergencies.

Terminology

Understanding the terms used in forecasting floods is critical to responding to these emergencies. All employees should be well versed in the following terms:

Flood Watch: Flooding is possible. Tune into National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for information.

Flash Flood Watch: Flash flooding is possible. Be prepared to move to higher ground; listen to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for information.

Flood Warning: Flooding is occurring or will occur soon; if advised to evacuate, do so immediately.

Flash Flood Warning: A flash flood is occurring; seek higher ground on foot immediately.

Before the Flood	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review the facility Emergency Action Plan with team and key employees; ensure that it addresses floods.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Perform a site assessment to address securing chemicals, fuel tanks, etc. from floodwaters, floating, and impact from flood-borne debris.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Postpone any receipt of goods, deliveries, couriers, etc. when a flood watch/warning has been issued.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure you have an emergency communication plan in place prior to the storm, evacuation, or threat.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish emergency communication methods, such as using an alert notification system, phone tree, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify a meeting place and time for all key employees in the Crisis Management Team.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Create voicemail for when evacuated, or out of office, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Update disaster recovery kits and begin crisis back-up procedures.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintain accurate inventory of assets and products, inventory, etc. on site.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify flood prevention resources, such as sandbags and drain plugs, that can be used to prevent flood water from entering the property.

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<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure you have an emergency communication plan in place prior to the storm, evacuation, or threat.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have all employees, vendors, and client contact information available remote from the premises.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop records retention and back-up programs to ensure vital business records and computer data are not lost during a storm.
During the Flood	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stay tuned to local media & community messaging and evacuate as directed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Life safety is paramount: ensure that employees evacuate promptly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Activate the mitigation portion of your business continuity plan.
<input type="checkbox"/>	During evacuation, have a central point of contact for all employees and ensure you know where your employees are located.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Raise elevators to the second floor and turn off controls and power to system.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Take cell phones, chargers, critical hardware, and emergency kits to offsite refuge areas.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Unplug electrical items and/or shut down facility power, if possible, before evacuating the premises.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider redirecting your business phones to cell phones to ensure continued service.
After the Flood	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Listen for news reports to learn whether the community's water supply is safe to drink.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoid floodwaters; water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, raw sewage, etc. Water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded; roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clean and disinfect everything that got wet; mud left from floodwater can contain sewage and chemicals.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Implement business continuity plan, and monitor local authorities' communication.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact employees via predetermined method of communications to advise them of next steps.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Conduct a damage assessment as soon as possible and contact your insurance agent.

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