

Severe Weather Emergency Response Plan Best Practices

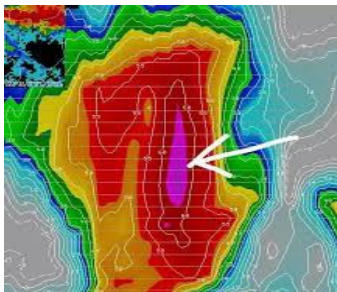
Texas weather has shown it has the potential to cause quite a bit of property damage, quickly. Hail is a storm component that has the ability to do that in a very short amount of time. To make matters worse, it is usually accompanied with high winds and/or tornadoes. Hail has also been responsible for most storm damage claims over the last five years for the Fund. For this reason, it is important for our members to either 1) develop a severe weather emergency response plan or 2) add a severe weather section to an existing emergency response plan.

Emergency response plans give members a detailed plan prior to a critical weather event. An effective response plan can greatly reduce damage to property and the impact of business disruption. They provide the advantage of knowing what to do when the weather event happens and ensuring the necessary materials are readily available.

Before developing a plan, identify equipment, vehicles, and processes located in low lying, flood prone areas. Relocating this equipment and/or processes to higher ground can have a significant impact in controlling the losses related to the weather event.

Steps in the emergency action plan take time to be activated and completed. By taking the time to understand the potential storm damage, you can make good use of the weather services' identified storm path and warning areas. Studies have shown that facilities with well-organized emergency response plans have nearly 70 percent less damage and resume operations sooner than those without an emergency response plan.

The key, however, does not lie just in the fact of having an emergency response plan. You must take the time to develop it and work out the deficiencies prior to the next weather event. This is accomplished with review and evaluation both annually and after a major weather event. It is imperative to identify what went right but also what went wrong and what adjustments can be made to improve those deficiencies.



Severe Weather Emergency Response Plan Best Practices

- Identify a response team
- Identify a response team leader
 - Will activate the response plan

- Will assign an individual to track the storm and its severity
- Secure/protect equipment on roof
 - Guy lines secured to rooftop AC units
 - Remove antenna(s) or secure in place
 - Clear drains and scuppers of debris to allow water to flow through the drain and away from the building
 - Add secured padding to vulnerable roof areas



- Secure/protect the fleet
 - Move vehicles inside the maintenance shop
 - Move vehicles under covered parking
 - Move vehicles to a parking garage
 - Cover vehicles with a padded vehicle cover
 - Padding underneath the vehicle cover will absorb the impact of the hail stones
 - Cardboard, blankets, bedding, egg crates (mattress topper)
 - Be sure to cover the windows as well
 - Secure heavy equipment in the field
 - Cover windows with removable panels

Major storm events bring uncertainty and damage. With a plan, we can reduce both and quickly recover after the storm is over. The written emergency response plans are a great tool to communicate the procedures necessary for preparation. The TCRMF Loss Control staff is available for consultation to develop a plan for your facilities. Severe storms are possible almost any time of the year, so it is imperative to have a plan before it is too late.