

COASTAL STORMS IS YOUR LIFE SCIENCE OPERATION PREPARED?

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has once again predicted an above average hurricane season for the Gulf Coast and Atlantic seaboard.

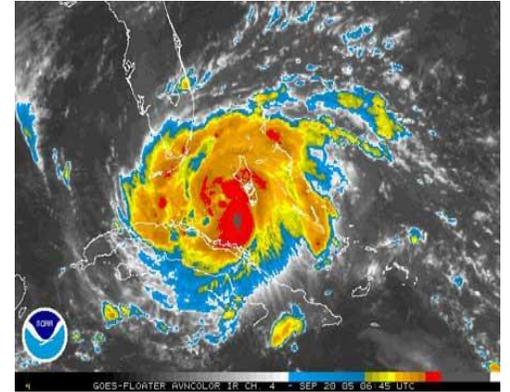
[National Hurricane Center](#)

Who is Responsible for What?

How to Prepare for a Storm Event

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM

- Identify locations – including yours, customers' and key suppliers' – that are exposed and therefore susceptible to hurricane and coastal wind storm damage. Review the implications of a storm related interruption at any of these locations.
- Review severe weather monitoring practices to ensure that you have the maximum advanced notice possible of in-bound events and that efficient internal decision making procedures are in place.
- Develop a written storm/hurricane contingency plan. The plan should focus first on the protection of employees and second on the protection of company infrastructure and valuable stored property. Some companies may choose to incorporate this into their overall business continuity plan.
- Create a coastal storm Emergency Response Team (ERT) that includes key employees. Assign a head of the team who has authority to make decisions ahead of, during, and following storm events.
- Coordinate ahead of time with local emergency management officials and utility companies and detail critical site needs related to sensitive or perishable property and research materials.
- If deemed necessary and safe to do so, have critical employees on site to monitor the facility and mechanicals. When employees are on site during storm events, implement a shelter-in-place plan to ensure their safety and needs for an extended duration. Communicate with local first responders that employees are remaining at the site during the storm event and never ignore mandatory evacuation requirements from civil authorities.
- Protect vital records: e.g., device master files, product design, quality and regulatory release/ validation records. Also protect accounts receivable, human resources and tax documents as well as insurance policies.
- Confirm that IT has implemented business continuity procedures and critical data is duplicated off-site.
- Have a crisis communication plan in place to be able to reach employees by phone, email, text message, social media channels, etc. Test the plan ahead of time.
- Before the storm event ensure that all employees are aware of business continuity procedures. Employees who have laptops or documents that will be needed following the storm should be instructed to take them off-site to facilitate remote continuity during extended utility outages or gas shortages.



Tropical storms and hurricanes are forces of nature that threaten all types of businesses, including life science companies. All firms can take steps to protect their infrastructure to ensure business continuity. Life science firms, however, also have unique property preservation concerns not shared by most other businesses. These include the need to preserve not only property specifically oriented to producing life science products as well as biological samples, research materials, sterile environments, etc. Being prepared is more than half the battle in the campaign to manage these risks. Here, Berkley Life Sciences offers suggestions on how life science firms can enhance their readiness to weather the ravages of tropical storms and hurricanes.

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FINANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- Develop a methodology to track storm related payments and associated expenses.
- Review insurance policies before the storm. Some coverage may provide expense dollars to protect or relocate critical property ahead of a storm event. In addition Berkley Life Sciences may be able to direct you to suitable vendors to assist with storm recovery.
- Negotiate pre-event contracts with local contractors to manage costs and lower production loss.

PRODUCTION/DEVELOPMENT/DISTRIBUTION

- Identify property susceptible to damage from water, contamination or loss of utilities – whether temporary or extended.
- Determine ahead of time whether you need to relocate critically sensitive property and research such as cell banks, scientific property, cultures or specimens away from the storm path, and have a contingency relocation plan ready to go if needed.
- Consider temporarily increasing raw materials or finished product inventory at a safe location to assist with the management of an unexpected interruption of an internal process, or a supplier interruption.
- Take proactive steps to protect critical property and machinery from water and other contaminants. Property that is susceptible to contamination should be stored in sealed containment where possible. Other property may be protected by plastic sheeting or raised above floor surfaces.
- When practical ship finished stock ahead of the storm.

FACILITIES / PHYSICAL PLANT ENGINEERING

- Decide in advance of a storm how you will protect equipment and plant operations.
- Inspect and test all mechanical and back-up systems. Ensure that all emergency generators, fire pumps and waste pumps have adequate fuel and battery charge, and have had routine maintenance such as air and fuel filter replacement.
- Turn off or isolate non-essential electrical and mechanical systems to minimize the exposure to surge or fire damage during the storm.
- Ensure that arrangements are made in advance of a storm to receive generator fuel deliveries following the storm in case an extended loss of electrical utility occurs.
- Inspect the roof. Ensure all drains and scuppers are free of debris. Make sure ballast stone is properly dispersed and that flashing is secured.
- Remove all un-secured equipment or material from the exterior of the building and ensure that all door and window seals are properly maintained.

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