



# Hurricanes come every year. Are you prepared?

When a hurricane unleashes its tremendous force, it can cause terrible destruction from massive flooding and intense, erratic winds. Although you may have warning that a hurricane is on the horizon, it's impossible to predict the actual path it will take or the amount of damage that will ensue. You can't stop a hurricane from affecting your business, but you can mitigate damage and help keep people safe by communicating clearly when one happens. That's where notification can help.

Here are ten things you can do to prepare for the inevitable disruptions caused by violent storms:

- 1 Regularly review your business continuity/disaster recovery plan** – Companies grow, staff gets promoted, responsibilities shift and equipment is upgraded frequently. When changes like this take place, your BC/DR plan must change too. Schedule regular reviews to ensure your plan evolves with your company and you're prepared when a hurricane strikes.
- 2 Develop clear channels of communication** – Even in the midst of a violent storm you'll need clear and effective channels of communication to quickly assess damage and coordinate recovery. Use your notification system to alert colleagues, vendors, partners and customers who may be outside the hurricane's path, but will still be impacted by your business interruption.
- 3 Gather the right contact data** – Your notification system is only as powerful as your contact database allows. Include email addresses, work phone, home phone, cell phone, pager, home address, fax number, etc., along with the person's title, position, primary location, level of authority, department and duty shifts.
- 4 Keep your contact data up to date** – As well as being complete, your contact data must be current. Develop incentives to persuade all personnel to keep their contact information up to date. A clean and current database is key to accurate and efficient notification, especially in the worst weather scenario.
- 5 Create escalation plans** – Crises like hurricanes need immediate response and direction from decision-makers; notification will help implement your escalation process. When delays are inevitable because of severe weather, notification can help you meet SLAs (service level agreements) by escalating customer service issues until all concerns are addressed and resolved.

- 6 **Pull your team together** – Use your notification system’s conference bridge feature to invite recipients to join a call with one touch on their keypad, creating a virtual conference room in minutes. Bringing key personnel together will help you make critical decisions quickly and gain agreement on how to handle a situation.
- 7 **Educate your staff** – Train your personnel on how to use your notification system in the event of a hurricane so they can send alerts if needed and they’ll understand how to monitor the entire alert process. Studies show that companies who educate their employees correctly before an event happens get better, more meaningful response and reaction rates.
- 8 **Test your plan and systems** – Test your alert system regularly and address any glitches quickly. Many companies test as often as twice a month to make sure that staff is familiar with the system and that contact data is current—both essential when a hurricane develops.
- 9 **Establish a post-event follow-up plan** – A hurricane can continue to take a toll even after the sky has cleared, so your business continuity plan should outline procedures not only for recovery, but also for follow-up. A final message once a situation is resolved will help refocus your staff on productivity.
- 10 **Review, evaluate and adapt** – Once your plan has been tested by a hurricane, send a notification that elicits comments from staff to find out what worked and what didn’t. This will not only garner useful planning tips for the next weather event, but will let your employees know that you value their observations.

Use your notification system wisely to keep your business on track and your customers, vendors and employees informed, no matter what the weather. Learn more about how you can keep your business safe during hurricane season with the help of notification at [www.mir3.com](http://www.mir3.com).

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