

## **Region 2 Individual Preparedness Activities**

### **Scenario 12: Small Business Preparedness**

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A key element to successfully responding to and recovering from a major disaster is the overall preparedness of individual citizens and their families. With that in mind, we invite you to participate in a series of ‘What would you do?’ scenarios with your loved ones to assess your level of preparedness. These tabletop activities are intended to be low-stress conversation starters to be discussed, as the name implies, around your dinner table. We do not want to know your results. Following the situation, we have included some discussion questions for the activity, as well as some helpful links to enhance your individual preparedness.

**Scenario:** The nightly news is abuzz with predictions of another “Storm of the Century” bearing down on the East Coast. As usual, the National Hurricane Center’s “Cone of Uncertainty” shows impacts could be anywhere from Virginia to Massachusetts. Having experienced Superstorm Sandy, or at least heard the horror stories, you are taking these warnings very seriously. After making sure your family is prepared, you think about your business. How certain are you that you are doing everything you can to better prepare your business and livelihood to survive a disaster?

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What services or activities are essential to your business operations? Think about maintaining frozen food storage for restaurants, processing payments, etc.
2. What records would be critical for you to access after a disaster, so you could return to ‘business as usual’ as quickly as possible? Think about payroll, insurance documents, purchasing records, etc. Do you have back-up or electronic copies of these? Could other employees access them if you weren’t available?
3. What methods do you use for communicating with your employees, vendors and customers? How often are your contact lists updated?
4. What advice do you provide your employees to help them prepare for disasters?
5. What supplies have you placed in your business’ Disaster Preparedness Kit?
6. Do you understand the differences between the following terms? **Tropical Storm Watch/Warning, Hurricane Watch/Warning, Coastal Flood Advisory/Watch/Warning, Flood Watch/Warning**
7. What steps can you take to mitigate or prepare your business to withstand disasters?
8. Do any of your employees or customers have any special needs (such as medical, emotional or physical needs, or limited English proficiency) that might present challenges if you experienced a disaster during business hours? If so, have you prepared a special plan for them?
9. Do you know the difference between evacuation, sheltering, shelter-in-place, and lockdown?

#### **Time to see how you did!**

To learn more about this scenario and to check your plan, please visit: <https://www.ready.gov/business>. Discuss with your employees’ what steps you think you should take to improve your safety in the event a natural or man-made disaster occurs.

#### **Helpful Links:**

For the Small Business Administration’s guidance for business preparedness, please visit: <https://www.sba.gov/managing-business/running-business/emergency-preparedness/emergency-preparedness>. To take the American Red Cross self-assessment of your organization’s preparedness, please visit: <http://www.readyrating.org/>. For more information on National Weather Service warning terminology, please visit: <http://www.weather.gov/lwx/WarningsDefined>.