



ACCESSING SAFETY KNOWLEDGE (ASK) SHEET: *HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS*

A Builder's Responsibility

During severe weather, you are responsible for securing your job sites for the protection of your employees, the public, property, as well as yourself. Materials such as plywood, loose debris, and scraps of 2 x 4s become missiles capable of impaling buildings, brick walls, or anything in its way. Construction debris can cause severe damage to property and cost lives. Any failure to take the necessary measures may result in lawsuits, fines, loss of license, or other actions permitted by state laws or local ordinances.

Create a Natural Disaster Plan

A good business plan usually covers different kinds of events, such as recessions and high demand, but an excellent business plan should also include details for natural disaster preparation.

- Use a Hurricane Preparation Plan to assist with your hurricane preparation, and assure your job sites are protected as much as possible.
- Review your insurance coverage; be aware if you have contents coverage, replacement value, and loss of business coverage.
- Keep important telephone numbers with you.
- Develop a "telephone tree" with important members of your company and also develop a contingency plan to operate out of another site, if needed. Establish a contact point out of the area, so your employees and subs can keep in touch. Don't depend just on your cell phone; use the phone of a friend, relative or other builder friend outside your area for contact. Make sure your customers and suppliers know where to reach you.

Now that a Hurricane is Approaching

As a general rule, keep all jobsites clean, arrange for timely pick up of trash dumpsters, and only keep materials on the job site you actually will install at any given week. Keep construction equipment secure or remove them from the job site. Once you become aware of any impending hurricane, or a hurricane watch is issued, arrange to have dumpsters removed, and postpone any planned supply deliveries.

When a hurricane warning is issued, remove all dumpsters and scaffolding, and remove, or safely secure all building materials and equipment. Alert subs of their responsibilities to secure or remove their materials and equipment. Stop job processes that will likely become damaged by the hurricane. Finally, follow through with a quick inspection of your job sites.

Computers are now indispensable equipment for many builders, so be sure to have a disaster plan for your computer equipment. Keep your computers in a safe location, with surge-protection, and if you deem important, an uninterruptible power supply. To avoid delays due to closed or inaccessible office supply stores, have extra supplies of ink cartridges, paper, and computer disks. Keep important office supplies stored in a secure location, possibly offsite if needed. When a hurricane warning is issued, back-up all important computer files, and keep the back-up tapes or disks in a secure location.

See the OSHA website for more details on [hurricane preparedness](https://www.osha.gov/dts/weather/hurricane/preparedness.html).

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Provided by the ASA – Houston Chapter Safety Committee – May 2015

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