



NEW YORK CITY

Office of Emergency Management

## NYContinuity

Emergency Management Newsletter for Businesses

NYC OEM  
July 2009

Welcome to the fourth issue of the **NYContinuity** newsletter, a monthly publication to help you prepare for emergencies, strengthen your continuity plans, update you on emergency management news, and inform you about events and resources available to businesses in New York City.

This month's newsletter focuses on your organization's most important asset--your employees. The issue includes suggestions on how to prepare your staff, such as talking to them about your continuity plans and helping them prepare themselves and their families. The Ready New York program and the new Ready New York DVD--both good tools to help you educate your staff about emergency preparedness--occupy the Guest Spotlight.

This issue also debuts a new feature to remind you how preparing can help: a case study from a business that survived a hurricane. Use the case study to think critically about your plans. How would you have responded?

**NYContinuity** is a newsletter for small business owners and continuity professionals brought to you by the New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM).

### Continuity Feature: Talk to Your People



Even the best continuity plan will fail if your staff doesn't know what is expected of them. Talk through your plan with your employees and practice what you intend to do during and after an emergency. Revise your plans based on lessons learned.

Know how you will get in touch with your staff in an emergency. Put together a calling tree, or set up a number for your employees to call to leave an "I'm okay" message in case of a citywide disaster. This will help you both keep in touch about whether your staff should come to work and determine who is available to assist with recovery activities.

#### Prepare Your Staff

During a major incident, your employees' first concern will likely be for their loved ones. Support your employees by encouraging them to develop plans with their families. If individuals are prepared at home, they will have more time to assist with your business's recovery after a disaster. A prepared staff is a present staff.

Help your employees learn how to prepare: visit [www.nyc.gov/readyny](http://www.nyc.gov/readyny).

### Guest Spotlight: Ready New York



Ready New York is the City's educational campaign to encourage New York City residents to prepare for emergencies. Ready New York takes an all-hazards approach to preparing based on three guiding principles: knowing the hazards in New York City, making a household disaster plan, and stocking emergency supplies.

The Ready New York program has several tools that can help you prepare your staff and their families:

[Request a Ready New York preparedness presentation for your employees](#)

[Request Ready New York guides for your staff](#)

[Download Ready New York guides](#)

#### Make the Ready New York DVD Part of Your Orientation Program!

To prepare more New Yorkers, OEM, in partnership with NYC TV, has created *Are You Ready New York?*, an 11-minute instructional video that explains basic strategies to help individuals and their families get through real-life emergencies in New York City.

By making this video part of your orientation program, not only will you show your new employees that you are concerned for their well-being, but your organization itself will be better prepared.

*Are You Ready New York?* is available for download on OEM's website, [www.nyc.gov/readyny](http://www.nyc.gov/readyny). It can also be found by searching for "Ready New York" on YouTube, Vimeo, and Blip TV, or you can call 311 to request a copy.

### Become a Fan of OEM on Facebook and Twitter!



On June 16, Facebook's Chief Privacy Officer Christopher Kelly became a fan of OEM on Facebook while Commissioner Joseph Bruno looked on.

Can't get enough emergency management news? Become a fan of OEM on Facebook and follow OEM on Twitter for the latest on NYC OEM.

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### Case Study: What Would You Do? A Galveston Business Beats the Storm



**Hurricane Ike slammed into Galveston with windspeeds over 110 miles per hour in September 2008. Hundreds of small businesses were affected.**

One such business was an industrial supplier that distributed metals to many of the oil refineries and heavier industries, including utilities, on the Gulf Coast.

The business was prepared for the storm, with emergency supplies on hand--food, ice, backup generators--and pumps set to remove water in case its facility flooded. But, according to the owner, Ike was a "100-year storm" that completely exceeded any contingency plans he had made. The pumps were overwhelmed, and everything was underwater.

"You can't [just] have a plan; you have to have two plans," said the business owner, and he had made his second plan.

The day after the hurricane, a sister company in San Antonio began sending in supplies and equipment to help the Galveston business recover and resume its operations. With this help, and thanks to planning done before the storm, the supplier was able to begin shipments to customers within three days after Hurricane Ike devastated Galveston.

"Anticipate what you will need"--figure out what equipment and assistance it will take to get critical operations back up and running, and make arrangements in advance to secure this aid should anything happen, recommends the business owner.

Several months after the storm, more than a third of Galveston's population still had not returned. As a result, many businesses were missing employees. Since the short-staffed businesses had not re-opened, residents hesitated to return to their neighborhoods without jobs and necessary services, setting off a vicious cycle. You can avoid this by talking to your staff about preparedness, or, if possible, by forming a telecommuting plan so that your employees can work from off-site.

**Think it can't happen here? According to *The Weather Channel*, New York City is the third most vulnerable city to a hurricane in the US, after New Orleans and Miami.**

Read OEM's [Hurricane Guide](#) or [Ready New York For Business](#) to find out how you can prepare.

If you have any topics or themes that you would like to see covered or any suggestions for how we may improve this newsletter, please send an e-mail to [publicprivate@oem.nyc.gov](mailto:publicprivate@oem.nyc.gov).

Sincerely,  
The **NYContinuity** Team

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