

Take Preemptive Measures BEFORE the Disaster Strikes

The most important factors in how you recover from a disaster takes place long before it ever happens. Proper preparations BEFORE will cut down the time you spend recovering AFTER the disaster, and can even be what makes your pharmacy survive. Below are some tips on how you can prepare your pharmacy and employees before to handle a disaster.

Know your building

Where is your

- Electrical transformer?
- Electrical panel?
- Water main shut-off valve?
- Sprinkler system shut-off valve?

Is there a Hazardous Material Survey available?

- Asbestos-containing material, lead, records for remediation

Have a simple plan in place

Make an action plan and have all employees sign off that they understand their role. Have the plan available online or send it out by email so everyone has access to it if a disaster has incapacitated your pharmacy.

Use the following questions to start a dialogue and outline a plan:

- **Who is in charge?** One person should be designated as the main point of contact, along with a second-in-command.
- **Who is responsible** for communication with the insurance company?
- **Who will dispatch** the disaster recovery company?
- **What will the chain of command** be within your organization, post-disaster?
- **Who reports to work?** Create a tier system, with Tier 1 being critical employees such as store manager, head pharmacist, etc.
- **How will you communicate** with employees during the catastrophe?
- **What vendors** will you call in the middle of the night? How will you get in contact with them? Who will be in charge of this task?
- **Who will contact your suppliers** to redirect or cancel shipments of product? It will be important to avoid deliveries in the middle of a disaster, when you may not be ready or able to accept them.
- **Establish a relationship** with the local municipality, fire department, etc.
- **Does your property** have a fire-proof safe? The safe should contain spare keys, access cards, and other items required in an emergency.
- **How will you handle media?** Who is allowed to communicate with the media?
- **How will you communicate** with customers? Who will be in charge of this task? Do

you have a list off-site if your data in the store is destroyed?

- **Can your business be relocated** nearby? What would you need to do this? Talk to neighboring businesses and commercial property owners ahead of time for potential temporary space. Having a plan in place to limit business interruption will help prevent loss of your customer base.
- **Do you have "before" pictures** of your facility? Pictures are some of the best documentation to show what the facility looked like before a disaster. They also will help you recall information later during the claims process. Take time to document your facility with pictures, and store them off-site.
- **Maintain inventory lists**. You should have a list of your inventory for the insurance company. You will need not only product inventory, but a list of all contents in the store such as furniture, fixtures, equipment, computers, etc. This is another reason "before" pictures are helpful.
- **Know where your building plans/blueprints** are. If you have these available, make sure you store a copy off-site, and/or have an electronic version made. These are extremely helpful in speeding up the recovery process.

Source: Cardinal Health Security Literature, Retail Crime, Security, and Loss Prevention: An Encyclopedic Reference, by Charles A. Sennewald and John H. Christman, copyright 2008, published by Elsevier

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