

Keeping Your Workers Safe During Severe Weather



When severe weather hits, the safety of your employees becomes top priority. To do this, you must teach everyone what to do before (preparedness) and after (response) a catastrophic event happens.

Not only could this help in controlling injuries to workers, this could also reduce the amount of damage to your business. While this may sound like an extremely hard task, both The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) have resources available to help you. Take a look at some of the recommendations below that these two groups offer for severe weather.

Preparedness – Before Severe Weather Hits

Have an evacuation plan in place before weather hits to avoid confusion. According to the CDC, a thorough evacuation plan should include:

- The conditions that will activate the plan
- A chain of command
- The needed emergency functions and who will perform them
- The specific evacuation procedures, including routes and exits
- The accounting procedures for personnel, customers and visitors
- Equipment for personnel

This plan must be reviewed with workers so that its execution can take place with little to no confusion. If you need additional planning resources to make your plan, additional resources for severe weather prep from OSHA and the CDC can be found here:

- OSHA's [Evacuation Plans and Procedures eTool](#)
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) [Evacuation Plan Guide](#)

Response – After Severe Weather Has Passed

Your workers may be involved in the response and recovery operations. But they need to know what areas of cleanup fall within their realm and which need to be left to professionals.

For instance, it may be ok to go remove some light debris, but they shouldn't try to repair a busted gas line or clean up spilled chemicals. Only workers who are properly trained, equipped and experienced in some operations, such as utility restoration, cleaning up spills of hazardous materials, demolition and search and rescue should be conducting such work.

Again, OSHA and the CDC have some general guidelines that show you what your employees can and can't touch

- OSHA's [Cleanup and Recovery](#) resources
- OSHA's [Hazard Specific Worker Safety](#)

If any of your workers ever want to get trained on how to provide skilled support services like the ones listed above, check out [OSHA's Disaster Site Worker Outreach Training Program](#).

Always Be Ready

The best way to prepare for something is to plan, train and practice. Make sure that your employees know what their roles include both before and after severe weather. If still feel like you need help with making a plan for your workers contact the State Auto Risk Engineering Department at AskRiskEngineering@StateAuto.com

Corporate Headquarters
518 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215

800-444-9950 ext. 4837
614-464-5000

AskRiskEngineering@StateAuto.com
StateAuto.com

This publication is designed to provide general information regarding the subject matter covered, and is not an insurance policy. State Auto makes no representations or guarantees as to the correctness or sufficiency of any information contained herein, nor guarantees results based upon use of this information. State Auto does not warrant that reliance upon this document will prevent accident or losses, or satisfy federal, state or local codes, ordinances and regulations.