

# do **1** thing/BUSINESS

SMALL STEPS TOWARD PREPARING YOUR BUSINESS FOR EMERGENCIES

## Step 9: Personal Preparedness



**THE GOAL:** Increase the resiliency of your business by encouraging personal preparedness for your employees their families.

*Making sure employees and their families are prepared can keep them safe when disaster strikes. Employees who feel that their families are protected will be more likely to come to work during and immediately after an event. When an employee's house and belongings survive a disaster, they are more likely to stay in the community afterwards.*

»» CHOOSE ONE OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH TO PREPARE YOUR BUSINESS FOR A POTENTIAL EMERGENCY:

- ☐ **Encourage your employees and their families to participate in Do 1 Thing's personal preparedness program ([www.do1thing.com](http://www.do1thing.com)).**
- ☐ **If you have employees or regular customers with disabilities, take steps to ensure that they will be safe and informed in an emergency.**
- ☐ **Train your employees to be ready for emergencies at work.**

Your business is your livelihood. You are the only one that can ensure that it can survive a disaster. Protecting it and yourself will give you peace of mind.

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**❑ Encourage your employees and their families to participate in Do 1 Thing's personal preparedness program ([www.do1thing.com](http://www.do1thing.com)).**

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Encourage team members to participate in the regular Do1Thing Program. Get employees involved at work through contests, seminars, newsletters, sharing best practices and plans with each other, etc.

It is important to remember to take care of not only your business, but yourself, and your family at home. Small business owners may experience "360-degree disasters". When disaster affects your home but you can go to work and feel "normal", or vice versa, disaster is likely to have less of an emotional impact. For small business owners, personal investment in the business is often so high that the impact of disaster can be devastating.

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**☐ If you have employees or regular customers with disabilities, take steps to ensure that they will be safe and informed in an emergency.**

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Identify places where those with disabilities could take shelter. Make sure that the route to the shelter locations are wheelchair accessible, and that they are clearly marked.

Think about investing in equipment that can help evacuate people with disabilities when needed. Special items like stair chairs, warning strobe lights, and braille markers to identify routes for the visually impaired, are all ways you can minimize impact on anyone who has a disability.

Make sure to designate a few employees to assist with special needs evacuations, and train them in the use of any special equipment. Many resources are available to assist you with creating safe accessible evacuation routes and creating clear signs that will help those who need it evacuate. Understanding the needs of people with disabilities will assist you in making your business inclusive and accessible.

#### **Resources:**

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- The National Organization on Disability: <http://www.nod.org/>
- The ADA: <http://www.ada.gov/>
- The US Department of Labor (Preparing the Workplace for Everyone): <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/ep/preparing2.htm>

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## ☐ **Train your employees to be ready for emergencies at work.**

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There are many types of emergency training available. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. In many communities, CERT training is available free.

The American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, and many other community organizations offer emergency training. Consider CPR, or purchasing and training employees on an AED (automated external defibrillator). Check with your insurance agent to see if offering safety training could lower your insurance rates.

Having employees that are equipped to deal with emergencies will make your business more disaster-resilient, and it could save a life.

### **»» Resources:**

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- CERT Training: <http://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams>
- Red Cross Training: <http://redcross.org/what-we-do/training-education>
- American Heart Association: <http://www.heart.org>

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*Information in this factsheet was adapted from: Surviving Extreme Events: A Guide to Help Small Businesses and Not-for-Profit Organizations Prepare for and Recover from Extreme Events by Daniel J. Alesch and James N. Holly. Available through the Public Entity Risk Institute at <http://www.riskinstitute.org>.*

**do1thing.com/business**