



Tips On Surviving A Natural Disaster

(NAPSA)—Failing to prepare for a natural disaster is not an option for businesses. That's because 75 percent of companies without business continuity plans fail within three years of a disaster.

So says Andrew Sachs, Vice President at Witt O'Brien's—a global leader in preparedness, crisis management and disaster response and recovery.

Sachs contends that if recent patterns continue, the U.S. is likely to experience anywhere from three to six major hurricanes a year and up to 1,000 tornadoes. Trends such as these, he thinks, make a disaster plan a necessity.

He also believes that companies that aren't able to resume operations within 10 days of a disaster are not likely to survive. According to data collected by his company, of those businesses that experience a disaster and have no emergency plan, 43 percent never reopen; of those that do reopen, only 29 percent are still operating two years later.

Expert Tips

To help, Sachs offers the following tips:

- A business should start by looking at its business continuity plan, and if it doesn't have one, it should start one now. Its objective should be to organize, develop and administer a preparedness program.

- The first step should be to gather information about the hazards and risks presented by a di-



Given current severe weather trends, experts believe that a disaster plan is a necessity if a business is to survive.

saster, which could be as simple as a fire or power outage.

- The business should then develop a preparedness plan that includes resource management, emergency response, crisis communication, business continuity, information technology, employee assistance, incident management and training.

- Once it has a plan, a company must test, exercise and evaluate the plan and identify what needs to be improved.

- Finally, a business should ensure that its employees are up to speed personally and encourage them to institute their own preparedness plan at home.

Employees who are prepared at their homes are employees who are able to come to work to get you back in business following a disaster.

To learn more, visit the website at www.wittobriens.com.