

Greetings,

09 November 2016

Welcome to the Weekly Newsletter of the Louisiana Business Emergency Operations Center (LABEOC).

This week we are initiating an experiment in collaborative preparedness within our LABEOC membership and among the businesses and non-profits across the state.

This week's newsletter contains the first in a series of "Top Ten" steps you can take to prepare for, respond to, and recover your business or organization from an emergency or disaster. Over the next four weeks, we will be providing segments of a consolidated document, the "LABEOC Risk Assessment Tool," that is posted as a pdf document on the LABEOC website. In the right-hand column is the "Top Ten," list for Business Preparedness, which can be copied and incorporated into your own business continuity plans or emergency guide. Over the next three weeks, we will provide the Response and Recovery "Top Ten" lists, along with a brief business risk assessment. We have compiled this information from a number of sources, and it represents the best thinking on business preparedness and continuity planning. A copy of the pdf checklist is also enclosed. I will provide an updated bibliography and references in a future newsletter.

We know that there are many more good ideas within our communities and businesses that should be shared as best practices—and in Louisiana's case—are often based on lessons learned gained from real experience.

So, in future newsletters, we will be focusing on one of the Top Ten steps and will ask for your ideas, experiences and best practices. The goal is to build a Louisiana Guide to Business Preparedness—based on local, real-world experience—that can be distributed via the LABEOC portal and member websites to help improve business continuity planning across the state's business community.

As always, thank you for your support of the LABEOC and your membership in the web portal. Please feel free to contact me and the NIMSAT staff with any ideas or suggestions on how to improve our operations and better serve the Louisiana business community (info@labeoc.org).

Lastly, also attached, you will find the latest copies of the FEMA Daily Fact Sheet and Recovery Advisory notices, courtesy of GOHSEP and the FEMA Joint Field Office.

All the best,

Michael Dunaway, PhD
Director, NIMSAT Institute

LABEOC "Top Ten" List for Business Preparedness, Response and Recovery. This week:

ACTIONS TO PREPARE YOUR BUSINESS FOR AN EMERGENCY and improve resilience to prevent losses that could affect immediate profitability or long-term liability.

1. Have a plan for contacting employees to verify their safety, inform them of an incident, and communicate guidance or immediate actions they should take.
2. Assist your employees in preparing for a disaster by providing information and training to protect their homes and families, so they can support you in protecting and restoring the business.
3. Identify the best route for emergency evacuation of employees, customers and visitors, to include a rendezvous point and a call-in cell phone number to account for all personnel after an evacuation.
4. Establish a schedule for regular drills and training of employees on procedures for emergency evacuation, on-site shelter in place, and emergency measures to be taken at the business or work site.
5. Maintain backup copies of important files, financial accounts and records, and update the records on a regular basis. Store the records at a location other than your business site.
6. Develop a written plan for the most common workplace emergencies such as personnel injury, small fire, bomb threat, or emergency evacuation and share the plan with your employees.
7. Develop a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) for maintaining business operations and recovering from large-scale incidents such as a major fire, tornado, hurricane or flooding.
8. Establish an alternate headquarters or base of operations to maintain business operations in the event that you have to evacuate your normal workplace for some period of time.
9. Designate a company preparedness manager or coordinator and provide that individual with an adequate level of training specific for your type of business and local conditions and environment.
10. Identify a partner company, local business group, or community organization and work together to develop common emergency procedures and a plan to maintain continuity of business operations.

