

LA BEOC



LOUISIANA BUSINESS EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

June 13, 2025

Protecting Your Most Valuable Resource This Hurricane Season

June 1st marked the beginning of a new hurricane season. The majority of national meteorologists and analysts are forecasting an above-average season, with heightened potential for tropical activity in the Gulf.

Over the years, we've discussed extensively how to prepare your physical infrastructure—boarding up, testing generators, securing supply chains. So rather than rehash those recommendations, let's focus on another critical aspect of business preparedness: your people.

It's not just a good business practice — it's the right thing to do — to ensure your employees have a well-formed plan for severe weather. Unless you're a one-person operation, your ability to reopen after the storm depends entirely on your team. Your recovery will be only as strong and timely as the preparedness of your workforce. So, what can you do now to help them, and by extension, your business, stay ready?

Here are some key considerations to guide employee-focused planning discussions:

How Will You Notify Your Employees?

- Have you identified a reliable and redundant communication system?
- Can you reach them by phone, text, email, or internal alerting platform?
- Do they know who to contact for updates before and after the storm?

Understand Their (Personal) Preparedness Plans

- Are they in a mandatory evacuation zone?
- Do they care for children, elderly relatives, or individuals with special needs?
- Do they have a designated evacuation location?
- Is their home structurally prepared for a storm?

These factors will influence when they leave, how long they're gone, and when they can realistically return.

Identify and Prepare Mission-Essential Personnel

- Have you clearly communicated who is expected to stay or return early?
- Is this role written into their job description or employment agreement?
- Have they made arrangements for their family and home, allowing them to focus on work responsibilities?

For businesses with ride-out teams or continuity roles, it's vital to support those employees logistically and emotionally.

Integrate Your People into Your Recovery Timeline

- Does your recovery plan account for the time employees may need to address personal or family issues post-storm?
- Have you considered staggered returns, remote work, or flexible leave during recovery?

Human-centered planning fosters resilience and loyalty, particularly when employees feel seen and supported during times of crisis.

Create a Culture of Preparedness

Encourage a culture where everyone discusses their plans, not just for their job, but also for their household. You could even host a preparedness workshop, share evacuation checklists, or partner with local emergency managers for training.

Final Thoughts

When your employees' plans are integrated into your business continuity plan, you create a more realistic and executable path forward. Storms will come. The real test is how well we are prepared to weather them, not just as organizations, but as communities of people who rely on one another.



James 'Jim' Williams, Public-Private
Partnership Operations Officer
NIMSAT Institute
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
james.williams@louisiana.edu
337.482.0633



Greetings from the NIMSAT Institute!

Summer Heat Safety in Louisiana: Stay Cool and Stay Safe

WOW! It's already getting hot in Louisiana. As you know, Louisiana summers are known for their intense heat and humidity, which can pose serious health risks if proper precautions aren't taken. With temperatures often soaring into the 90s and heat indexes even higher, residents and visitors alike need to understand the dangers of extreme heat.

Heat-related illnesses like heat exhaustion and heat stroke can develop quickly and become life-threatening if not addressed. Staying aware and prepared is the first step in keeping yourself and your loved ones safe.

Hydration is key during hot summer days.

Make it a habit to drink water throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty. Dehydration can occur quickly, especially during physical activity or prolonged exposure to the outdoors. Avoid beverages that contribute to dehydration, such as alcohol, caffeine, and sugary sodas. Keep a refillable water bottle with you and take regular sips throughout the day. Eating water-rich foods like fruits and vegetables can also help you stay hydrated.

Limiting outdoor activity during peak heat hours—usually between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.—can significantly reduce your risk of heat-related illness.

If you need to be outside, wear lightweight, light-colored clothing and a wide-brimmed hat to protect yourself from the sun's harmful rays. Apply sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher and take frequent breaks in shaded or air-conditioned areas. Children, older adults, and individuals with chronic health conditions should be especially cautious during extreme heat.

Never leave children, pets, or vulnerable individuals in parked vehicles, even for a short time.

The temperature inside a car can rise dangerously high in just minutes, creating a potentially fatal situation. Check in on neighbors, especially seniors and those who may not have access to air conditioning, to ensure they are staying cool and hydrated. Many communities in

Louisiana offer cooling centers or emergency shelters—know where these are located and use them if necessary.

Being #SummerReady means understanding your risk of extreme heat and taking steps now to prepare for it.

Tips from FEMA:

- [Learn the signs of heat-related illnesses and ways to respond](#) Learn the signs of heat-related illnesses and ways to respond
- Fans alone aren't enough in high heat + high humidity. Get inside an air-conditioned place or go to a public place like the library, museum, or shopping mall to beat the heat.
- NEVER leave children or pets alone in hot vehicles! Heat can rise in a car, up to 20 degrees, in just 10 minutes.
- During extreme heat, check on family, friends, and neighbors who do not have air conditioning and who spend much of their time alone.
- Approximately 40% of the unwanted heat buildup in our homes is attributed to windows. Use awnings or curtains to keep the heat out.
- Use your oven less during extreme heat advisories and warnings to prevent making your house hotter.

Finally, stay informed by monitoring local weather forecasts and heat advisories. Sign up for emergency alerts through your parish's emergency management system or download a reliable weather app.

When a heat advisory or excessive heat warning is issued, take it seriously and adjust your plans accordingly. By taking these precautions, you can help ensure that summer in Louisiana remains a season of fun, not one of preventable emergencies.

For more information on beating the heat, I encourage you to visit: <https://www.ready.gov/summer-ready>.

#SummerReady #Preparedness #HeatSafety #BeatTheHeat
#HeatstrokeKills

Stay cool, stay hydrated, and stay safe!

Shannon

Shannon Strother, PhD, Director
NIMSAT Institute
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
shannon.strother@louisiana.edu
337.482.0609

Latest News & Events

GOHSEP Academy



Kelly Feet, Training and Exercise Branch Manager with the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, presents a training session on 'Contingency Planning for Sporting Events' on June 10 & 11, 2025.

Did you know?

The GOHSEP Academy was established in 2024 in partnership with the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and the Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Association. It offers courses in Abdalla Hall through the **NIMSAT Institute**, a research center for emergency preparedness located on campus.

The courses cover a range of topics, facilitating refinement in processes critical to community efficiency and resilience. Please share these upcoming opportunities with the appropriate partners and stakeholders to maintain and build capabilities within your communities.

All courses will be available in the STEMS portal and are added monthly.

[Register on the GOHSEP STEMS Portal](#)

For any cancellations, please contact Trevis.Thompson@la.gov.

Jun 16 - 17, 2025	ICS-400	Advanced Incident Command System
Jun 17, 2025	Stop-the-Bleed	STOP-THE-BLEED
Jun 17 - 18, 2025	MGT-418	Training Identification and Preparedness Planning (RTIPP)
Jun 18, 2025	406 HM	PA 406 Hazard Mitigation
Jun 19, 2025	MCI	Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) Response and Management course
Jun 24, 2025	GP	PA Grants Portal
Jun 24 - 25, 2025	ICS-300	Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents
Jun 24 - 25, 2025	ICS-400	Advanced Incident Command System
Jun 24 - 25, 2025	UL Lafayette - PIO	UL Lafayette Public Information Officer
Jun 26, 2025	EOC 101	Emergency Operations Center Overview
Jul 8, 2025	UMR 2025 BM	GOHSEP UMR - Branch Manager Training
Jul 8, 2025	UMR 2025 L/T	GOHSEP UMR - Loggers/Taskers Training
Jul 8 - 9, 2025	ICS-300	Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents
Jul 8, 2025; Jul 9, 2025	UL-Lafayette PA/Closeout	Public Assistance from Assessment to Closeout
Jul 9, 2025	UMR 2025 LNO	GOHSEP UMR - LNO Training
Jul 9, 2025	UMR 2025 LSA	GOHSEP UMR - LSA Training

**Take the LABEOC
Business Risk
Assessment**

The assessment provides a concise, best-practices approach to assessing the preparedness of your business or organization for an emergency or disaster, and serves as a checklist for critical actions to take for response and recovery from a crisis



**View the Ready
Business Hurricane
Toolkit**

The Ready Business Hurricane Toolkit helps leaders take action to protect employees, customers, and business continuity.

Latest News

Helpful Links



Follow us for the latest news!

The LABEOC is managed by the [National Incident Management Systems and Advanced Technologies Institute](#) at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, in partnership with the [Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness](#) and [Louisiana Economic Development](#).