



## **Basic Wind & Winter Storm Emergency Preparedness**

This FREE emergency preparedness ebook was prepared for residents and businesses of Pierce County. You may share it with friends and keep a copy (printed out) where you can find it when you need it. It is provided by:

**APEX Tree Experts**  
**Tree Removal & Tree Services**  
**(253) 227-9775 - [www.apextreeexperts.com](http://www.apextreeexperts.com)**



## Basic Emergency Preparedness

Winter storms can cause utility disruptions as well as blocked roadways. Most electrical problems in the past have only been on a local basis and generally only last a few hours, however if storms become more powerful and more frequent we should be prepared for emergencies lasting several days. If disaster hits, it might be safer to remain home, which will give you a home base of operation, while you restore order on your own property and your neighborhood if needed.



Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes so it is important to plan in advance: how you will get to a safe place; how you will contact one another; how you will get back together; and what you will do in different situations.

### **What you can do before hand:**

#### **Residential**

Don't park under trees

Have dangerous trees removed

Have extra cell phone batteries

Keep cell phone batteries charged

Keep a supply of batteries for flashlights and other battery operated lighting devices

Purchase a hand-crank radio

Keep a stock of canned foods AND a portable can opener

Have bottled water on hand

Have plastic tarps  
Have a complete medical supply kit ready  
Maintain supplies of toilet paper, paper towels, handiwipes, disinfectants.  
Shovels, snow shovel, hammers, and hatchets to repair damage and clear fallen trees and debris  
Books and games for entertainment  
Make sure your automatic garage door opener will work mechanically or by battery  
Fire extinguishers



Businesses can be very vulnerable during disasters. Businesses have more planning and considerations to make than residential preparations do. Businesses generally only operate nine to five and rarely 24/7.

Who and how will communication be made to secure and protect the

property?

**Businesses:**

Extra Fire extinguishers  
Access information (security panels, passwords, keys)  
Security precautions  
Tarps and rolls of plastic to secure broken windows  
Duct tape  
Hammers, nails, industrial shears, staples and staple guns  
Canned food supplies and water  
Cots and blankets  
Create a business continuity plan (page 5)



**During the storm and immediately after be aware of:**



- Downed trees
- Downed power lines
- Blowing debris
- Possibility of utility interruptions
- Food spoilage
- Loss of life
- Lack of communication
- Damaged roof
- Power outages
- Roadway re-routing

After the storm:

- Replace any medical supplies used from your supply kit
- Restock canned foods
- Check for roof damage
- Clean up downed trees and limbs

Resources:

Pierce County Emergency Management - <http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/Index.aspx?NI D=104>

It is the mission of the Department of Emergency Management to create sustainable communities and enhance public safety by empowering all who work, govern, live in and visit Pierce County to prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from all types of hazards, emergencies and disasters.

Smith Fire - <http://www.smithfiresystems.co/>

Smith Fire Systems Management (SFSM) is a full service fire and life safety company, serving customers in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. Although, SFSM provides 24/7 emergency service that our customers can rely on during a full-scale emergency they will also be hard pressed to help everyone. Get your supplies before the emergency.



## **Business Continuity Plan:**

·Determine your greatest risk potential. It might come from loss of heat, frozen pipes (which can burst, causing water damage), or loss of access caused by icy conditions.

What would happen if you had to shut down your business for several days?

Look at the building where you do business and assess the property damage risks.

If you do this early enough, you'll have time to make structural upgrades that can prevent possible future storm, wind, water or earthquake damage.



·Calculate the cost of business interruptions for one week, one month and six months. Once you've done that, you'll be able to investigate insurance options or build a cash reserve that will allow your company to function during the post-disaster recovery phase. It's also a good idea to develop professional relationships with alternative

vendors, in case your primary contractor can't service your needs. Place occasional orders with them so they regard you as an active customer when you need them.

·Review your insurance coverage. Contact your agent to find out if your policy is adequate for your needs. Consult with a business insurance expert to advise you on the right coverage for your situation. When



buying insurance, ask “How much can I afford to lose?” It’s a good idea to know the value of your property.



·Build a crisis communications plan so you’ll be able to make sure your staff, customers, vendors, and contractors know what’s going on. Establish an email alert system. Make sure you have primary and secondary email addresses for your employees, and everyone you do business with.

Create a Facebook page, and use Twitter to keep the public aware you’re still in business, and that you’re in the process of

recovering after the disaster.

We hope this basic information will help prepare you for most wind and winter storm emergencies in Pierce County. This plan was brought to you by

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