

City of Los Angeles Emergency Preparedness Guide



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As a business owner, you have a passion for what you do. It's part of who you are. And it's likely a primary source of income after years of hard work. But if an emergency happened, all this hard work could be lost in minutes.

Los Angeles has its obvious natural emergency risks, such as earthquakes. But also possible are extreme weather events like wildfires and floods, human-caused destruction like a terrorist attack, and disease outbreaks.

You've dedicated yourself to building your business. Now it's time to protect it.

This workbook is designed for busy owners like you. It's an easy-to-follow emergency planning and recovery resource. And it's a handy tool to organize your key business contacts, assets, and financial documents; do a deep dive into your business and emergency insurance policies; prepare for — and practice — onsite safety and survival; and create your contingency plan to map the road to recovery.

As you read through this workbook, document your business information on the accompanying worksheets. The worksheet file is available in excel, google doc and pdf formats for you to customize as you need.

**Worksheets
available at
[ReadyLA.org](https://www.readyla.org)**



Once completed, make sure to save a copy on a thumbdrive, to a cloud software system and/or email it to yourself and another person. Also print and keep physical copies in two separate locations.

Low on time? Aim to read/fill in just one section a week!



2 CONSIDER YOUR EMERGENCY RISKS

Some emergencies come with warnings, but many don't.

Visit the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services to look at the specific risks for your area, including if your business is located in a tsunami evacuation zone: myhazards.caloes.ca.gov

As you assemble your own emergency preparedness and recovery strategies, anticipate a worst-case scenario. Imagine that you won't have any power, internet, phone service, running water, or working restroom facilities.

If you're prepared for a major earthquake, for example, you'll be ready to navigate through most other emergencies.



Emergencies include natural disasters, like wildfires, humans-caused, like terrorism or cyberattacks and health-related, like the COVID Pandemic.



3 PREPARE FOR SAFETY

In the Prepare For Safety worksheet, you'll address the steps to create a safer work environment. And you'll have the tools to train employees how to respond to the immediate dangers – and the aftermath – of several emergency scenarios.

The first thing to do is sign up for **NotifyLA**, the Los Angeles emergency notification system. It's a “must have” because it will help you and your employees stay informed about emergency situations.

Preparation can help to reduce injuries and property damage – and save lives. In this section, you'll examine the following topics to:

- **Take** steps to secure your business premises
- **Plan** shelter-in-place locations, evacuation routes and other safety protocols
- **Onboard**, train, and form an emergency response team with your employees
- **Collaborate** with your immediate community to develop a neighborhood plan
- **Assemble** emergency kits

Sign up for geographic related alerts via phone, text and email at NotifyLA.com



3 PREPARE FOR SAFETY

3a Prepare For Safety

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3b Train your Employees



In the immediate aftermath of an emergency, it is vital your team work together to mitigate the dangers.

Use this '**Train Employees**' - **Owner/Manager Worksheet** to:

- **Plan** your emergency training “To Dos” and training intervals
- **Develop** the topics for training
- **Train** all employees on a regular basis (at least once a year!)

As part of this training, distribute the **Employee Worksheet** as a print out to your employees. They will be able to follow your plan step-by-step, take notes, and address the topics from their point of view.

4 ORGANIZE FOR RECOVERY

Alarming, FEMA estimates that many U.S. businesses could close permanently after a widespread emergency. Creating a plan will increase your odds to recover losses and get back to business as quickly as possible.

Once this section's worksheet are completed, you'll have collected the tips, information, and resources you need to:



- **Connect** with your employees, suppliers, vendors, insurance contacts, etc.
- **Review, renegotiate, and confirm** your insurance contract(s)
- **Confirm** insurance company requirements in order to file claims
 - **Track** the damage to your business
- **File** insurance claims, and
 - **Recover** your assets
 - **Collect** lost income
- **Rebuild your business**

4a Contact List

Use this worksheet to compile a comprehensive list of contacts. There is no time more critical to reach your employees, community, business contacts, government services, and your customers.

Don't underestimate the importance of this exercise. If your phones and computers are damaged, you'll be glad to have your up-to-date printed backup list.



- **Update** it regularly and keep easily accessible digital and printed copies
- **Provide** each employee a list of contacts that they'll need after the emergency

4 ORGANIZE FOR RECOVERY

4b Insurance Coverage

Insurance is essential – emergency or no emergency. But is your business thoroughly covered?

It's time to get reacquainted with your standard business insurance policies – and your emergency coverage specifically. It's a sound practice to spend time reviewing your total coverage at least once a year anyway.

If you need a standard business policy “refresher course” you can learn more about the 6 basic types from organizations like the [SBA](#).

Then, use the **Insurance Coverage worksheet** to review and evaluate your current emergency coverage. Note that there are two types of disaster insurance:

- Disaster insurance that covers your business assets
- Loss of income insurance policies for business interruption due to an emergency

And while you are updating your insurance policies, follow up with your vendors to ensure that they have emergency insurance that protects your business interests.

This may be the most important exercise to establish your business resiliency in the face of an emergency. And, when you're done, you'll be an expert in your total coverage.

Now that you have the business insurance policies you need, the next step is to make sure you have records of all items that you'd want to file a claim for.

The purpose of the **Assets & Inventory worksheet** is to gather information on all of your business assets so you can record and track post-emergency damage and recuperation costs.

4c Asset & Inventory

4 ORGANIZE FOR RECOVERY



4d Business Records

An emergency that impacts your business also threatens your livelihood. You can protect yourself by opting to be covered for a business interruption. Your policy may require you to file a claim for two types of loss:

- Damaged and/or destroyed property
- Loss of income

The **Business Records worksheet** is a tool to help you prepare the type of documents and information you'll need to submit a claim for Loss of Income.

If you decide not to purchase Loss of Income insurance, this worksheet is still important. It also serves as an exercise in diligent record keeping and backups. Up to date, accessible records will allow you to get back to work as soon as possible after an emergency.

There are 7 basic business areas that you can specifically and proactively address now to plan a roadmap to quick recovery. Use the **Prepare to Rebuild (Recovery Plan) worksheet** to collect the information that will help strengthen your resiliency after an emergency occurs. In it, you'll think through the steps to:

- Start **financial recovery**
- Begin the process to **file insurance**
- Bring **employees** back to work
- Address **business location** options
- Assess your **supplier's** ability to get back to business
- Address general **operations** tasks
- Manage **customer/client relationships**

4e Recovery Plan

5 DURING AN EMERGENCY:

SURVIVAL TIPS

You have been diligent in your preparation for an emergency (in the previous sections). It's now time to develop survival techniques for the first minutes and hours of an emergency. In this section you'll review several of the most likely emergency scenarios and the basic steps to survive. Distribute this section as a training document for all of your employees to read.

Although different emergencies – earthquakes, floods, and terrorist attacks, for example – may warrant different emergency protocols, the rule of thumb is to go where it's safe, provide aid to those who need it, and plot the next steps to get out of danger as soon as you are able.



Stay Informed

Make sure you understand the emergency notifications that you may receive during an emergency:

Evacuation Warning or Voluntary Evacuation	Evacuation Order or Mandatory Evacuation	Shelter-In-Place
Prepare to leave the area with your household, animals and emergency kits	A directive from the Police or Fire Department to leave your home or business immediately and not return until order is lifted. Failure to evacuate may be life-threatening.	Go inside with your animals immediately or stay in your vehicle.

If there is an emergency that immediately threatens your safety, the City will activate alert systems and share vital information on:



1. **Notify LA:** The City of LA's mass emergency notification system. Sign up for geographic related alerts via phone, text and email at NotifyLA.com

2. **Local Commercial Radio:**

- KPCC 89.3FM
- KCBS 89.1 FM
- KIIS 102.7 FM
- KFI 640 AM
- KABC 790 AM
- KNX 1070 AM

3. **Amateur Radio:** Access the LAFD Auxiliary Communication Service on **FREQ. 147.3 + 110.9 (LAFD ACS CH.1)** (More info at www.LAFDACS.org)

4. **Social Media:** @ReadyLA - City of LA's Emergency Management Department on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

5. **Local Area TV stations**

5 DURING AN EMERGENCY



Protect Yourself During Earthquakes!

If possible:



DROP!



COVER!



HOLD ON!

Using a wheelchair



LOCK!



COVER!



HOLD ON!

Stay indoors until the shaking stops and wait for aftershocks (small and medium earthquakes that can occur after)

And If You Are:



OUTDOORS:

Move to a clear area away from buildings, power lines, signs, trees and vehicles. Stay away from old or damaged buildings and anything else that could fall on you in an aftershock



DRIVING:

Pull over to a clear location and stop. Avoid bridges, overpasses, and power lines. Stay in the car until the shaking stops



AT THE BEACH:

Move to higher ground immediately and follow tsunami evacuation signs

In the immediate aftermath of an earthquake, use a physical copy of the [Post Earthquake Action Plan](#) worksheet to help you and your employees follow an action plan.

Go to Earthquakecountry.org for more information.

Also consider participating annually in the world's largest earthquake drill, the 'Great ShakeOut' at shakeout.org

5 DURING AN EMERGENCY



ACTIVE SHOOTER

An active shooter is an individual who is trying to kill and injure people. In most cases, there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims. The following is an overview of the Run, Hide, Fight survival principles:



Run/Escape

- If possible, help others to escape
- Do not attempt to move the wounded
- Prevent others from entering an area where the active shooter may be
- Call 9-1-1 when you are safe



Hide

- Lock the door or block the entry to your hiding place with tables, chairs or anything else available
- Silence your cell phone



Fight

- Fight as a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger
- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter



How You Should React when Law Enforcement Arrives

- Remain calm and follow instructions
- Keep hands free and visible
- Avoid quick movements directed toward officers as well as pointing/screaming

For more info, visit runhidefightla.org
and view The Red Cross [Terrorism Safety Tips](#)

5

DURING AN EMERGENCY

WILDFIRE

Wildfires are uncontrolled fires usually in areas with combustible vegetation. Los Angeles is increasingly facing wildfire threats due to high winds and droughts that, in turn, create a much drier landscape.

Unfortunately, wildfires can spread quickly, and depending on where you are, you may or may not have a lot of time to evacuate. So, it's best to be prepared to leave your premises quickly.

NO ADVANCE WARNING

- **Remain calm**, if possible, clear thinking will help your decision making and chances of escape
- **Prepare**, in advance if you can, for a wildfire scenario in which you have to evacuate quickly so you can take a "go bag" with you
 - a. Business documents, emergency contacts, information
 - b. Personal computer hard drive and disk
 - c. Wallet
 - d. Mask(s)/or other cloth protection with water to keep the cloth wet
- **Only take the "go bag" if it is safe to do so**
- **Follow** emergency services instructions and evacuate when told to do so
- **Help** others evacuate
- **Ensure** all employees, vendors, and customers have evacuated the premises
- **Stay** low to the ground when moving through smoke-filled areas
- **Use** your internal emergency contact protocols and report in your status

ADVANCE WARNING

- **Listen** to local area radio, NOAA radio or TV stations for the latest information and updates
- **Ready** your go bag
- **Plan** your evacuation route out of the fire danger zone
- **Charge** your cell phone and text your loved ones
- **Gather** all staff and customers together

5 DURING AN EMERGENCY



TSUNAMI

A tsunami is one or more intense ocean waves, usually caused by an earthquake. All low-lying coastal areas, including the Los Angeles Harbor, Venice and West Los Angeles beaches are at risk.

A tsunami may not allow sufficient time to issue a warning via emergency alerts system.



When a tsunami warning is issued, or if you feel a strong earthquake at or near the coast:



- Evacuate immediately if you are within the Tsunami Evacuation Area



- Grab your go kit



- Move inland away from low-lying coastal areas by following evacuation routes

- Do not call 9-1-1

- Do not return home until authorities say it is safe to do so

For more information about tsunami risks, visit:
conservation.ca.gov/cgs/tsunami/maps



IF DIRECTED BY AUTHORITIES TO SEAL OFF OUTSIDE AIR

- **Shut** all doors and windows
- **Seal** windows with duct tape
- **Turn** off heaters, air conditioners, ventilation fans, and close fireplace dampers
- **Cover** your nose and mouth with a wet cloth

5 DURING AN EMERGENCY

FLOODING

Emergency weather services track conditions and send flood warnings so citizens have time to prepare for and/or evacuate.

Right Before a Flood

- **Listen** to local area radio, NOAA radio or TV stations for the latest information and updates
- **Gather** emergency go kit and business critical items, if possible
- **Go** immediately to the safest place as identified and practiced in your emergency plan (e.g., highest level of building)
- **Evacuate** all employees and visitors – if that is the decision – through the safest exits
- **Help** others to do the same
- **Account** for all employees and others who are with you (e.g., customers/clients and suppliers)

Advance Warning

If advance warning is given and you have the time, here are some “last minute” tasks you can do to mitigate damage to expensive equipment, merchandise, and/or furniture

- **Fill** bottles with drinking water
- **Fill** sinks and bathtubs with water for flushing or washing clothing (DO NOT DRINK this water)
- **Fill** your car’s gas tanks
- **Move** outdoor furniture inside
- **Turn** off propane tanks
- **Unplug** all equipment
- **Move** valuable and important equipment to a higher level

During a Flood

- **Avoid** contact with flood water as it may be contaminated
- **Don't walk, swim or drive** through floodwater. Just six inches of fast-flowing water can knock you over and two feet will float a car.

6 AFTER AN EMERGENCY:

REBUILD YOUR BUSINESS

Now it's time to assess the damage, start the cleanup process, and get back to business. Fortunately, you have prepared for this moment.

In this section, you'll follow the **Rebuild Your Business Worksheet**. Below is an outline of the hard work you'll be doing over the next few days and weeks.

- **Use the 'Contact List' worksheet** to plan and connect with your business critical contacts
- **Utilize the 'Assets & Inventory' worksheet** as a resource to start your emergency insurance claim
 - Track the damage and the costs to repair or replace inventory, equipment, and supplies, etc.
- **Retrieve the 'Business Records' worksheet** to start your loss of income insurance claim
 - Assess building damage and its impact on your ability to conduct business at your location
 - Compile your Loss of Income documents in order to file your claim

May your hard work in preparation lead to a speedy and strong recovery.

CONTACT US WITH QUESTIONS:

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