



September 3, 2015



Community Advocacy Network Alert



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Tropical Storm Erika may be gone but it was the first statewide "Storm Scare" Florida has had in almost 10 years. Even though Erika dissipated before it reached Florida, it did cause us to stop and think about what plans we have in place in the event a larger storm does wreak havoc on our Sunshine State. As a homeowner, you may have water, flashlights and an evacuation plan ready, but what's your plan if you are a small business owner?



In response to Erika, Florida's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) issued a warning to companies in the state: "Get Prepared." In a statement last week, the SBDC said that small businesses need a Business Continuity, Emergency Preparedness, and Disaster Recovery Plan in place *before* an actual storm comes their way. This is because the U.S. Small Business Administration estimates that 25% of small businesses never reopen in the wake of a natural disaster. Some even suggest this rate could be even higher depending upon the severity of the storm.

The U.S. Small Business Administration recommends that at a minimum, small businesses do the following in preparation for a natural disaster:

- Prepare a disaster preparedness kit;
- Confirm that your business systems are ready to function in the event of a disaster;
- Develop an emergency communications plan to keep your employees and clients connected; and
- Determine which of your business systems are most critical to your mission so that you can prioritize where most of your effort is needed.

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Getting a basic emergency plan in place could take as little as 15 minutes. For a sample emergency plan for both families and business owners, please visit FLGetAPlan.com. For business owners, free Webinars and other resources can be found at PrepareMyBusiness.org.

As always, we are here to help. Please call toll free at (800) 393-1529 and we will provide guidance at no charge.

Yours in Community,

Alan Garfinkel, Esq.

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Community Advocacy Network (CAN), Chairman

The Community Advocacy Network (CAN) is Florida's leading voice for the interests of 60,000 community associations statewide, leading the fight against over-regulation of private residential communities by state and local governments. Each year since its inception in 2007, CAN spearheads important State legislative reforms designed to protect and enhance Florida Community association living, CAN continues to foster financial stability and operational integrity to all common-interest ownership communities statewide.

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