SEVERE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS FOR COMMUNITY PHARMACIES

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DISCLOSURES

Faculty

Sonja Pagniano, faculty for this activity, has no relevant financial relationship(s) with ineligible companies to disclose.

Planners

None of the planners for this activity have any relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies to disclose.

ABOUT US

The NCPA Foundation is an independent nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established in 1953. Since 1953, we have provided disaster relief grants to independent community pharmacies.

Our mission

- To improve community-based healthcare access by supporting efforts that promote the sustainability and growth of independent community pharmacists, the most accessible healthcare provider, through scholarships, grants, and ownership development.

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SUPPORT OUR WORK

- Become A Sponsor
- Make A Gift
- Volunteer
- Mentor

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DISCLAIMER

The information presented today is for general educational and informational purposes only.

This presentation does not constitute legal, medical, or professional advice.

For specific guidance related to pharmacy practice during disasters, legal requirements, or individualized recommendations, please consult with appropriate experts in pharmacy law, emergency management, or public health.

We are happy to connect you with relevant specialists in these fields upon request.

The examples and information shared reflect general developments and should not replace consultation with qualified professionals familiar with your specific jurisdiction and circumstances.

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PRE-TEST

1. What is a basic first step in preparing a community pharmacy for potential severe weather?
2. Should all pharmacy staff participate in severe weather drills or only key staff like the owner and pharmacist in charge?
3. What is the primary goal of severe weather preparedness for a community pharmacy?
4. Whose emergency contact information should be regularly reviewed and updated and included as part of the pharmacy's emergency plan?

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SEVERE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS FOR COMMUNITY PHARMACIES

The Kansas Edition

A MOMENT FOR FRED – THE PREPAREDNESS DOG

Fred passed away in February 2025. Fred was the mascot of the Kansas Department of Health Environment’s efforts to educate Kansans on the importance of being safe and prepared. You are the help until help arrives. Be like Fred.

10 YEARS AGO, FRED MADE THIS VIDEO TO HELP YOU STAY PREPARED

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Agenda

- A brief history of pharmacists' role in disasters
- Understanding *your* pharmacy's role in disasters
- Prevention – is there really anything you can do?
- Preparedness: Creating your emergency plan
- Response:
  - Operating a community pharmacy during emergencies
  - Evacuation & Closure Procedures Essentials
- Disaster Recovery
- Recap

"DISASTERS BRING OUT THE BEST IN PHARMACISTS" -

KAITLYN E WATSON, DEB VAN HAAFTEN, KAREN HORON, ROSS T TSUYUKI

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COMMUNITY PHARMACIES ARE CRITICAL TO HEALTHCARE INFRASTRUCTURE

Generally

- First to reopen after disasters
- Uniquely positioned in communities
- Growing recognition for expanded disaster role beyond logistics and dispensing medication

Kansas

- Kansas pharmacies are integrated in the state's healthcare safety infrastructure through programs like K-TRACS (Kansas Prescription Drug Monitoring Program), which helps healthcare providers prioritize patient safety – a critical function during severe weather emergencies.

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YOUR COMMUNITY PHARMACY'S ROLE IN DISASTERS

- Independent community pharmacies can be nimbler than chains and mail order.
- Keep life-saving medicines from spoiling.
- Often hand-delivering medicine to patients.
- Donating medicine and collecting donations, helping coordinate essentials for the community.

Four Practice Areas in Disasters:

- **Public Health** – Vaccination, health advice, medication management
- **Patient Care** – Decrease strain on healthcare resources, medication management
- **Governance** – Medication advice, information dissemination, changing legislation
- **Logistics** – Drug Shortages, alternatives (i.e. compounding), coordinating supplies

A BRIEF GLOBAL EVOLUTION

SOME THINGS YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW

Post-Katrina Legislation: The Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (2006) and subsequent reauthorizations expanded pharmacists' emergency response capabilities.

Hurricane Sandy (2012): Pharmacists provided mobile medication services, maintained cold chains for insulin and vaccines during power outages, and coordinated with relief agencies.

COVID-19 Pandemic: Pharmacists became central to testing, vaccination, and medication management on an unprecedented scale. Outside of temporary and public health sites, pharmacies provided approximately 90% of COVID shots.

SOME THINGS YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW

Hurricanes Maria, Harvey, and Irma: These disasters saw pharmacists providing point-of-care testing, administering vaccines, and managing chronic conditions when other healthcare infrastructure failed.

Opioid Crisis Response: Pharmacists expanded their disaster response to include naloxone distribution and addiction management during emergencies.

Wildfires in California: Pharmacists developed innovative medication delivery systems and remote consultation models when evacuation zones prevented physical access.

Integration into Disaster Response Teams: Pharmacists are now routinely included in official Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs) and other emergency response structures.

KANSAS DISASTER DECLARATIONS – A TIMELINE

- 2025
  - January & February Winter Storms
  - April Wildland Fire
- 2024
  - January Winter Storms
  - February & March Wildland Fires
  - April & May Severe Storms
  - June Drought & SG Fire
  - October & November Wildland Fires
- 2023
  - March & April Wildland Fires

KANSAS DISASTER DECLARATIONS – A TIMELINE

- 2022
  - October & November Wildfire
- 2020
  - March COVID
  - June Wildland Fire
- 2019
  - January Winter Storm
- 2018
  - January Winter Storm
  - March Wildland Fires
  - October Flooding
  - November & December Winter Storm

KANSAS DISASTER DECLARATIONS – A TIMELINE

- 50 since 2010!!
- In 2006, the Kansas Legislature created a statewide mutual aid system by enacting KSA 48-950 through KSA 48-958. The statewide mutual aid system automatically made all political subdivision of the state a part of the system, subject to the ability of political subdivision to withdraw from the statewide mutual aid system.
  - Purpose was to expand the resources and provide assistance available to each of the participating political subdivisions, assist with planning, ensure more timely arrival of aid, minimize operational and administrative conflicts, resolve disputes, and facilitate the prompt recovery of costs.
  - https://www.kansastag.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2165/Kansas-Mutual-Aid-System-Compact-PDF

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WHAT IS SEVERE WEATHER?

According to the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service; Severe and hazardous weather can include conditions produced by thunderstorms, including damaging winds, tornadoes, large hail, flooding and flash flooding, and winter storms associated with freezing rain, sleet, snow and strong winds.

Common phenomena we see:

severe thunderstorms, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, lightning, hail, and derechos

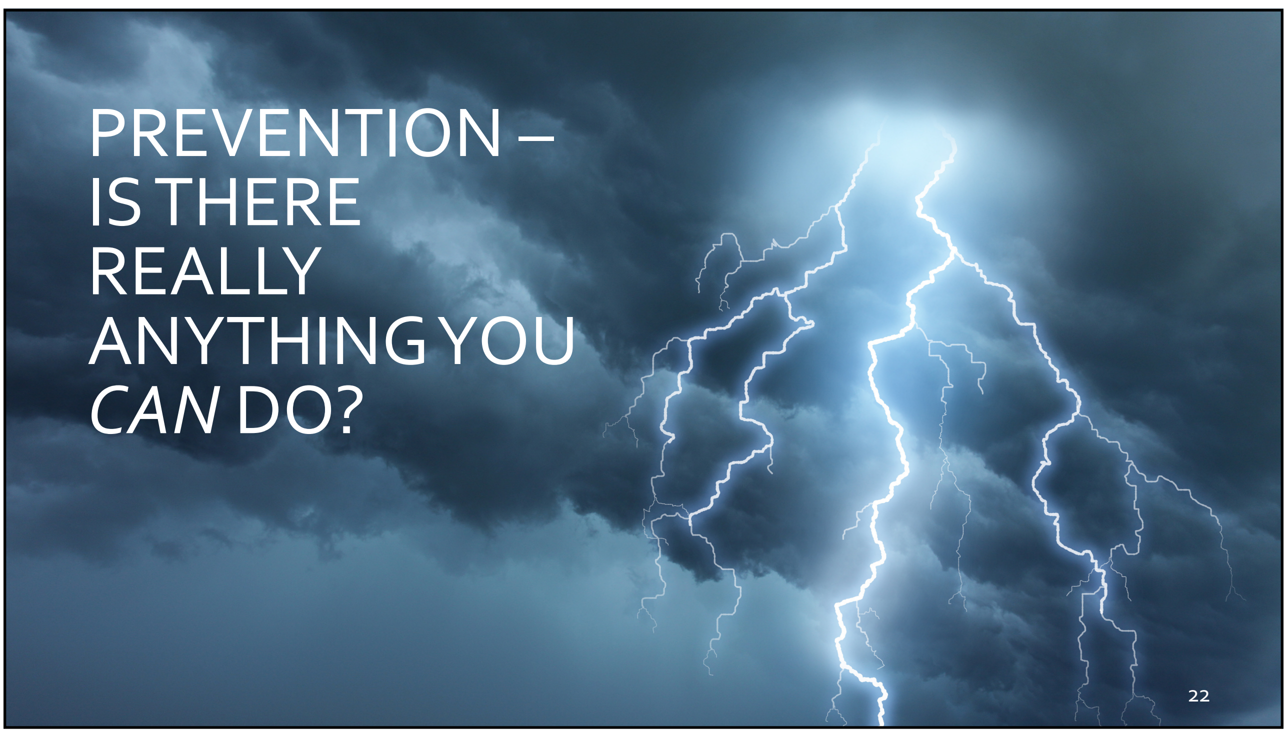
THE DISASTER MANAGEMENT CYCLE

Prevention: Reduces health risks posed by hazards

Preparedness: Ensures timely and effective response systems

Response: Actions during the disaster/emergency

Recovery: Returning to "normal" operations and beyond



PREVENTION – YOU'RE ALREADY DOING IT!

- Administering immunizations, health screenings, medicine and medication supply optimizations especially for chronic diseases, medication counseling, critical care, blood pressure monitoring, etc.
- Educating the public on reducing spread of communicable diseases; providing tailored messaging to chronic disease patients
- Keeping your business property maintained

PREVENTION – YOU'RE ALREADY DOING IT!

- Ensuring patients understand their increased risk during disasters especially those most at risk: older adults, children, people with disabilities, and people with chronic health conditions
- Incorporating a community healthcare worker
- Preparedness & flexibility: having a plan in place for potential power outages, flooding, building damage, etc. to ensure patients can still access medications; being prepared to pivot if needed

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PREPAREDNESS

Creating your emergency plan

- Policies & Procedures
- Physical Infrastructure
- Human Resources
- Technology and Communications
- Documentation Systems
- Testing and Training

KANSAS RESOURCES

KSReady.Gov

https://www.kansastag.gov/157/KSReady

Kansas TRAIN

https://www.train.org/ks/welcome

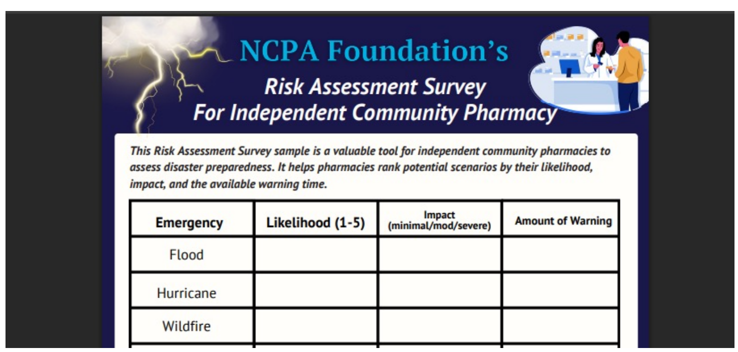
Douglas County Example

https://www.dgcoks.gov/emergency-management/severe-weather-planning-businesses

Provides relevant resources for businesses and organizations that may be helpful!

IDENTIFYING RISKS

The first step to ensuring adequate policies and procedures – make a risk assessment survey



NCPA Foundation's

Risk Assessment Survey For Independent Community Pharmacy

This Risk Assessment Survey sample is a valuable tool for independent community pharmacies to assess disaster preparedness. It helps pharmacies rank potential scenarios by their likelihood, impact, and the available warning time.

Emergency	Likelihood (1-5)	Impact (minimal/mod/severe)	Amount of Warning
Flood			
Hurricane			
Wildfire			

https://www.ncpafoundation.org/disaster-resources-independent-community-pharmacy/

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- **Draft comprehensive policies for different types of emergencies**
  - Severe weather, hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, etc.
  - Power outages, civil unrest
- **Define clear decision-making authority**
  - Who can decide to close?
  - Who initiates emergency procedures?
- **Communication protocols for…**
  - Staff, patients, authorities, suppliers, landlords

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PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PREPAREDNESS

- **Backup power systems**
  - Generator capacity and testing
  - Battery backups for essential equipment
- **Secure medication storage**
  - Controlled substances protocols
  - Temperature-sensitive medications
- **Cold chain maintenance**
- **Physical security and access controls**

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HUMAN RESOURCES PREPAREDNESS

- Staff emergency contact information
- Clear roles and responsibilities for emergencies
- Cross-training for essential functions
- Personal emergency plans for staff
- Communication trees and backup contacts
- Phycological first aid awareness
- Mental health first aid certification

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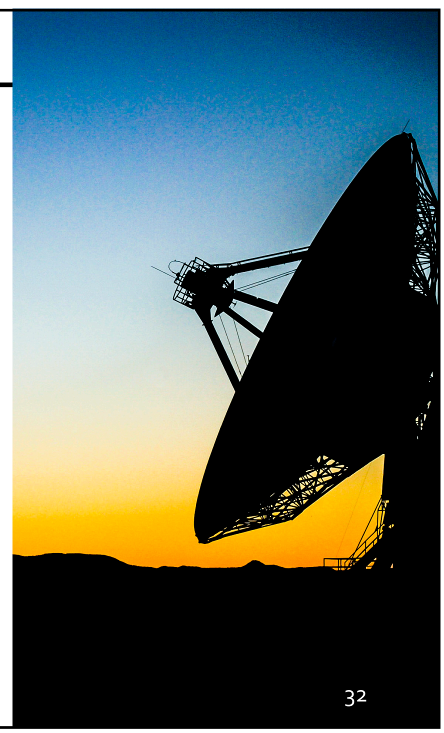
TECHNOLOGY PREPAREDNESS

- Data backups and recovery systems
- Manual operation procedures
- Alternate processing systems
- Emergency prescription processing capabilities
- Patient record access contingencies
- Communication systems (satellite phones, radios)



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EXTERNAL COORDINATION

- State/Local emergency management agencies
  - Fire & police departments as well
- Other healthcare providers & Patient transportation services
- Wholesalers and suppliers/vendors
  - Dispensing system vendor
- State Board of Pharmacy & NCPDP
- Utility Companies – Phone/Electric/Cable/Internet/Computer (Cybersecurity)

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MAINTAIN IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS AS HARD COPIES AND DIGITALLY

- State license/DEA license/pharmacist & tech license(s)
- Diplomas
- Controlled substance inventories
- State tax license/federal tax license
- Original drafts/all riders/all changes
- All insurance documents
- Copies of your corporate charge cards
- Copies of your bank account numbers
- Any license or posted notice that is required to be posted at your business site

BACK-UP HARD DRIVES AND MAINTAIN DUPLICATE EXTERNAL SYSTEMS

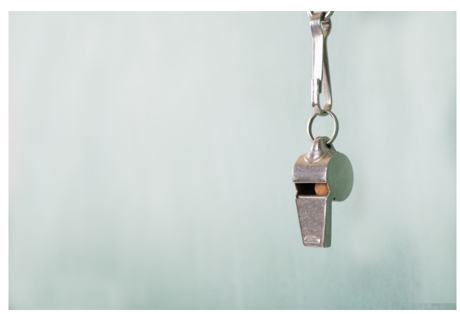
- You will want a full system back-up of both Rx and POS
  - Consult with a professional on how often you need to have back-ups running and have an understanding of how that works for each system you have.
- Business office computers
- Some people take home external drives and swap them out each day to mitigate ransomware attacks and other disasters/catastrophes, there are now other ways to protect yourself – consult with IT/tech professionals on what will work best for your pharmacy business.

BEFORE AND AFTER PICTURES/VIDEOS

TESTING YOUR SYSTEM – HOW PREPARED ARE YOU?

- Annual/semi-annual drills
- Don't forget to update after real events!
- Document your lessons learned
- Review and revised regularly
- Learn from other pharmacies!
- Include ALL staff in training

- Consider encouraging your local municipality to create exercises so you can test it out at-scale. Your FEMA National Preparedness Exercise Officer is John Bissen for Kansas (john.bissen@fema.dhs.gov)



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Form a legal "cooperative agreement" with another pharmacy on an in-case-of-emergency basis.
- Maintain a good rapport with your business neighbors.
- Identify potential storage sites in case of emergency.
- Ready.gov/business
- Ncpdp.org/resources/emergency-preparedness

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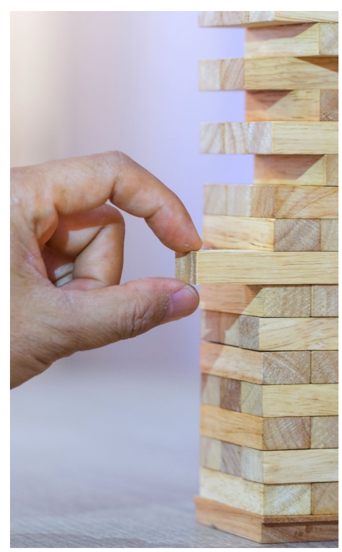
INSURANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- Verify with your insurance agent what type of coverage you carry on your building(s) and physical assets.
- Make sure it covers the type of damage you may encounter from a disaster – such as wind or water and that it is enough coverage to return your business to operation.
- Consider business interruption insurance which can help with lost income due to a forced shut down following a disaster.



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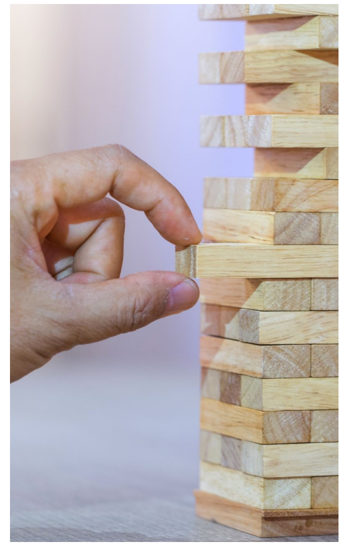
INSURANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- **Understand the difference between:**
  - Commercial property insurance
  - Spoilage and contamination insurance
  - Business interruption coverage
  - Employee dishonesty coverage
  - Pharmaceutical product liability insurance



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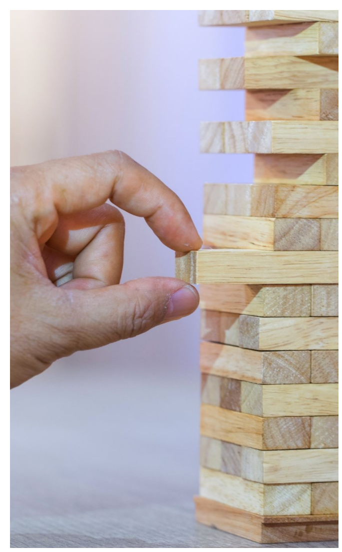
INSURANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- Many insurance policies do not cover flood or earthquake policies – you need to check if there is a separate policy available for that
- Verify if your coverage changes if the event is a declared disaster vs. one that has happened in your area and did not constitute a local, state-wide, or national emergency declaration
- Consider what you will do if your insurance deductible goes above $5,000; $10,000; $20,000 etc.
  - Have a plan in place.



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Prioritize staff and personal safety!

Legal and regulatory compliance

Patient needs assessment – *where are they? Are they ok? What are immediate needs?*

Resource allocation – be mindful and nimble

Communication systems – can you communicate, how, and with whom?

Documentation requirements

RESPONSE
OPERATING DURING EMERGENCIES

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MODIFIED OPERATIONS - CONSIDERATIONS

Extended hours	Limited formulary	Emergency prescription refills
Therapeutic substitutions	Modified counseling procedures	Alternative payment methods
	Prioritization of vulnerable patients	

WHAT IS THE PRIMARY GOAL OF SEVERE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS FOR COMMUNITY PHARMACY?

While there is legitimate perspective that maintaining business operations is the primary goal, because it enables everything else to occur. From a health ethics and public health perspective, **ensuring continuous medication access for patients with chronic conditions is generally considered the higher-level goal** that business operations of community pharmacies serve. This becomes even more imperative in emergency preparedness contexts, where these healthcare providers are viewed as essential infrastructure with a primary mission of protecting public health.

LEVERAGING REGULATORY FLEXIBILITIES

- Emergency refill provisions – *Watch for emergency declarations by local governments*
- Out-of-state pharmacist utilization – *becoming more common!*
- Remote processing options
- Scope of practice extensions
- Emergency declarations impact
- Temporary relocation authorizations
- **Just remember – these are all *short term!***

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EVACUATION – CLOSURE PROCEDURES ESSENTIALS

- Know your Board of Pharmacy notification requirements
- Secure controlled substances
- Implement your patient notification and transfer procedures
- Documentation preservation
- Essential records backup
- Medication inventory management
- Building security measures

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DISASTER RECOVERY

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RECOVERY – GETTING BACK TO "NORMAL"

- Inventory assessment and replenishment
- Documentation and record reconciliation
- Facility inspection and remediation
- Staff debriefing and support
- Patient follow-up
- Insurance and financial recovery
- Finding a new/temporary location
- Lessons learned documentation

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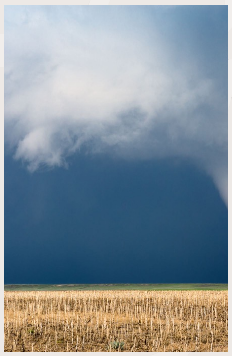
RECAP



1. Create/update your emergency preparedness plan
2. Identify and address physical infrastructure needs
3. Train all staff on emergency procedures
4. Establish external coordination relationships – now rather than later
5. Test your systems regularly
6. Have pictures/videos of your before – ready. Do it today if you don't have any.
7. Document and learn from each event

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Don't Let Independent Community Pharmacies Disappear

FREE CHECKLISTS

https://www.ncpafoundation.org/disaster-resources-independent-community-pharmacy/

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO CONNECT WITH AS A PHARMACY OWNER

- State Board of Pharmacy emergency provisions/National Association of Boards of Pharmacy
- Your Local Emergency Management Agency contacts
- Professional association/network disaster guidelines
- FEMA & State emergency management resources for businesses
- Insurance and risk management resources
- Mental health support services

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO CONNECT WITH AS A PHARMACY OWNER

- NCPDP – remember to report your status
- Enroll in EPAP if you are eligible – this can and should be done ahead of time: phe.gov/EPAP
- Save our information www.ncpafoundation.org – apply for disaster relief grant funding from NCPA Foundation
- Consider utilizing SBA's disaster assistance loan funding
- You can call or text the disaster distress helpline for 24/7/365 crisis counseling support:
  - 1-800-985-5990

SO YOU WANT TO DEPLOY?

NVOAD – National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

- National VOAD promotes cooperation, communication, coordination and collaboration, and fosters more effective delivery of services to communities affected by disaster.
- Consider joining the Kansas VOAD and ask how you can join their efforts in times of disaster.

American Red Cross

- Sometimes seek pharmacist volunteers. Reach out to them to see how you can get started.

QUESTIONS?

Website: www.ncpafoundation.org

Find us on LinkedIn

Find us on Facebook

Find us on YouTube

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POST-TEST

1. What is a basic first step in preparing a community pharmacy for potential severe weather?

- Installing a backup generator
- Training staff on emergency procedures
- Completing a risk assessment survey
- Contacting local emergency management agencies

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POST-TEST

2. Should all pharmacy staff participate in severe weather drills or only key staff like the owner and pharmacist in charge?

- Only full-time staff should participate
- Only staff who will be assigned emergency responsibilities should participate
- All pharmacy staff should participate
- Only the owner and pharmacist in charge

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POST-TEST

3. What is the primary goal of severe weather preparedness for a community pharmacy?

- Maintaining business operations and minimizing financial losses
- Safeguarding patient records and prescription information
- Ensuring staff safety during severe weather events
- Ensuring continuous medication access for patients with chronic conditions

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POST-TEST

4. Whose emergency contact information should be regularly reviewed and updated and included as part of the pharmacy's emergency plan?

- Pharmacy staff and key personnel
- Suppliers and vendors and pharmacy staff and key personnel
- Just local emergency management
- Utility companies, suppliers & vendors, pharmacy staff & key personnel, local emergency management, State Board of Pharmacy, NCPDP, backup pharmacies, most vulnerable patients…

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https://www.kansasvoad.org/volunteer/

THANK YOU!

Questions?

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