Emergency Preparedness in NC

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What is Emergency Preparedness?

* State of readiness to cope with the aftermath of a natural disaster
* Federal government recommends all citizens be prepared for 3 days without federal assistance
* Basic preparation is the same for all disasters
* Be informed and prepared for disasters in your community
Disasters
Disasters in NC

Hurricane Floyd
Hurricane Hazel
Hurricane Fran
Hurricane Isabel
Hurricane Irene
Hurricanes in NC

- Ranked fourth (after Florida, Texas, and Louisiana) for most hurricane force winds affecting the state
- Hurricanes responsible for over $11B in damages and almost 1,000 fatalities
- A hurricane on average makes landfall in NC once every four years
  - 17.5% of all North Atlantic hurricanes have impacted NC
- Storms have hit in every month from May-December
Hurricanes in NC 1980-Present

- 120 hurricanes and tropical storms during that period
- $10B in damaged (primarily from Fran and Floyd)
- 77 fatalities and 44 indirect casualties
- Fran in 1996 was the strongest to hit the state at category 3
- Hurricane Emily in 1993 brushed the Outer Banks as category 3
- Deadliest was Hurricane Floyd in 1999 which caused 35 fatalities and record flooding
You as an EH specialist are a first responder
In order to be effective you need to advocate for readiness for yourself and your community

Plan
Make a kit
Prepare your family
Plan to respond (if needed)
A Kit

- Water (a gallon per person per day)
- Food (at least 3 days of non-perishable food)
  - Manual can opener if required
- First aid kit
- Flashlight and batteries
- Moist towlettes and garbage bags
- Prescription medication
- Important papers
- Money
- Sleeping bags or blankets
- Other items (pet food, infant formula, other supplies)
Prepare a travel kit in your car in case of emergency
Prepare to be stranded
  Water/food
  Blankets
  Backup phone battery
  Flashlight
  Jumper cables, cat litter
  Work items
Specialty items (for others in your household) as needed
Responders will be needed
* Register in SERVNC
  * [https://www.servnc.org/](https://www.servnc.org/)
* Volunteer if interested for special events
* Take classes
  * ICS (100, 200, 300, 400)
  * Disaster response
Emergency Preparedness Manual

* Now new and improved for 2015!
* Coming to a website near you!
* Only $29.95 plus shipping and handling*!

* *We’re not charging for the manual.*
Disaster planning should take place before a disaster
Make sure agency plans are in place
  * Continuity of Operations (COOP)
  * Internal emergency preparedness plans
Training
  * ICS
  * Roles and responsibilities
Agency Disaster Supplies
Preparation – Not just for the HD

- Businesses should be prepared
- Continuous information sharing
- Training
- Local agency response protocols
Four basic things must be in place for a food establishment to reopen

- Physical safety
- Safe water
- Approved wastewater disposal
- Safe food supply
Physical Safety

* Electricity
  * Building inspectors should determine if hazard exists
  * If water levels did not reach the level of outlets then no electrical hazard may exist
  * If a hazard exists, power should be shut off

* Generators
  * No generator should ever be connected to the panel box without the approval of local building code inspector
  * Portable generators can be used for equipment that can be directly plugged into them
  * Generators should never be run inside a building due to CO risk
Safe Water

- Public Water Supply
  - Will issue guidance
  - Notice – facility should suspend operations until water is safe
    - Empty, clean, and sanitize (or dispose) containers that have come into contact with water
  - Advisory – remain open with precautions in place
    - Bagged ice
    - Bottled water and drinks
    - Serve food that has been made with bottled or boiled water
Safe Water Continued

- Individual establishment wells
  - If flooded or damaged should be tested prior to use
- Lack of water
  - If no water present establishment should not open and permit should be suspended until water service restored
- Lack of hot water
  - Establishment should be evaluated to see if proper procedures and protocols are in place to allow opening
Water Supplies

* Establishments should plan ahead to obtain water in case of an emergency
* Be aware that planning to purchase water may not mean that water will be available
Municipal or public connections
* If there is nowhere for wastewater to go, permit should be suspended

On site wastewater
* Many require electricity to operate
* May not operate if saturated with water
* Should not be used until working properly
* If sewage is backing up into establishment immediate permit suspension required
Food Safety

- Contamination and Adulteration
  - Any food that cannot be verified as safe must be discarded
  - When in doubt throw it out

- Physical contaminants
  - Flood waters, debris, broken containers, fire extinguishers
  - Cans that show no evidence of damage can be cleaned and sanitized and used provided food will be cooked to 165

- Biological contaminants
  - If the power has been off less than 4 hours food likely not in danger zone (given refrigeration operating properly and food safety practices in place)
  - If power has been off more than 4 hours food needs to be evaluated
  - Frozen foods that have not exceeded 41 can be refrozen or kept refrigerated
  - Frozen foods that have in whole or in part exceeded 41 for more than 4 hours must be discarded
Plan to Minimize Loss

* A blanket set of guidelines cannot be put in place prior to a disaster to guarantee opening

* Food protection
  * Put as many perishables in freezer as possible
  * Packed freezer will retain temperature longer

* Water Supply
  * Buy bottled water or fill jugs with water
  * Frozen bottles can also be used in refrigerator/freezer to maintain temperature
Plan to Minimize Loss Cont.

* Ice
  * Leak proof containers in freezer
  * Ice in sandwich/prep units too close to temp sensor can trigger automatic defrost cycle
  * Shut off water to ice machine until water supply can be assessed

* Wastewater
  * If power failure anticipated and facility has a wastewater pump tank – set tank to manual to reduce amount of water in tank
  * Contact LHD or system operator for guidance

* Portable Generators
  * Will prevent loss and assist with recovery efforts
  * Are not intended to replace approved supplies for facility operation
Assessments of shelters should be performed periodically to ensure readiness in the event of a disaster

- Respiratory hygiene
- Sleeping cots separated at least 18 inches
- Food and hand hygiene
  - No one with GI symptoms should handle or prepare food
  - Handwashing
  - Sanitizing
  - No bare hand contact
  - Temperature control
  - Foods prepared in domestic kitchens should not be served
Daycare Facilities

- Should closed until cleared by the building inspector
- Those that need to remain open should be evaluated on a case by case basis
Want More?

- Food Safety and Defense Task Force meets bi-monthly (every other month) in Raleigh
- Presentations from interesting speakers
- Networking with industry, federal and state regulatory agencies, academia
For additional help you can always email me at jennifer.stewart@dhhs.nc.gov

Questions?