



Records Management Guidance
— Emergency/Disaster Preparedness

What are the most basic preparations for emergencies and/or disasters?

The following are basic preparations local government agencies should take in case of emergency/disaster to protect records.

- Written disaster plan - should include contact list and contact information for both business and non-business hours. Form a response team and designate a person or position to be in charge. The Disaster Plan should include location of emergency operating records, including delegations of authority, building plans, computer system documentation, vital records inventories, records inventories, records locations, equipment locations.
- Basic supply kits - can include items such as scissors, plastic sheeting, tape, flashlights, batteries, water soaking mats, written plan, etc.
- List and physical location of vital records. A copy should be kept with the written plan, supply kit, and at least one copy off-site. The list should be provided to appropriate personnel.
- Plan with local emergency officials about location of records so any emergency actions (fire extinguishing, etc.) will not further damage records.
- Vital records protection. This can include security microfilm, backup of electronic/digital records, offsite storage, duplication, and dispersal.

Tip: Vital records are listed in appropriate retention schedules. They are denoted with a “(V)”.

Tip: Follow a regular backup routine and store backups in a different location, preferably some distance away. Create a directory.

What are the steps to creating a Disaster Plan?

- Conduct a risk analysis
- Identify existing procedures
- Allocate responsibilities
- Develop response and recovery procedures
- Include first responders

What are some disaster preparedness factors?

- Determine existing risks to records
- Complete a site survey - both inside and out of the building
- Look at security, is it sufficient?
- Determine vulnerable areas
- Mitigate risks where they are noted
- Know the history of structures (previous issues, past repairs, etc.)
- Look closely at records storage areas

**Additional information regarding records management for Local Government Agencies is available from the Local Records Branch at Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives:
www.kdla.ky.gov**

