

# Storm Planning for Technology

As severe storms approach, here are some useful tips you would want to consider for your **Home** and **Office**.

1. Verify Data Backups (onsite and offsite). Make sure any critical data is kept safe. If you have onsite backups, it is best to have two copies - one left onsite (preferably in a fire-proof / weather-proof / crash-proof safe), and one taken offsite as you may not be able to return to the office to retrieve the other backup set. If you have offsite backups already, verify they are working and up-to-date. Also remember, if you have a server, files on your local system may not be backed up - so move or copy them to your server to be backed-up properly!
2. Power off all Computers / Servers / Printers / Network Equipment. You won't likely be working from home during the storm and often power-outages will occur if the storm is severe enough anyway. It is best to power off all technology related devices/equipment and also **UN-PLUG** them! Just because it is powered off does not protect it from power surges. Do not forget computers, servers, phone systems, routers, switches, copiers, printers, battery backups, etc. Yes, please power off and unplug your UPS. If the power goes out, they will continuously beep and unnecessarily drain the battery. To make things easier, if all of your devices are connected to battery backups, you can power it off and unplug just the battery backup - this will make it easier in reconnecting and powering on.
3. Disconnect network cables. Even though your computer or server may be unplugged and powered off, your network adapter could still be at risk. You can leave the cable plugged into the wall, simply remove it from the back of the PC/Server/Network Printer.
4. Remove equipment from the floor space as best possible. Flooding can cause damage even if the devices are powered off and unplugged. So, try to store everything at least 24" or more off of the ground.
5. Move all equipment at least 6 feet away from doors and/or windows. If not possible, keep them off the ground, and do your best to wrap electronics in a plastic trash bag to prevent any water spray. This will not guard against falling trees or debris, but at least help keep your devices dry if water starts blowing into the building.
6. Document all Software Licenses. If you have a folder/binder/drawer full of license keys, make a copy of them for safe keeping. Software can account for 30-50% of system cost. If your tower is tagged with a license key, take a picture or document the code and store them in a safe place. If you have a fire-proof safe, keep a copy there and take a copy with you.
7. Make copies of software as needed. If you do not already have them stored on a CD/DVD, or other media, make backups of any software that you may need to help in restoring your home or business' computers. These might be items like: Quickbooks/Quicken, other accounting/financial software, Client/Case Management software, Windows (XP/Vista/Windows 7), Microsoft Office, Server Software, Antivirus, and drivers.

8. Print list of Contacts, Vendors, and Customer Info. You may need to contact customers or vendors before power is restored to your office. If you cannot access your PC, or the system is lost, it may be vital that you have a hard copy of contact information.
9. Have a Business Continuity Plan. This plan should include how to contact other employees/co-workers, family, and clients in case the office/home is not accessible. Distribute cell numbers as well as home numbers and ask an out of area contact to be available to receive information from your employees in case of an emergency. Remember, during severe storms, cell phones may also not be operational for a period of time, so there may be times when communication is not possible.
10. Insurance documentation. Know who your insurance company is and their contact information. Have a copy of both your policy and policy numbers safe. Document all assets accordingly in case of any loss. Pictures are always a good idea, but having a detailed list of the items is just as important.

This list is provided by Cralyn Technology Solutions. We are a full-service IT company, supporting both business and residential clients. If you have any questions or need assistance in performing any of the above steps, please contact us to schedule an appointment.

After the storm, if you need any assistance in reconnecting your systems/network or suffered a loss, contact us as soon as possible so we can get you back up and running with as little down-time as possible.

## **CRALYN TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS**

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