

# Ceridian Connection

a monthly e-newsletter

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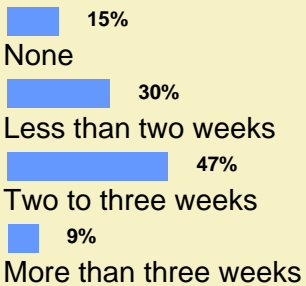


## February 2006 In This Issue

- Connection Home
- HR, Payroll and Tax
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### Reader Poll

How much annual paid vacation time does your company offer new hires?



total votes: 243  
margin +/- 1

### HR Trends

According to career publisher Vault's *Office Supplies Survey*, 67 percent of employees admit that they've taken supplies from work for personal use.

### For More Information

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## Organizational readiness: Be prepared for potential disasters

How prepared is your organization for a catastrophe? Major disaster can happen anyplace or anytime. Make provisions for disaster recovery planning and preparedness for your organization - before it's too late.

According to FEMA, the number of declared major disasters has more than doubled, with 529 major disasters occurring from 1995 - 2004, a 68 percent increase over the number declared in the previous decade. Preventative measures can go a long way. This holds particularly true when it comes to businesses investing resources to withstand a major disaster.

Is your organization prepared to handle these potential disasters?

- Hurricanes
- Tsunamis
- Floods
- Fires
- Terrorist attacks
- Flu pandemics
- Computer viruses
- Identity theft
- Striking workers
- Broad power outages
- Transit shutdowns

The transit strike that crippled New York City in December, the hurricanes and floods that ravaged the Gulf Coast several months ago, and the power outage that shut down most of the northeast in 2003 represent potential disasters that warrant putting a disaster recovery strategy in place in your organization. These incidents are prompting businesses to go from an "it can't happen here" attitude to a "we need to be prepared" line of attack.

### Create or refine your disaster recovery plan

According to the Insurance Information Institute, the \$11 billion in business disruption caused by the September 11 terrorist attacks exceeded the amount of property damage by \$1 billion. Being prepared and having a plan to follow during disastrous situations not only reduces the stress of an already horrific situation, but it can also save your organization from losing additional money from a business disruption.

Here are some tactics to consider when planning or refining your disaster recovery strategy:

- Recognize the major types of disasters that might impact your business.
- Establish a planning team that includes a cross-functional group of employees.
- Determine ways to communicate the plan to all employees.
- Implement optimum shelter and evacuation procedures.
- Provide specific guidelines for protecting employees, clients, customers and workplace facilities.
- Determine back-up systems and/or off-site storage to protect key assets, documents and information (such as financial data, databases, custom software, HR records, emergency contact lists and insurance files, including copies of signed contracts and proof of ownership or proof of loss).
- Practice your plan.

## Comments or suggestions?

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- Plan for the continuation of business operations, ideally with minimal impact to customers.
- Establish backups or understudies for critical employees.
- Establish communication channels to contact all employees who may be dispersed following evacuations.
- Determine ways to ensure payroll continuity.
- Determine how to leverage services available through your employee assistance program (EAP) or establish one if your organization does not have a program.

When creating a disaster recovery plan, it's essential to ask and answer important questions about your business. What are the critical applications you're trying to protect? How will you convene disaster-recovery team members if communications are down and members are evacuated to unknown locations? Do you have arrangements to quickly resume critical applications? How can you make sure employees continue to get paid?

To address these and other issues, you may want to consider retaining a disaster planning consultant to help you develop a plan customized to meet your business needs. Ceridian's work-life and EAP program, for example, partners with Professional Workplace Interaction, Inc., to provide expert training and consulting on disaster planning. Through this partnership, Ceridian provides a wide range of services, whether your organization is creating an in-house plan or seeking outside expertise to design a comprehensive response to emergency situations.

The plans provide specific guidelines for protecting employees, customers and workplace facilities and offer advice on business continuation issues. Plans may also describe the responsibilities of individual employees for a wide range of emergency and disaster situations that require preplanning and preventive measures. "Our disaster planning services assist organizations in examining and preparing for 15 to 20 different types of emergencies," says Diane Syer, Ceridian senior training consultant.

Whatever the plan, it's critical that companies test it. Rehearsals will reveal holes in planning that must be filled so your organization can be truly prepared for the real thing.

Plans should also be reviewed and updated regularly, as the business and its key players change over time. Lack of rehearsals and out-of-date plans are the two most common weaknesses in disaster recovery planning, according to the *Disaster Recovery Journal*.

### Are you prepared?

A good disaster recovery plan can help your organization recover, function and continue to survive if you're struck by the unthinkable. Organizational readiness should be a priority and part of the overall business strategy. Chances are, you've got a good thing going. It's critical that you protect it.

Contact your Ceridian representative to learn more about Ceridian's organizational readiness consulting services.

### Sources

*Disaster Recovery Journal*, [www.drj.com](http://www.drj.com)

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

Small Business Administration, [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM), [www.shrm.org](http://www.shrm.org)

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