



RealManage

Disaster Planning Guide

Preparing Your Community or Association for a Crisis

A BOARD MEMBER'S GUIDE





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Introduction

Welcome to the **Disaster Planning Guide**, brought to you by RealManage. Is your association ready for any disaster? Even if you don't live in an area where natural disasters are common, preparation is still essential. Coming up with a disaster plan allows you to feel confident in your community's ability to withstand storms and other weather-related emergencies. Most disasters involve one or more of the following:

- Hurricanes
- Tornadoes
- Flooding
- Wildfires
- Snowstorms
- Landslides

FEMA and other disaster organizations advocate for a traditional three-step system for both you and your homeowners/residents:

- Planning
- Preparation
- Recovery

Board members must review and sign off on your disaster plan. Store the approved version in various easily accessible locations for all board members and emergency contacts to access. Review and revisit your plan at least once a year.





Your Specific Association

Since every community is unique, it's essential to think about how your board members can help mitigate these disasters. When planning, be sure to keep in mind things that are specific to your association.



What makes your association unique?

In order to come up with a thorough disaster plan, you must first understand the specific needs of your community. For example, associations vary in size. A beachfront condo may only have six units, while a planned unit development may have over 1,500 units consisting of a combination of single-family homes, townhomes, and condos.

- Multi-story condos along the coast or in large urban areas are at a higher risk for fire, flooding, and evacuation
- Communities that have amenities such as clubhouses, marinas with boat slips, tennis courts, pools, and retention ponds require unique planning

Additionally, associations and condos have different population characteristics. Resorts tend to have a high concentration of absentee owners, making an emergency communication plan critical. Some community associations have higher populations of retired/senior residents, while other communities near universities may have a student population.



Disaster Planning

Consider the factors here to adequately move on to the Preparation Stage. These questions can help you build your Community Association Disaster Plan.

Assessing Your Risk Factors

- Summarize any past disasters
- Summarize any potential risks that your community faces
- Summarize the potential impact to the overall association

Assessing Financial Plans

- Determine the budget and finances that will be used to satisfy any disaster expenses
- Assign responsibility for who is authorized to approve contracts/expenditures during and directly after a disaster
- Set spending limits and spending procedures for the treasurer

Coordinate With Your Management Company

- Summarize your association's plans to coordinate with your management company
- Request a written special consideration for communication, staffing and support personnel, and expense planning from the management team
- Record and publish the contact information for your emergency contact at the management company

Document Storage and Safeguards

- Summarize any procedures the secretary should follow to safeguard any essential documents¹
- Regularly back up electronic files and store them in a safe location
- Determine what technology your management company can provide to safeguard these critical historical files

[1] **Documents include** (but are not limited to):

- Articles of Incorporation
- CC&Rs
- Insurance Policies
- Bank Account Numbers
- Statements, Checks and Assessment History
- Equipment Warranties
- Existing Contracts



[1] **Information** such as

- Insurance agent and agency
- Agent emergency contact information
- Policy numbers/information
- Date of last policy review

[2] **For example:**

- Elderly residents
- Disabled residents
- Residents with particular medical needs
- Residents with access to special equipment like four-wheel drive vehicles, large bed trucks, ATVs, pumps, generators, etc.
- Absentee owners
- Residents with medical skills or training

[3] **For example:**

- Route maps
- Directions for exiting the community
- Nearest public shelters

Insurance Audit

- Review your risks, coverage, deductible, and resident responsibilities with your insurance agent
- Summarize the procedures for reporting a loss or incident for both your board members and your residents
- Keep a record of important information¹

Disaster Communications Plan

- Summarize your pre- and post-disaster communication method
- Publish, somewhere accessible to your residents, a resident preparedness flyer or FEMA preparation checklist
- Ensure you have access to a resident directory with names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, and emergency contact information
- Consider and recommend planning for any residents who have unique or special needs or those who can be helpful in disasters²

Evacuation Plan

- Summarize procedures for community evacuation³
- Identify and define how residents can access emergency evacuation information and contacts
- Create a plan for residents with pets, including what the policy and procedures should be for short-term and long-term boarding
- Consider the creation of an access waiver (especially for condo residents) to provide authorized personnel entry to shut off utilities or otherwise protect the property



[1] **For marinas,** consider:

- Docks
- Boats
- Pump-outs
- Fuel
- Emergency valve shut-offs

For clubhouses, consider:

- Fire extinguishers
- Smoke alarms
- Carbon monoxide detectors
- Electrical appliances

Physical Inventory and Community Map

- Summarize your community's amenities and any equipment that may be damaged during a disaster
- Create a location map and instructions for all cutoff valves and switches for water, gas, electric, sprinklers, etc.
- Note any facilities requiring a key or combination lock entry and store information safely for any specialized access crews that need to gain entry

Miscellaneous Considerations

- Pre-qualify any vendors or contractors for post-disaster cleanup and create a list of those you've determined valuable to residents and board members
- Create unique IDs for authorized decision-makers, board members, or volunteers to help residents know who is with your community
- Account for any special amenities¹



Disaster Recovery

Returning to your home after a disaster can be dangerous, so make sure that residents and board members follow these steps to ensure safety.

[1] **A list** of emergency supplies:

- First-aid supplies
- Tie-down straps
- Rope and chain
- Ladders
- Utility knives
- Sheet plastic
- Tarps
- Blankets
- Radios
- Flashlights
- Batteries
- Plywood and portable sawhorses
- Portable generators
- Portable heaters (ice storms)
- Pumps (flooding)
- Fans or smoke/ventilation equipment (fire)

After a disaster is when we start rebuilding our community, so remember to keep your checklist and inventory for all items that will need to be repaired or replaced in the future.

- Wait for authorities to approve returning
- Ensure you can contact residents to let them know when they can return
- Determine who will be responsible for letting residents know it is safe
- Never enter a damaged building without qualified professionals to guide you
- Check on neighbors and put emergency services on standby.
- Don't attempt to remove heavy debris without using proper equipment and protections
- Avoid any flooded roads and ensure you know of and communicate to alternative routes to others

More than anything, it is important to stay calm and avoid panic during disasters. Securing the area with professionals, providing first aid if possible, and following the instructions of local authorities are all paramount to a good preparation plan for natural disasters.

Be sure to note where your supplies are located and inventory them periodically. The association may want to request a resident's support to loan and/or deliver tools to a central location before any disaster. It is recommended that tools should be marked for identification and return.¹



Emergency Contact List

Contact Name	Phone Number	Email
Management Company		
Community Manager		
Property Manager		
Emergency Contact		
Local Non-Emergency Services		
Electric		
Gas		
Internet		
Police		
Fire		
Board Members/Volunteers		
President		
Vice President		
Secretary		
Treasurer		
Miscellaneous		



When Disaster Strikes, Having a Solid Preparation and Recovery Plan is Crucial

That's where RealManage steps in. Our comprehensive community management services ensure that your association is not only prepared for disasters but can also recover quickly and efficiently.

Our dedicated Vendor Services Department is committed to handling the disaster recovery process with care by working exclusively with qualified and vetted vendors, giving you peace of mind that your community is in the best hands.

Choose RealManage for a partnership that prioritizes your community's safety and well-being.



Get in Touch

