

There are resources available to help plan for a crisis.



NICOLE E. DELLA RAGIONE

The U.S Small Business Administration estimates that 25 percent of businesses don't open again after a major disaster.

That's a sobering statistic for any business owner, small or large.

Experts say the best way to protect business is to identify the risks relevant to your location, whether natural or man-made. Then, keep the plan updated annually.

And, in the modern world, companies can't afford to ignore cybersecurity threats:

"Companies should have a disaster recovery plan in place that adequately addresses cybersecurity," said Nicole E. Della Ragione, an associate at Ruskin Moscou Faltischek, P.C., where she is a member of the firm's Cybersecurity and Data Privacy Practice Group. This plan should strive to lessen the impact of any unplanned incidences,

including malware threats (ex. Ransomware), the insider threat of a rogue employee, and physical or environmental impacts that could destroy a company's network infrastructure (i.e., flood or fire)."

"In addressing these issues, a company should consider how it will recover from any kind of disaster, such as having off-site backup servers that can allow it to resume operations quickly and identifying who must be notified internally and externally if an incident arises," Della Ragione said. "Most importantly, companies must rehearse these plans to ensure that if any kind of disaster does happen, they know how to immediately respond.

For small businesses, all of this may seem daunting, but the federal government has multiple tools available to help. You can preserve your equipment and business records by referencing an IRS guide for protecting your information before an emergency strikes. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) also offers an emergency preparedness checklist and toolkit.

Among the subjects covered are natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods and tornadoes as well as a range of cyber threats.

The sites are readily available by searching for FEMA, SBA or IRS and adding "business preparedness."