

Is your business prepared for disaster? Step #4: Know your customers, contacts, suppliers and vendors.



In an emergency, do you know your critical contacts and how you'd quickly reach them? Businesses who add this element to their emergency plans are more likely to maintain customer satisfaction and positive working relationships. So, whether you're experiencing a temporary closure, an emergency, or a more permanent shutdown, these tips can help you know your contacts and keep everyone informed.

We recommend starting with our printable contact information form. Simply create a copy for each contact (like your customers, contacts, suppliers, and vendors). Then, follow these tips for each group.

Key Contacts Form

Use this form to record information about your current suppliers, those you could use as an alternate choice, and your key customers and contacts. Duplicate this form for each contact.

Updated: _____

Next review date: _____

Contact type

☐ Current supplier/vendor ☐ Backup supplier/vendor ☐ Key customer/contact

General company information

Company/individual name: _____

Account number: _____

Material/service provided: _____

Street address: _____

City, State, ZIP code: _____

Company phone: _____

Website: _____

Company representative

Primary contact: _____

Title: _____

Office phone: _____

Mobile phone: _____

Email: _____

Alternate contact: _____

Title: _____

Office phone: _____

Mobile phone: _____

Email: _____

Additional information

Notes: _____



How to keep your customers informed.

In addition to keeping contact information current by filling out a form for each customer, consider these ways to keep customers informed in an emergency:

- Send emails or make phone calls for quick updates.
- Post updates and news on your social media profiles.
- Add an announcement to your company website.
- Set up a designated emergency phone number with a recorded voicemail.

How to keep your contacts informed.

Fill out forms for each of your contacts, such as your:

- Accountant
- Bank
- Billing/invoicing service
- Building manager/owner
- Building security
- Insurance agent/broker
- Insurance company
- Internet service provider
- Payroll provider
- Public works department
- Telephone company
- Utilities company

How to keep suppliers and vendors informed.

No matter how prepared your business is for an emergency, you won't be able to resume business operations if your suppliers and vendors can't deliver. And that could cause you to lose customers. To protect your business, fill out a contact form for each supplier and vendor and take these precautions:

- Make sure your suppliers and vendors are not all in the same geographic location as you. If you're out of service for a local emergency, they're likely to be, too.
- Have alternate or backup suppliers and shippers in place.
- Request copies of your suppliers' business continuity plans.
- Establish a notification list and procedures.

Frankly speaking, the best businesses are prepared for the worst, and our free Disaster Preparedness Guide has you covered. For additional questions or protection, our local, independent agents are here to help. Talk to one today.

This content was developed for general informational purposes only. While we strive to keep the information relevant and up to date, we make no guarantees or warranties regarding the completeness, accuracy, or reliability of the information, products, services, or graphics contained within the blog. The blog content is not intended to serve as professional or expert advice for your insurance needs. Contact your local, independent insurance agent for coverage advice and policy services.