

# Windstorm Preparedness amidst COVID-19



**The 2020 Pacific typhoon season begins in May and is anticipated to be an active one, complicating the fight against the current pandemic. COVID-19 will present an additional challenge, impeding emergency response efforts, as windstorm preparedness tasks may conflict with quarantine and contagion prevention requirements.**

To help prepare for the 2020 typhoon season, this guide offers useful advice and reminders to deal with today's challenges – whether your property is currently idled, or otherwise just resuming operations.



2020 Pacific typhoon season: pandemic compounds natural hazards

## Windstorm Preparedness – What you can do Now!

- Closely monitor the weather forecasts to quickly anticipate next actions to take.
- Review and adapt all your Emergency and Natural Hazards Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Plans for the current pandemic conditions.
- Update the contact information of your employees, vendors, and contractors involved in windstorm preparedness and recovery tasks.
- Contact and confirm availability of essential employees and contractors needed for the key actions and tasks of the windstorm preparedness plan.
- Review your inventory of materials and equipment needed for windstorm preparedness and recovery tasks, such as storm shutters, plywood, etc., and order materials now because shortages in supplies are expected.
- Confirm availability and needs for fuel and other resources needed for your operations; be cautious of storing these additional resources or fuel on site as they potentially create protection challenges.



The COVID-19 pandemic crisis is limiting the resources to prepare for severe windstorms.

## Preparedness considerations during a pandemic

- Closely follow the directives from local authorities to determine when you can restart operations and what restrictions apply to your site and employees.
- Consider conducting a re-layout of the work stations and common areas at your workplace to maintain safe distancing.
- Remember that mass transportation options for your employees will be limited.
- Personnel, materials, and resources for preparedness tasks will be limited.
- Ensure adequate stock of cleaning materials and personal protection equipment such as face masks, gowning, hair and shoe covers, and gloves.
- Increase cleaning and sanitizing frequencies of surfaces at your workplace.
- Alcohol-based cleaning and sanitizing fluids should be stored in a separate and protected, non-combustible space or UL listed flammable liquids cabinet.
- Provide contact barriers such as glazing or transparent plastic panels in areas where there is frequent contact with the public.

The following is a summary of the preparedness, response, and recovery plans and guides developed by Swiss Re Corporate Solutions that should be revised and adapted for this challenging COVID-19 pandemic time. These plans and guides are available and can be downloaded in our portal at [CorporateSolutions.SwissRe.com/Insights/Knowledge](https://CorporateSolutions.SwissRe.com/Insights/Knowledge)

### Windstorm Preparedness Plan

Review, update and adapt the main sections of your plan:

#### Pre-season Preparation

- Inspect roof cover, flashing and drains
- Inspection and protection of external walls, openings, windows and doors
- Inspect and test backup power supply and connected equipment
- Check/replenish preparedness, recovery, and cleaning supplies
- Review business continuity plan

#### In-season Preparedness

- Monitor the weather and storm forecasts
- Monitor the stock of consumables
- Reduce the stock of in-transit materials/products

#### Storm approaching

- Re-test backup power supply equipment
- Test dewatering and sump pumps
- Remove debris around the facility
- Secure roof-mounted and outdoor equipment
- Protect your data backups
- Reduce stock level as much as possible and elevate materials and products above floor level

#### After the storm

- Anticipate and plan for accessibility challenges
- Assess the impact and document damages
- Immediately initiate recovery plan

### Idle and Vacant Properties

If your property has been idle please adapt the main sections of this guide:

#### Keep Fire Protection Systems Active

- Maintain sprinkler systems active
- 24/7 alarm monitoring
- Inspect, test, and maintain equipment
- Lock control valves

#### Unnecessary Combustible Loading

- Eliminate or reduce combustible materials stored indoors and outdoors

#### Ignition Sources

- Restrict hot work and smoking
- Isolate all non-essential utilities such as electricity and gas

#### Contractor Management

- Close supervision of contractors

#### Security

- Secure the perimeter and points of access
- Increase security measures

#### Burglar Alarms & Watch Service

- Provide intrusion detection sensors
- Monitor alarms remotely

#### Inspections

- Conduct regular inspections of the building and perimeter

#### Access Control

- Log access and escort visitors

#### Local Authorities

- Inform local police and fire department when the property becomes unoccupied

#### Heat

- Be mindful of potential freezing temperatures during the latter part of the typhoon season

#### Detection and Alarm

- Provide detection systems in areas not provided with automatic sprinklers

### Restarting Operations Guide

Planning to resume operations after been idle, adapt the main sections of this guide:

#### Changes since previous operation

- Identify changes and reassess the risks

#### Staff and Resources

- Check personnel availability

#### Supply Chain readiness

- Check key suppliers are available and aware of your requirement

#### Machinery

- Check inspection/maintenance routines to OEM guidelines, consider what is needed prior to re-start

#### Ignition Sources

- Enforce hot work policy
- Ensure electrical system and equipment are in good condition

#### Fire Protection

- Ensure fire protection systems and special protection systems are in service

#### Emergency Response

- Check pre-fire and emergency response plans are still accurate

#### Housekeeping

- Ensure all areas are tidy and clear of excess combustibles

#### Access and Security

- Ensure adequate security arrangements are in place

### Swiss Re CatNet® – offers a range of proprietary geo risk tools.

Windstorm, Flood and other natural hazards exposure profiles for any location worldwide are available through Swiss Re's CatNet® online natural perils tool.

Use the following link to register: [SwissRe.com/CatNet](https://SwissRe.com/CatNet)

### Useful Links & Resources

#### Asia Pacific

Japan Meteorological Agency – [www.jma.go.jp/jma/indexe.html](http://www.jma.go.jp/jma/indexe.html)

Hong Kong Observatory – [www.hko.gov.hk/en/index.html](http://www.hko.gov.hk/en/index.html)

Bureau of Meteorology Australia – [www.bom.gov.au/cyclone](http://www.bom.gov.au/cyclone)

Meteorological Service Singapore – [www.weather.gov.sg/](http://www.weather.gov.sg/)

China Meteorological Administration – <http://www.cma.gov.cn>



### Contact your

Swiss Re Corporate Solutions  
Risk Engineer, Account Engineer  
or representative for additional  
information or assistance with  
developing your Windstorm  
Preparedness and Response Plan.

This checklist is intended as a guide to property loss prevention and to aid in preparing for a windstorm event. This document should not be regarded as a standard and should not be referenced as supporting material in the event of a loss. Please do not distribute without permission from Swiss Re Corporate Solutions Ltd and its subsidiaries and affiliates. Under no circumstances shall Swiss Re or its Group companies be liable for any loss or damage resulting from use of this document.