

# Company offers tips for being prepared

Is your business ready for an unexpected emergency or natural disaster? Are important financial and human resource records backed up? Do you have a plan for essential employees to work so that you can maintain operations? How quickly would your office be able to get back up and running from just a minor interruption in service to major natural disasters?

Insight Performance, a human resources consulting and employee benefits solutions firm with offices in Danvers and Dedham, poses these questions for National Preparedness Month. The Danvers office is located at 185 Centre St.

During September, the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency sponsors a month-long awareness campaign designed to encourage businesses and communities to prepare and plan for emergencies and disasters.

"If your company has not thought about these questions in a while, it might be a good time to review disaster recovery and business continuity plans," said Mike Ward, president of Insight Performance. "We try to encourage our clients to think about issues in the event of an emergency around employee resources, working from home, compensation, as well as benefits and insurance questions."

Preparation is the key to success. When you prepare and practice for an emergency in advance, it makes a difference in your ability to take immediate and informed action when it matters most. Additionally, training is an essential part of the preparedness program process. It is vital to ensure that everyone knows

what to do when there is an emergency or a disruption of business operations.

"A little planning and communication goes a long way to limit a disaster's impact on your business, including loss of life, injury, financial loss, property damage, and lost productivity from missed work," said Nancy Saperstone, senior HR consultant at Insight Performance.

Insight Performance offers a few suggestions when developing emergency plans:

- **Resource Management** — addresses resources needed for responding to emergencies, continuing business operations and communicating during and after an incident.

- **Emergency Response Plan** — protects people, property, and the environment. Plans include evacuation, sheltering, and lockdown.

- **Crisis Communications Plan** — addresses communication with employees, customers, the news media, and stakeholders.

- **Business Continuity Plan** — addresses recovery strategies to overcome the disruption of business.

- **Information Technology Plan** — addresses the recovery of computer hardware, connectivity, and electronic data.

- **Employee Assistance and Support** — encourages employees and their families to develop family preparedness plans.

- **Incident Management system** — addresses responsibilities and coordination of activities before, during and following an incident.

- **Training** — helps people with a defined role in the preparedness program so they are ready to perform assigned tasks.