

Arcotherm Business Continuity guide

If you have a flood, fire or other major event at your business premises which may impact on your ability to do business, we can suggest the following steps.

This is meant to be a general guide and we take no responsibility for the outcome of following such advice. As with any major incident, we would recommend you take specific advice from suitably qualified sources.

Insurance

Call your insurance company's (24 hour) Emergency Helpline as soon as possible. They will be able to provide information on dealing with your claim, and assistance in getting things back to normal.

Keep a record of the damage (especially photographs or video footage) and retain correspondence with insurers.

Commission immediate emergency work if necessary to protect your property from further damage; this can sometimes be undertaken without insurer approval (remember to check your policy and get receipts).

Get advice where detailed, lengthy repairs are needed. Your insurer or loss adjuster can give advice on reputable contractors / tradesmen. Beware of bogus tradesmen and always check references.

Check with your insurer if you have to move into alternative business accommodation: this may be covered in a policy.

Make sure your insurance company knows who the key contacts are, their decision-making authority and where to contact them.

Emergency Services and safety advice

If the fire service has been involved, check with them first to determine whether the premises are safe or whether there are any specific areas which should be cordoned off and made out of bounds until survey and/or repair work is under way

Cleaning Up

Find out where you can get help to clean up. Check with your local authority or health authority if you think there may be a health hazard. Look for suitable general or specialist companies that can rectify any damage. Insurance companies may have authorised suppliers, but may also allow immediate work to take place without authorisation. Check your policy.

Open doors and windows to ventilate the premises, but take care to ensure the building and its contents are secure.

The Environment Agency states that in the case of flooding, it takes a standard brick about one month per inch to dry out. **Arcotherm can supply suitable equipment to help with drying processes for flood or building repair. We're well experienced in this area and can advise on the most appropriate equipment for the task.**

Contact your utilities companies. Have the power supplies to your premises checked before you turn them back on to make sure they have dried out. Wash taps and run them for a few minutes before use.

Don't attempt to dry out photos or business paperwork - place them in a plastic bag, and if possible store them in a fridge or very cool area.

Throw away food which may have been in contact with floodwater - it could be contaminated. Contact your local authority Environmental Health department for advice.

Assessing the impact on the business operation

It is vital to assess the following:

- What business paperwork or technically stored information is damaged or undamaged and available
- What the available information tells us about work in progress
- What work, stock and materials, or production have been lost
- What work, stock and materials or production have been undamaged or can be retrieved

- Which customers are affected, how are they affected and what can be done to remedy the situation – if possible when explaining the situation, it is important to offer your customer appropriate solutions
- How to prioritise replacement work and operational processes and business services.

Don't forget, Arcotherm can supply suitable equipment to help with drying processes for flood or building repair. We're well experienced in this area and can advise on the most appropriate equipment for the task.

Communicating with the outside world

It is important to have a clear policy about alerting staff, customers and suppliers.

- Who should be responsible for the overall communications process
- Who should be told first and how much information they should be given
- Where possible put the people to be communicated with into different groups:
 - Key clients
 - Clients whose work has been damaged/lost
 - Suppliers whose deliveries or services might be affected
 - Outsourced companies who can help with the business recovery – including Arcotherm
 - Local or national media

When a major event has taken place which causes a business interruption, it is important to keep everybody well informed and reassured. If the event has had a substantial impact on the business operation, honesty is the best policy.

Ensure that all staff know who to refer media enquiries to. Instruct them not to be drawn on the facts, but to politely refer them to the appropriate director/manager who is in control of media communications.

Dealing with the media

- Give your name and position
- Prepare a written statement giving the facts – give them a copy for reference
- If you are being interviewed stick to your written statement
- Ideally, and where it is appropriate to release a level of detail, it should state what has happened (factually and not conjecture)
- Give a reassuring message to staff, customers and supplier
- Say you're still open for business or operational from another site
- State all your normal contacts numbers are still working and usable

Don't be persuaded to make any emotive statements or unfounded judgments about the situation, possible causes or perpetrators.

You cannot control how the media will present or edit the story, but ensure that all reports are correct. You have a legal right to respond if anything is misconstrued or misrepresented.

Remain cool and professional and stick to the facts. If journalists persist in trying for a controversial angle, reiterate the facts. If they ask you anything you can't answer – simply respond stating something truthful but neutral like "We simply don't know at this stage and can't make any comment on that until we have full possession of the facts".

Ask the journalist(s) to write or email you with the questions they want to pose and give them a written response. If anything is misquoted, you have a written record of your message and key points to respond with. You have the right for the media to correct their report in a subsequent issue.

Remember: Effective crisis management and clear guidelines and communications channels are vital to disaster recovery and business continuity.