
Hurricane Preparedness: The Importance of Planning

It's simple right? Like the kids cartoon/story about the grasshopper and the ant. The grasshopper goes through life partying without a care. The ant plods and plans. When bad times come (like a hurricane), the grasshopper hurts and the ant survives. The moral: planning for hurricanes is not glamorous. But, as every library manager who has been through a hurricane will tell you, having a plan helps. Specifically, a plan can:

- Enhance our abilities to mitigate potential hazards;
- Enable us to better respond to emergency situations; and,
- Make us quicker to begin to recover from disasters.

A hurricane enables to more quickly respond through the cycle of emergency planning, crisis reaction, and recovery.

The Alabama Public Library Service, State Librarian, Rebecca Mitchell, believes that public library hurricane disaster planning function is so important that she has re-directed one of her consultants, Jim Smith, to work full time with Alabama public libraries on developing their plans. Jim is using [D-plan](#) developed by the [Northeast Document Conservation Center \(NEDCC\)](#) and the [Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners \(MBLC\)](#). Contact Jim Smith <Jim.Smith@apls.alabama.gov> for further information. The Southeast Florida Library Information Network (SEFLIN) has collected member [disaster plans and resources](#) as an aid to other libraries planning efforts. Take a look at the University of Texas, Austin's [Hurricane and Related Disasters Emergency Plan](#) and the Library of Virginia's [Workbook for Disaster Planning](#).

How You Can Help: This blog post is provided by the Florida State University's [Information Use Management & Policy Institute](#). The Institute has been awarded a grant to examine how public libraries can aid their communities to better prepare for and recover from hurricanes. See a [project summary](#), [LibraryJournal.com article](#), or [radio interview](#) for further information. One aspect of the recently awarded FSU Information Institute's project is to develop a model public library hurricane/disaster plan. To do a good job we need to draw on the plans libraries have already developed as good examples. Help us all out by sending your library's hurricane or disaster plan – as well as any other related experiences – to Charles R. McClure charles.mcclure@cci.fsu.edu or c/o FSU, Information Institute P.O. Box 3062100, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2100.