

SMALL BUSINESS CASE STUDY

Equity Technologies Corporation knows what it means to be prepared. Located in Mobile, Alabama, the company has long had plans and procedures in place to counter the threat posed by hurricanes and other severe weather. For instance, Equity Technologies promotes family and individual preparedness and has set up a means of communicating with employees when dangerous weather threatens. Employees carry laminated cards with contact information for supervisors and a voice recorded call-in number with updates about the company's status.

But it was the risk of Y2K related disturbances that motivated Equity Technologies to get serious about its disaster preparedness and business continuity plans. "We are a small company which does business around the world. To be competitive my clients must feel confident that we are ready for anything," said Equity Technologies Corporation's President and CEO Cathy Anderson-Giles. "It wasn't hard to put together a plan, you just have to make it a priority."

First the company identified workers to serve as key contacts for the 72-employee operation. These key contacts then established safety and security teams which analyzed Equity Technologies Corporation's entire emergency process.

The teams realized that communication between the company and the outside world was the single most important operational factor in an emergency. As a result, Equity Technologies purchased generators to power the phone system during utility outages and trained co-workers to set them up within seven minutes. Not only does the company have emergency plans and procedures in place, it has made a commitment to review the plans and tools each year at the start of the hurricane season. "We have the annual review on our corporate calendar," said Anderson-Giles. "Being prepared means being ready for any kind of emergency, be it hurricane, utility disruption or man-made disaster."