



# WHAT EMERGENCY MANAGERS SHOULD KNOW TODAY

## A FORTUNE 100 BENCHMARK REPORT

CURATED BY



P R E P A R E D N E S S

# BACKGROUND

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Ethos Preparedness is dedicated to assisting the Emergency Management community in its effort to keep workforces safer + more prepared for disasters of all kinds.

In late Spring 2021, key leaders from Ethos Preparedness met with the teams responsible for emergency preparedness, business continuity, and resilience planning from more than a dozen major companies, nearly all of which were Fortune 100 level or higher.

As leaders in this space, we sought to understand what had changed for organizations over the last year and a half. In an effort to support emergency managers establish benchmarks for success, we compiled our learnings into this report. Together we can set the vision for a more prepared + resilient future.



# WHO WE SURVEYED

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## TITLES + DEPARTMENTS

- Crisis Management
- Resiliency
- Occupational Health + Safety
- Business Continuity
- Risk Management
- Security



WEST COAST-HEADQUARTERED WITH  
GLOBAL PRESENCE & RESPONSIBILITY,  
OUR PARTICIPANTS RUN THE GAMUT OF  
RISKS & PREPAREDNESS NEEDS.



# TAKEAWAY STATS

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**100%**

Have some quantity of disaster preparedness supplies for their employees on campus.

**92%**

Have experienced at least one occasion in which their employees, or a portion thereof, were forced to shelter-in-place as a result of an emergency event.

**84%**

Expressed concern for the distribution of supplies to their workforce during an emergency.

## DANGEROUS ASSUMPTIONS

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### **Homeward Bound?**

Many businesses assume employees will be able to leave the office during an emergency. This under-estimates possible damage to critical infrastructure and comes from limited reference points in modern times. The hard truth is that, from earthquakes and hurricanes to social unrest and security breaches, response plans need to cover shelter-in-place for at least 24 hours.

### **No Such Thing As Free Lunch**

As Fortune 100 companies, many of the teams we interviewed have on-site cafeterias. There is an incorrect assumption that a cafeteria (on any level, down to a break room) will always be a safe option to distribute food and water during an emergency.

### **That Could Never Happen Here...Right?**

Businesses on the west coast have been primed for decades to take workplace preparedness seriously due to the risk of earthquakes, but all businesses surveyed stated that the most common events include hurricanes, active shooter scenarios, & social unrest around the globe.



# BIG COMPANIES. UNIVERSAL IDEAS.

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Participants were granted anonymity to encourage candor. We found the core principals of preparedness applicable to **Emergency Management Professionals at companies of all sizes.**

## ORG 1

HQ: California

Confessed that up to just a couple of years ago, they had nearly no supplies on campus beyond the OSHA required first aid equipment and training. Now they have backpacks with water, food, first aid equipment, etc.

They later removed the food and water, assuming that they could rely on their company feeding program for those provisions. Supply containers are visible in the stairwells. Direct quote: “We’re not ready for something big yet.”

## ORG 4

HQ: Pacific NW

Each employee has a go bag at their desk containing a glow stick, blanket, food + water for 72 hours. One notable issue they face is that employees tend to empty the bags in favor of using them for other purposes!

Similarly, they struggle with the shelf life of those items and effectively refreshing them for the employee population. They also have supplies specific to floor warden duties like radios, gloves, crowbars, flashlights and bucket toilets.

## ORG 6

HQ: California

Publicly stockpiles select items like N-95 masks, but have supplies in the basement that remain 'invisible' to their employees with no plan for distribution.

Food + water was assumed to be something that the on-site kitchen would continue to supply through a shelter-in-place scenario, but admitted the flaws in this logic.

**Organization 8, headquartered in California with offices across the U.S., reported that their Texas employee base was very disappointed with their lack of preparedness and response to meet their needs in the wake of the deep freeze with Winter Storm Uri, sparking a debate about their responsibility in educating and supplying their teams.**

# WHO LEADS?

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If the top companies in the world are any indication, corporate emergency preparedness is on the cusp of a major leap forward. Benchmarks vary by company size and region, but there is alignment on the necessity of evacuation & shelter-in-place supplies for the office.

Global best practices have yet to emerge on the best distribution models and participants displayed great interest in how to best improve upon both the supplies available, their visibility among the workforce, and the knowledge + training to build a truly resilient team.

**We'll leave you with this response that changed our perspective entirely:**

## ORG 11

HQ: California

In the wake of Hurricane Maria, employees in the affected area actively sought out the shelter of their office and reached out to management for assistance finding supplies to survive, completely changing their expectations on what their responsibility could be during a disaster to keep employees safe.

**Where would your employees turn in that moment?  
Who has the responsibility to plan, supply, and educate?**

## Leadership Buy In

It can be difficult for business leaders to prioritize funding human and financial capital for something that you hope to never endure. Here are some winning strategies to consider:

- Company reputation post-disaster can be tenuous, preparedness is a key investment.
- Thoughtful preparations minimize liability following an on-site event.
- A resilient business is made up of your greatest asset: resilient employees.

Ethos is committed to supporting emergency professionals as they make the case to prioritize preparedness with investments in equipment, kits + supplies, and training. Reach out to our team for a consultation to see how you can take your next step.

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