

The *C*entral *C*hamber of *C*ommerce's

C4 Report – Plan Ahead!

I recently attended a meeting at the Stephenson Disaster Management Institute (SDMI) at Louisiana State University. This meeting was held so that we could be introduced to some of the services that are available to business owners through the SDMI and to encourage us to have area businesses develop a "Continuity of Operations Plan". The purpose of a "Continuity of Operations Plan" is to ensure that businesses and agencies would be able to continue performance of essential functions under a broad range of circumstances that could disrupt normal operations. Not only are such plans valuable to businesses and various agencies but they could be scaled down to be beneficial for families as well. Here are some key questions to consider in developing a "Continuity of Operations Plan".

Do you have communications in place where folks can call in for updated/status info?

Do you have an out-of-area number for vendors, customers to call?

Do you have multiple contact numbers for employees, vendors, etc?

How will you reconstitute your operations?

Are your vital business files/records backed up, and readily available?

Communications: do you have any old rotary dial phones or manual typewriters?

Can your business operate via Telework and Alternate Work Locations?

Who is the back-up decision maker?

Do you have enough "cash" on hand?

None of us like to think about disasters but having Business Interruption Insurance policy, a Continuity of Operations Plan and a Disaster Recovery Plan. However, having these in place helps to assure that you, your employees and your business are prepared for the unexpected and will be able to resume normal operations as soon as possible. If your business is interested in any information on these areas contact us and we will point you in the right direction.