

The Storm & Crisis Communication Plan

A before/during/after plan for Long Island businesses, because a storm is unpredictable, but how you communicate through one doesn't have to be.

How to use this plan: fill it out during a calm week, not while a storm is bearing down. Having the contact list, channels, and message templates ready in advance is what makes the actual event manageable instead of chaotic.

What's inside

- Before / During / After Checklist
- Communication Channels Worksheet
- Pre-Drafted Message Templates
- Emergency Contact Sheet

1. Before / During / After Checklist

Before (as soon as a storm is forecast)

- ☐ Monitor forecast and any local emergency management alerts
- ☐ Decide on closure, delay, or modified-hours criteria in advance, don't decide under pressure
- ☐ Secure or move equipment, inventory, and outdoor signage
- ☐ Back up critical business data and files
- ☐ Confirm staff emergency contact info is current
- ☐ Pre-draft closure/delay messages so they're ready to send instantly (see Section 3)
- ☐ Update Google Business Profile hours if a closure or delay is likely

During

- ☐ Prioritize safety, no job or sale is worth risking anyone's safety
- ☐ Send the relevant pre-drafted message the moment a decision is made
- ☐ Designate one person as the single source of updates, so messaging doesn't get inconsistent across channels
- ☐ Keep updates factual and calm, avoid speculation about damage or duration

After

- ☐ Assess safety of the location before anyone returns
- ☐ Document any damage (photos, notes) before cleanup, for insurance purposes
- ☐ Send a reopening or status update as soon as it's confirmed
- ☐ Thank staff and customers for their patience
- ☐ Debrief: what worked in this plan, what needs to change before next time

2. Communication Channels Worksheet

List every place a customer might look for a status update, and who's responsible for updating each one. An update posted to only one channel often misses the customers who needed it most.

Channel	Who Updates It
Google Business Profile	
Website Banner	
Facebook / Instagram	
Text / Email List	
Phone Voicemail Greeting	
Storefront Signage	

Update Order (which channel gets updated first, second, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

3. Pre-Drafted Message Templates

Fill in the brackets and save these somewhere fast to reach, a phone note, a shared doc, so nobody is writing from scratch while also dealing with an actual storm.

Closure Announcement

"Due to [storm name/conditions], we will be closed on [date]. Your safety and ours comes first. We'll update you here as soon as we have more information. Thank you for understanding."

Delayed Opening

"We'll be opening later than usual today due to [conditions], expecting to open by [time]. We'll post an update if that changes. Thanks for your patience."

Appointment / Order Rescheduling

"Because of [storm name/conditions], we need to reschedule your [appointment/order] originally set for [date]. We'll reach out directly within [timeframe] to find a new time that works. We're sorry for the disruption and appreciate your patience."

Reopening Announcement

"We're back open as of [date/time]! Thank you for your patience while we made sure everything was safe and ready. We look forward to seeing you."

Extended Closure / Damage Update

"We wanted to update you directly: [brief, honest status]. We expect to reopen by [date, or "as soon as we have a firm date"]. Thank you for your continued support, it means a lot during a stretch like this."

4. Emergency Contact Sheet

Print a copy of this page and keep it somewhere that doesn't depend on power or internet access to reach, a phone won't always be charged or have signal when it matters most.

Role	Name	Phone
Owner / Manager		
Assigned Communicator		
Key Staff		
Insurance Agent		
Landlord / Property Manager		
Key Vendor / Supplier		
Utility Company		
Local Emergency Management		

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