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## Prepared

Only half of employees believe their workplaces are prepared for a severe emergency, according to the third annual workplace safety survey by Staples, Inc.. Nearly two-thirds of those polled said recent natural disasters have not led to their employers reassessing company safety plans. The survey, in honor of National Safety Month, also reveals that in the past six months nearly half of businesses have closed due to severe weather, costing the economy nearly \$50 billion in lost productivity.

**Isaac M. O'Bannon** • Jun. 05, 2014

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**SAFETY  
FIRST**

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“Safety is a top priority for employers, but there is still more planning and training that can be done to improve safety in the workplace,” said Bob Risk, national safety, health & wellness manager, Staples. “Staples offers the tools businesses of all sizes need to make more safety happen in the workplace, including first aid kits, fire extinguishers, proper signage and more.”

According to the survey, the top three safety concerns for employees are:

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after a natural disaster.

- **Fire:** Fire is one of the most common safety incidents, but most employees feel their companies are well prepared. Three-fourths say their employers have a plan and equipment in place for a fire emergency.

### **Small business employees feel more at risk to emergencies and disasters than employees at larger companies.**

The survey finds workers at businesses with fewer than 50 people are less aware or less sure who is in charge of emergency planning than employees at larger companies. Employees from smaller companies report having less emergency equipment or plans in place, are less likely to do safety reviews or drills, and are less prepared for severe emergencies than their counterparts at bigger organizations.

No matter the business size, Staples has the safety products companies need to keep their employees safe, whether through Staples stores or Staples.com for small businesses, and through Staples Advantage, the business-to-business division which services larger organizations. Staples also offers these tips for a safer working environment:

- **Businesses should assess and make sure they comply with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations.** While exact safety products may differ between businesses, a good starting point of must-have safety products includes first-aid kits, fire extinguishers, crank-powered cell phone chargers and flashlights, personal protective equipment (such as protective clothing and respiratory protection), and the following emergency items: water/food, blankets, and exit signs.
- **A good safety plan** includes procedures to respond to various emergency situations, methods to recover and maintain business continuity, securing adequate resources and supplies for crisis events and employee training.

- **To help limit slips, trips and falls** in the workplaces, businesses should be vigilant

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