



Disaster Planning In The Digital Age

News

8.15.14

Mike Mitchell was quoted in the August 15, 2014 article "Disaster Planning in the Digital Age" published in Legal Management. The article discusses the importance of having a disaster plan in place because a major disaster can cause major communication, data access and other technology disruptions which can quickly halt a business.

When Hurricane Katrina struck in 2005, causing more than \$100 billion in damage, the Fisher Phillips' New Orleans office did not have a plan in place to deal with major disasters.

With phone lines and internet down, firm leadership couldn't get in touch with staff members to find out if everyone had weathered the storm. As cell phone service gradually began to be restored, the firm found an unusual way to connect.

"We found it easier to get through very, very early in the morning or late at night," Mike says. "We had 2 a.m. phone calls because that was the only time people could get through."

A crisis-management plan can help firms contact clients, resume work and complete assignments in the days following a hurricane, fire or other natural disasters.

Key disaster plan components should include:

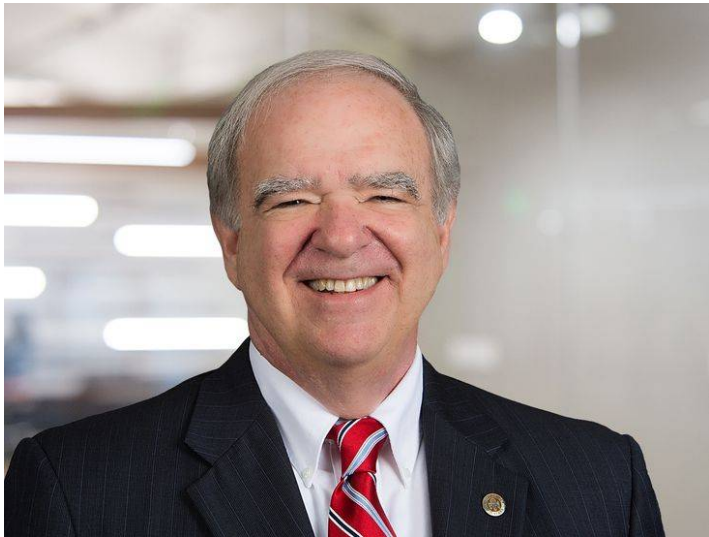
- Physical pre-storm preparations
- Important information protection
- Communication back-up plan
- Pre-arranged contingency services
- Remote workspace plan
- Staff compensation strategy
- Multi-office engagement policy
- Insurance claim follow-up plan

"If you know a disaster is heading your way, get out your plan, review it and make sure it's current and up-to-date," Mike says. "The main thing is making sure you know where everybody is going to

be. Make sure files are secured and the office itself is physically secure."

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Michael S. Mitchell
Senior Counsel
504.529.3830
[Email](#)