**Goals of a Disaster Plan notes**

* Identify and Protect Vital Records
* Reduce the risk of disasters
* Ensure your ability to continue or resume operations after a disaster
* Ensure your ability to rapidly reconstruct essential information and/or salvage damaged records

**Records Disaster Plans should include the following:**

* Prevention checklist
* Resource List
* List of tasks to be done immediately following a disaster.
* Salvage Priority list
* Equipment location list

***Plans must be tailored to each organization’s size, complexity, goals, objectives, management style and geographical location.***

***No plan can be transferred intact from one company to another.***

**Traits of a Good Plan:**

* Clear, concise and specific
* Well organized
* Relevant
* Practical
* Widely distributed and read
* Reviewed annually and updated
* Tested Periodically

## THE DISASTER PLANNING PROCESS

### Step 1: Obtain Top Management Support

**Step 2: Establish a Planning Committee**

**Step 3: Perform the Risk Analysis**

* The identification of and likelihood of various types of disasters (natural and human and technical) happening.
* The consequences and impact of each disaster scenario on the entire company
* The estimated costs of lost/damaged information/records and lost time and customer good-will
* The costs to replace/restore records, equipment, facilities, hire or replace staff versus the costs to develop and maintain the disaster plan.
* The risk of the “worst case” situation striking the organization

**Step 4: Establish Processing and Operations Priorities**

* What equipment is needed to complete jobs
* What communications devices are required
* What detailed steps and procedures must be followed? Where are these steps written down – in a manual, kept in the middle of the disaster site or, more often than not – in someone’s head?
* What people will be needed to complete daily business? Will they all be available to work – under what conditions?
* What vital or essential records, if destroyed, would place the organization in jeopardy or survival?

**Step 5: Perform Data Collection**

* Determining and locating external resources and making contracts/agreements with them
* Determining backup/duplication systems
* Preparing staffing information
* Gathering various inventories (records, equipment/supplies, forms, etc)
* Locating policies and procedure manuals, etc.
* Preparing master lists (staff, telephone, vendor, insurance)
* Reviewing all security systems
* Evaluating the facilities for potential problems
* Locating “cold” and “hot” sites

(It is helpful to develop forms for documenting these tasks and to use a software program to compile the data)

**Step 6: Prepare the Written Plan**

**Step 7: Testing the Plan**

It is essential that the plan be tested and evaluated on a regular basis (at least annually). The tests assure that the plan’s steps and assumptions are accurate and inclusive. Most importantly, can the staff follow them? Other objectives include:

* Identifying areas in the plan that need modification
* Reviewing the reliability and compatibility of backup systems, facilities and procedures
* Assuring that backup and duplication procedures are adequate and appropriate
* Providing training for team members
* Demonstrating the ability of the organization to recover
* Providing motivation for maintaining and updating the plan