



AVOIDING AND RECOVERING FROM DISASTER HOW DO YOU TEND TO YOUR GARDEN?

Ellen Freedman, CLM
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Are you surprised that 75% of U.S. businesses do not consciously prepare for disaster recovery? Chances are pretty good that you're one of them. Unfortunately, chances are also good that if you actually experience a disaster your firm will fail within five years. The smaller the firm, the more likely it will not recover.

Disasters come in many forms. I categorize them into four risk areas:

1. **Natural Disasters.** Pennsylvania lawyers have contacted me over the years following crippling experiences with flood, hurricane, fire, lightning and mudflows.
2. **Technological Disasters.** I have received calls over the years, and even personally experienced such events as equipment failure, sewer main break, water main break, electrical outage, and heat or air conditioning outages for extended periods during weather extremes.
3. **Man-Made Disasters.** The crippling effects here are so severe, that most of you have attended one or more of my seminars dealing with the variety of events which fall under this category, such as sudden death or disability of firm partner, cyber-crime, intentional or accidental deletion of files and forms, and workplace violence.
4. **Human Error.** Disasters caused by human error are too numerous to list. They include such events as accidental deletion of computer files, crippling of computer systems, severe lapses in security, fatal airplane crashes, fires, disabling or fatal car crashes, and more.

Loss control data indicates that 2% of disasters are intentional / man-made, which can affect the firm principal(s), or the firm as a whole; 5% are caused by natural disasters, which can affect an entire region; 25% are caused by technological failures; and the largest percentage of disasters, 68%, are attributable to human error.

Although man-made and natural disasters combined account for only 7% of disasters statistically, these are the types of disasters which can affect not just the firm, but your employees, your clients, your service providers, and even the region as a whole.

Two sessions at the upcoming Solo & Small Firm Section Conference will address all or aspects of this issue and offer practical advice and clear action steps to prepare your firm. I hope to see you in “Disaster Recovery” and/or “Cyber Security” so I can help ensure your firm is a survivor if it experiences one of the many forms of disaster which frequently impact PA lawyers and firms.

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