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MEDIA RELEASE

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Keep Your Small Business Above Water

Columbia, S.C. — Floods not only damage homes, they also take their toll on small businesses. The South Carolina Department of Insurance (SCDOI) and the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) reminds small-business owners to protect their businesses, as well as their homes, this hurricane season.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 40% of businesses never reopen after a flood.

“Catastrophic flooding can happen throughout the state, we saw that from the flood that hit in October 2015,” said Ray Farmer, Director of the SCDOI. “The cost of that storm climbed over \$1 billion in damages to the state’s infrastructure – including many small businesses that our communities rely on, some of which were never able to reopen.”

Director Farmer urges small business owners to speak with a trusted insurance agent to fully understand their risks and to know how to protect against losing their business due to flood.

Here are a few things small-business owners can do to protect their employees, property and operations.

- Depending on the risks, employees might be asked to shelter in place or evacuate immediately. That is why it is critical to have a plan in place to communicate with employees, regardless of where they are when a storm hits.
- It's important to have disaster provisions at the workplace, along with evacuation maps and a weather radio to hear instructions from local authorities.
- Insufficient insurance coverage can lead to serious financial loss or even business failure. Know what your policy covers and how much you will need to pay creditors, employees and yourself should a disaster strike. Go over these numbers with your insurance agent to learn how flood and business interruption insurance could assist with meeting these obligations.
- Be sure to store any records your insurance provider will need to see after an emergency in a safe place.
- Build a business continuity plan and practice it with employees. Be sure to take into consideration that employees might be working from different locations and that internet and/or other critical business services might not be performing normally. If you need assistance creating a business continuity plan, FEMA offers a [resource](#).
- Be sure to back up all personal and company data on a regular basis to help ensure you are prepared in case information is lost during a disaster.
- If disaster strikes your business, contact your insurance agent immediately and ask what information is needed to file a claim.