



FLOOD DEBRIEF REPORT

25 OCTOBER 2013



BOMA Calgary worked with the Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) throughout the 2013 Flood. The BOMA Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) team - Lia Robinson, Glen Kitteringham and Ray McPhee - made notes on the challenges and opportunities learned through the event. However, BOMA wanted to understand what members learned and how we could better help them prepare and organize through a similar disaster. On September 18, BOMA met with property management members; the following is a report of that meeting.

Members' Experiences:

- Some companies did not have an emergency plan for this type of disaster;
- For those and many others, emergency response plans for a 'flood', typically meant a bursting water pipe or main;
- Members had difficulty getting through police checkpoints to relieve building employees, both Calgary Police Services and Calgary Parking Authority made getting into downtown difficult;
- Tenants were calling CEMA directly in order to get access to their buildings with some succeeding, as the downtown was not officially closed;
- Coordinating appointments with ATCO and ENMAX was difficult with processes changing frequently;
- Members communicated with each other to share information and knowledge throughout the flood and recovery;
- Access to prescription drugs at downtown pharmacies was a concern;
- Hotels without power discarded food in anticipation of or to ration use of generators.

Members' Suggestions:

- Members ran Wi-Fi (hotspots) off smartphones and were able to access their computers even when power was down. A how-to on this would be valuable to members;
- Food from hotels could be sent to property management teams working downtown during the flood, or to shelters / evacuation centres;
- Food trucks could be called to downtown to feed emergency responders and volunteers. Restrictions on diesel in the downtown core would need to be lifted during an emergency to allow for extended generator use;
- Have a badge or identification that would allow specific people to enter the downtown core in an emergency.

Recommendations for Members:

- Build a contact list of your trusted and tested suppliers and service providers who would be required during an emergency and be open to sharing this list with other members;
- Create a designated email - emergency@company.com - that would serve as one point of contact for the whole company. It would function as a list serve, with employees



email addresses added and removed by the company. This would allow BOMA to email this address, rather than to multiple addresses, and have it go to those the company designates as part of its internal list.

Recommendations for BOMA:

- Create a blog (hosted away from the main website, but linked to it) that would be used in case of emergencies. It would allow members to post updates, messages and lists of resources without having to go through BOMA staff. This would help all property management members and their teams to keep up to date on issues in their particular area of the city. This would also be accessible to BOMA staff and would allow for quick and timely communication between email blasts;
 - This blog could also serve as a message board for service and supply providers;
- Work with ATCO and ENMAX to source checklists for re-opening buildings. This might include paperwork or signage that could help ATCO and ENMAX know who to call and which inspections have been completed;
- Work with Calgary Police Services to address the access problems;
- Work with the City to create a process to re-open buildings that have pharmacies or other emergency / priority services first;
- Research options and past successes in regards to badges or special identification for access to downtown. There have been examples of this elsewhere, successes which could be applied here.
- Research feasibility and conduit to attain access to more detailed maps, cross-referenced with membership information - contact information, security numbers etc.

The flood debrief further demonstrated the incredible and successful efforts of BOMA members. If some or all of the recommendations are followed, there will be an increased ability by BOMA Calgary and its members to better manage such an emergency in future.

BOMA Calgary would like to thank those who participated in the flood debrief.

Comments and questions are welcome at 403.237.0559 or lia.robinson@boma.ca.

