



## Post-Sandy: BOMA/NY study points needed for writing rules for response

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By the time Hurricane Sandy had slammed into the east coast near Atlantic City the night of October 29th, it may have degenerated in a post-tropical cyclone, but the damage done to N.Y.C.'s office buildings was historic. And not just in terms of the millions of gallons of water that property management crews had to pump back into N.Y. Harbor, or the fact that some skyscrapers in Lower Manhattan are still running on generator power today.

It was historic in that it called on building teams to go beyond their Emergency Action and Business Continuity Plans and enter a new realm of disaster recovery. It turned well-intentioned Dept. of Buildings, FDNY and Dept. of Environmental Protection's rules on their head and called into question codes and regulations that made eminent sense before the disaster. And BOMA/NY, whose Hurricane Sandy Lessons Learned Task Force has just completed a survey of BOMA/NY members to see what worked, what didn't and what might be needed in the future, is helping to write new rules for this type of disaster.

The report, its findings and lessons learned were shared with a packed seminar hosted by BOMA/NY on January 30th where attendees learned that 44% of those who responded had suffered physical damage from the storm—most prominently flooding, followed by wind damage. The Lessons Learned panel covered 11 key response areas ranging from staffing and technology, to tenant communications, security, building codes, legal and insurance issues and more. While many building teams had prepared well in advance, with most lining up vendors and pre-ordering supplies, there were still many lessons to be learned. To help building teams better prepare for the future, BOMA/NY will:

1. Develop a business continuity/disaster recovery checklist for building teams.
2. Use the report findings and anecdotal information supplied as the foundation for advocacy with the City to make reasonable changes to existing codes and regulations.
3. Continue to function as a central information clearinghouse—the 65 BOMA/NY Alerts analyzed and distributed by director of legislative affairs Sylvester Giustino served as an excellent information conduit from city agencies, Con Edison.
4. Create the BOMA/NY Incident Management Team to communicate with government officials quickly to obtain info, clarify misconceptions, correct errors and more.

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