



## Hurricane Preparedness: Is Your GIS Data Protected?

The last thing you're thinking of as you prepare for the worst during a hurricane is protecting your data. With the 2019 hurricane season well underway, Category 5 Dorian becomes the strongest to ever hit the Bahamas. Dorian, just the 4th hurricane of the season, is tied with a 1935 hurricane as the strongest to strike land in the Atlantic. Hurricane Matthew followed a similar path in 2016 and caused \$11 billion in damage. And there are more hurricanes lined up before the season ends on November 30th.

### Your staff's safety comes first, but don't overlook your data.

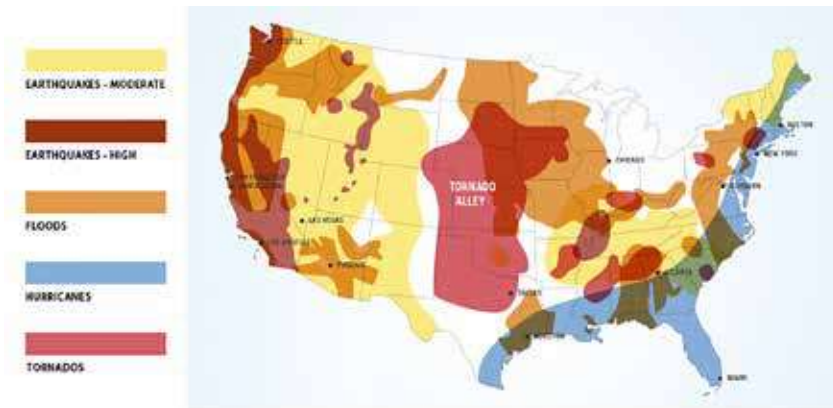
The number one concern in the event of on-coming disaster is without a doubt, people's safety. After that, you should concentrate on securing your data. Critical data is what keeps business and governmental organizations operating. Damage to physical and digital assets could result in major setbacks and can prevent organizations from ever fully recovering. After any natural disaster, check for internet connectivity and the physical maintenance of your server, if on-site. If the power is out and there is damage, your data is vulnerable.

### During disaster, the cloud can be your best friend.

In the event of an on-site failure, having critical applications and databases off of on-premise servers and in the Cloud can protect your assets. Cloud-based solutions are especially important for organizations located where a high probability of natural disasters occur ( Hint: it's not just the Eastern coastline) . The Cloud can effectively help eliminate application downtime and data loss, providing around-the-clock availability during disaster recovery.

ROK Technology spoke with Jennifer Morgan, GIS Division Manager at Bay County, Florida Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) about their challenges being in a high-risk area and recovering from Category 5 Hurricane Michael last October.

**“Always in the event of a potential disaster there is a possibility of losing your local hardware, connections, for instance, in our main administration building, the roof was torn at one end of the building. If by chance, the rip off had been at the other end, our entire server room for the county would have been exposed. Having the security of being on the Cloud and of course also having a local backup is very beneficial.”**



The map above overlays earthquake (both moderate and high risk), flood, tornado and hurricane risks in continental United States. Data for this map was provided by Redcross.org and NOAA.gov

## **When it comes to data, think redundancy.**

If your data is hosted at a single site, whether on-premise or in the Cloud, you could be at risk. The Cloud offers a perfect backup storage solution for many organizations. Regular backups with a redundant system will safeguard against loss and downtime.

**“As far as data goes...Redundancy. Redundancy. Redundancy. We learned major lessons [from Hurricane Michael]. I sleep better at night not having just a local copy, but also having the Cloud. Having the data off site and safe in the cloud is key. But also prepare in the event you can't reach it, and have a local copy.**

**It is really not optional [to be on the Cloud]. We have to have a local copy of data at all times, and have to have back-ups. [The Cloud] is where the future is headed. I can't imagine not having our data in the Cloud.”**

## **Invest in Virtualization.**

By creating an image of your entire data center, you can quickly activate your disaster recovery plan. Staff can readily resume work from a remote location even if physical offices are damaged or without power. The Cloud enables your staff to access key systems, data and applications virtually for as long recovery takes. If your headquarters is compromised, has lost power and internet fiber lines are down, you can still operate remotely from evacuated locations.

## **Align with a Managed Services Provider.**

A high-quality MSP, like ROK Technologies, can help you develop and implement your disaster recovery plan. We can help the stress that your local IT teams experience during natural disasters. MSPs offer faster recovery time, greater security and overall flexibility.



**“Our cloud services provided by ROK also [includes] to optimize our services. So it’s not just us looking at everything. ROK is also spending time monthly analyzing, enhancing, and without any doubt clearly since our move to the Cloud our applications process faster, load quicker, there has been a considerable uptick in just how responsive our applications are.”**

**Learn more about ROK’s Managed Services.**

## **Act Now.**

Natural disasters can occur when we least expect them so making the jump to the Cloud can ease anxieties from your internal stakeholders, your clients and your IT Department. The time to prepare your business for hurricane season is now.

ROK Technologies provides off-site data backup and disaster recovery services. A comprehensive disaster recovery plan will enable you to resume revenue-generating operations as quickly as possible, while also keeping your systems and data safe.

**“We have an outstanding relationship with ROK. We have done business with a lot of different vendors. I would put you at the very top of the list of people that are the easiest to work with.”**

Put your data in the right hands so you can focus on keeping you and your staff safe.

Toll Free: 888.898.3404 | Email: [info@roktech.net](mailto:info@roktech.net) | [www.roktech.net](http://www.roktech.net)

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