

Local Flooding Affecting Computer Technology

Posted At : July 28, 2017 1:35 PM | Posted By : Admin

Related Categories: Your Business, Business Continuity

During July, the Ithaca area has experienced record rainfall. While great for most of the crops and our lawns, there have been a number of flash floods affecting several business and organizations. Fortunately, this doesn't happen often in our area. However, a flood, even when small, can damage or destroy computer and other electronic technology. A number of local clients had significant damage to some or all of their computer technology.

Some reminders:

1. When installing new or updating computer technology, network servers, or any electrical or electronic equipment, avoid basements and other near to the ground locations. Seems obvious, but in most businesses, putting the network server in the basement seems like "just the right place" and "out of the way". It is, until the day water finds its way to the same place. If you must put a server or computer in a basement, keep it well off the floor and be very vigilant should there be the possibility of a flash flood.
2. If a flash flood is imminent and if there's time, get the equipment to higher ground. Shut down servers and computers BEFORE moving them. Don't forget to turn off all UPSs, unplug everything, and if you can turn off the electrical breakers to outlets located in low lying areas.
3. If any electronic device gets wet, assume that it's been compromised and needs to be replaced. Electronics and water do NOT mix. Even clean water contains minerals and other deposits which will eventually corrode circuits. We've seen computers, laptops, monitors, and other devices which apparently survived getting wet, only to fail days or weeks afterwards. Most computer warranties do NOT cover liquid damage, so your insurance may be the only way to recover from flooding other than just writing a check.
4. Hard Drives that have been submerged in water require special attention. Under no circumstances are they to be turned on. Don't try to dry them out either. Just wipe up the water on the outside, wrap the drives in a paper towel and put them into a plastic waterproof bag like a ziplock bag. We use Drive Savers which will disassemble the wet drives in a clean-room and retrieve the data from the platters.
5. Even though Drive Savers is amazing, sometimes the data is irretrievable. Making sure you have a good backup system is essential.

A number of Computing Center clients and many other companies have innovative ways of protecting their computer equipment from water damage or other natural disasters.

- Putting server rooms on high floors or on a roof. Harrod's of London has their entire data center located on the roof of their iconic building.
- Have duplicate servers in other locations. We "host" several duplicate server farms at our location. Should one side or the other be damaged or lost, the other side keeps operating.
- Put all your data and programs in the cloud. That may protect your servers, but you still need to deal with desktops, laptops and other devices. If you opt for "cloud" computing, don't assume that all remote data centers are protected. Check the contract.
- For larger systems, consider a modular data center (MDC). Hewlett Packard Enterprise manufactures a full array of scalable MDCs.

We are here to help. With our decades of experience and significant expertise, we can find workable solutions, both very quickly to meet an imminent threat, or help you design and implement a water impervious long-term cost-effective server or data center system.