

**TOWN OF CLARENCE
SUPERVISOR'S COLUMN FOR SEPTEMBER 2011
Ready Business**

Every September, we work on the Town budget. I anticipate that we will maintain our strong fiscal standing – flat or reduced tax rate, sound fund balances, best bond rating for a municipality our size, and efficient and effective services. To date, our special district budgets have borne that out. More details are soon to follow. Budget projections also help us prepare for worst case scenarios. We do this as we look at our multi-year budgeting. Always foremost on my mind is, “How can we avoid the worst case financial scenario?” We do so by appropriately planning. Our Town has weathered many a fiscal storm over the last four years and emerged even stronger. The reason - we planned and prepared the best we could and then executed that plan to the best of our ability.

This question is even more appropriate on a large scale, “How can we avoid the worst case scenario?” Again, we do so by proper planning and preparation. In December 2007, only 38 percent of businesses responded that their company had an emergency plan in place in the event of disaster. Given that September is also National Preparedness Month, it is wise and prudent for businesses to be prepared for numerous emergency scenarios.

First, I highly recommend that you sign-up with NY-ALERT at www.nyalert.gov. This website allows you to receive emergency information via many methods (e.g., cell phone, text messaging, pagers, and) e-mail. If you do not have web access, you can sign up by calling 1-888-697-6972.

Second, go to www.ready.gov/business/. There, you will find a lot of advice on business preparedness. Businesses are affected by local emergencies – from fires, flooding, chemical hazards and to such extreme conditions as that experienced during the October Storm and Flight 3407. It is important for Clarence businesses to be prepared. According to FEMA, “How quickly your company can get back to business after a terrorist attack or tornado, a fire or flood often depends on emergency planning done today. . . . A commitment to planning today will help support employees, customers, the community, the local economy and even the country. It also protects your business investment and gives your company a better chance for survival.”

The business plan should be one to stay in business. It should include continuity planning to establish succession planning and what do to if your store or office is not accessible. The plan should consider your employees. Review your stores of emergency supplies. Also, decision will be needed for evacuations or “sheltering in place”.

Business owners should lead the way by talking with their workers, practicing the plan, and promoting preparedness for their families, friends, and neighbors. Prepare a crisis communication plan. Finally, support employee health after an emergency or disaster.

Business owners want to protect their investment. Review insurance coverage. Prepare for utility outages. Secure property. Also, make sure your cyber security is ready.

I want you to be safe and prepared. Your family, your business, and the Town depend on you and will thank you for it.