

When Disaster Strikes: Why Emergency Building Solutions Matter

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Severe weather can be concerning for people across the UK and the businesses that they have worked hard to build up, disrupting entire communities and leaving the likes of workplaces, hospitals and schools without safe facilities.

Whenever a firm is affected by harsh weather conditions, [specialist emergency response service](#) provider Portakabin has advised business owners on the importance of an emergency response plan and also how modular buildings can help minimise downtime swiftly.

The UK's growing risk from severe weather

[BBC Morning Live](#) has acknowledged that almost five million properties throughout the nation are now based in areas that are at risk of surface water flooding.

Data from National Resilience which was reported on by the [National Fire Chiefs Council](#) also found that England and Wales fire and rescue services had been called out to over 850 wildfire incidents in 2025 up to mid-August.

Floods, wildfires and other severe weather can put people in a situation where they have no other choice but to leave their workplaces, schools and colleges.

Once the threat has subsided, repairing any damage comes at a huge expense. This cost can be even more straining if an organisation has had to close for a substantial period.

Why businesses need an emergency response plan

Business owners should not wait until an incident has taken place to address the need for an emergency response plan across their organisation.

This plan is designed to keep all employees safe, so working on one in advance of any problem developing will show that an employer is committed to safety throughout a workplace.

Nick Griffin, Divisional MD at Portakabin, adds: “An effective emergency response plan will also clearly set out everyone’s roles and responsibilities should there be an incident, with the aim of reducing downtime and profit losses.

“Every emergency response plan should include risk assessment processes too, so that any conditions which can lead to an emergency incident around an organisation can be quickly identified and altered to minimise their risk.”

How modular buildings can help in a severe weather emergency

With rapid deployments, adaptable solutions and efficiency all key aspects to how effective a business is at handling an incident, modular buildings should factor into all emergency response plans as well.

Griffin explains: “A modular building is a cost-effective solution that can be constructed, delivered to a site and be ready to use in a matter of days, if not hours, instead of business owners having to wait months for traditional buildings to be repaired or replaced.

“Modular structures are flexible in their designs too. This means that a building can be easily expanded, adjusted or relocated as the needs of an organisation and their surrounding community change. For instance, a modular building used as a makeshift emergency medical facility can be easily redeveloped into school classrooms.”

Businesses in locations prone to regular warnings of severe weather should also note that modular buildings are becoming more popular as permanent solutions for workplaces.

Modular buildings are constructed with the same building regulations and planning requirements as conventional structures to guarantee quality. Therefore, everything from offices and health centres to school buildings can be designed with the durability to better withstand the effects of extreme weather all year round.

Modular buildings are not only solutions for responding to severe weather incidents

It is not just when dealing with the after-effects of severe weather where modular buildings can prove effective though. Over the years, Portakabin has demonstrated what is possible with modular construction when companies need to respond to some other problematic emergency situations.

For example, the modular building experts partnered with the Department for Education in 2023 to deliver 92 modular structures to the Warwick-based Myton School when the educational establishment faced the challenge of relocating 800 students and staff after reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) was discovered.

These fit-for-purpose teaching spaces included specialist maths classrooms, art studies, a dedicated music block and a library.

In a [case study](#) on the work, Jane Burrows, Finance Director at Myton School, commented: “Portakabin worked swiftly and effectively with Myton School to deliver emergency classroom accommodation and welfare units in a very short period of time.

“The closure of RAAC affected school accommodation occurred on September 1st, 2023. Due to the accelerated nature of the solution from Portakabin, Myton School was able to minimise disruption to learning with all students back in classrooms by the end of October 2023.”

Griffin underlines the appeal of modular buildings in these types of situations by stating: “Whether it is dealing with the effects of a devastating flood or finding quick solutions when a construction material is flagged as a safety risk, emergency response will come in many forms.

“Modular buildings are designed and constructed in a way that helps organisations to remain operational in a crisis. These structures rapidly deliver workplaces with essential buildings which will avoid huge disruption to a firm’s vital services and get companies back in action swiftly after an incident.”

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