



## Natural disasters trained business team well -- From office fires to much worse, preparation is the key to recovery

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Gayle Rose says she was haunted for decades by dreams of the tornado that killed her grandparents and severely damaged the town of Charles City, Iowa, when she was a teenager living there.

Today, Rose is chairman and CEO of Electronic Vaulting Services Corp., a new firm that's meant to help businesses recover quickly from disasters ranging from office fires to hurricanes and earthquakes.

Rose and Dennis H. Jones, chief executive officer of the new information technology firm Securitas Consulting Group, are organizing a conference Thursday to tell businesses how to prepare for the worst.

"We don't anticipate being able to solve every possible problem for every firm," said Jones. "But we want to expose them to what some of the issues are.

" Some of the keys are to train employees in how to survive disasters and to give them instructions on what to do to keep the business running in the event of an emergency, Jones and Rose said. Businesses are also increasingly dependent on computer systems, and it's important to keep them running during disasters, they said.

Conference speakers include Mason Granger, a former Memphian who now heads a television station in New Orleans and is scheduled to talk about his experiences during Hurricane Katrina. Other scheduled speakers include Arch Johnston, director of the Center for Earthquake Research and Information at the University of Memphis; Ben Adams, CEO of the Baker Donelson law firm; and John Dunavant, an officer with FedEx Express.

Jones, 54, who lived through Hurricane Iniki on the Hawaiian island of Kauai in 1992, said his experience has made him more concerned about disasters. He recalled watching images of Hurricane Katrina filling the Gulf of Mexico last year. "I would yell at the news and say 'Do something! Get those people out!' " said Jones, a former chief information officer for FedEx Corp.

His firm provides information technology services to small and mid-sized businesses and works with Rose's firm to provide services to companies looking for offsite storage.

Rose, 51, said she was 13 when tornadoes swept through Charles City and surrounding communities. The tornadoes on May 13, 1968, killed 18 people, injured more than 600, and destroyed hundreds of homes and businesses. Rose said the storms wrecked the retirement home where her grandparents lived and was also an economic blow to her father, an eye doctor, who lost his business and all patient records. He had to start from scratch.

"I think about how important it could have been if we could have had records stored away from the community," she said.

Rose said that the technology her company offers today has made the recovery much faster. Her firm, founded two years ago, offers businesses a chance to back up their software in a hurricane proof off-site data center location run by Time Warner Telecom in southeast Memphis. The center, which has a generator to keep power running during emergencies and is designed to be hurricane-proof, can keep businesses going through disasters, she said.

Jones and Rose said most companies would spend between \$1,000 and \$2,000 per month on information technology service and off-site storage. And the company gives firms a chance to back up their data at a similar data center in Dallas in case a major earthquake or another catastrophe hammers Memphis, Rose said.

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