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**James C. Condos, Secretary of State
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For immediate release
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PRESS RELEASE

Sec'y Condos Issues Guidance for Advance Preparation of Possible Severe Weather

Montpelier, VT- Secretary of State Jim Condos is issuing the following guidance with respect to the potential impending storm/severe inclement weather our state may receive as a result of Hurricane Sandy.

“Although we are not sure exactly when or if this storm will affect us, we all learned many important lessons from Tropical Storm Irene, and we want to remind local municipalities and state agencies how to prepare for an emergency, should one arise,” stated Condos.

Below you will find some helpful resources:

- **What do I do first?**

While it's difficult to prepare for an emergency when you don't know what to expect, in incidents where you have advance notice of a storm or other major weather event, there are steps you can take to mitigate damage to your agency or department's records.

A first step is to identify and prioritize safeguarding any records in your possession that are **essential** to your agency/department's mission and **cannot be recreated** if destroyed. Depending on your agency/department function, these may include active files, property records, or records needed in the event of an emergency such as continuity of operation plans (COOP). Your COOP may already list essential records.

- **What should I do with essential and other records prior to an expected emergency?**

1. Keep paper records at least four inches off the floor, and even on upper floors of your building, if possible.
2. Remove any records stored in basements, especially essential records.
3. If possible, cover exposed records, shelving and desks with plastic sheeting.
4. Make sure that records are secure in the event that you won't be able to return to the scene immediately: put away all records at the end of the day and lock filing cabinets and storage rooms.
5. Contact your IT support to confirm that electronic records are backed up and to understand the process for retrieving backups, if need be.
6. Make copies of records that will be required to respond to the potential emergency and remove those from site, using flash-drives, mobile devices, or simply by making photocopies.

For more information on records that may get damaged by water, please visit our website at :

<http://vermont-archives.org/records/handbook/pdf/FloodDamagedRecordsFAQ.pdf>

You may also contact VSARA's Records and Information Management staff at rim@sec.state.vt.us or by calling 802-828-3700 and ask for a records analyst.

Jim Condos is Vermont's Secretary of State.

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