

What Can't Stop

Time: About 20 minutes **Who to involve:** You, plus anyone who takes requests for GIS work

Why this matters

When a hurricane, cyberattack or building closure hits, you will not be able to do everything. The first step in continuity planning is deciding, ahead of time, which GIS services have to keep going and which can wait.

Continuity planners call the must-keep-going work your essential functions. You will find your top three here. The other worksheets build on them.

Step 1. List the GIS services you provide

Write down each service your GIS team delivers. Be specific. "GIS support" is too broad. "Keeping 911 address points current" is just right. Aim for 6 to 10 services.

GIS service	Who relies on it	What happens if it stops for a day?
<i>Example: Emergency maps and dashboards for the EOC (Emergency Operations Center)</i>	<i>Emergency management, EOC staff</i>	<i>Decisions are made without current maps of damage, shelters and closures</i>
<i>Example: Public web map updates</i>	<i>General public</i>	<i>Maps stay a little out of date. Little immediate harm</i>

Tip: think about the requests you got during your last emergency activation, not just your everyday work.

Step 2. Test each service

Go down your list and ask three questions about each service. If the answer to any one of them is yes, put a star next to it.

- ☐ Does it support life safety or emergency response? (For example, 911 addressing or EOC mapping.)
- ☐ Is it required by law, regulation, contract or a formal agreement?
- ☐ If it stopped, would other essential work stop too? (For example, the platform everything else runs on.)

Step 3. Choose your top three

From your starred services, pick the three that would cause the most harm if they stopped. For each one, estimate how long it could be down before the harm becomes serious. Planners call this the maximum tolerable downtime. A rough guess in hours or days is fine.

#	Service that can't stop	Why it can't wait	Longest it could be down
	<i>Example: 911 addressing support</i>	<i>Dispatchers need correct addresses to send help</i>	<i>About 4 hours</i>
1			
2			
3			

Step 4. Name what can wait

Deciding what to pause is just as useful. It frees people to work on the top three. List two or three services you would put on hold, and for how long.

Service you would pause	For how long?
<i>Example: New data layer projects</i>	<i>Until the event is over</i>

Bring this forward

Copy your top three services into Worksheet 2. That is where you find out what each one depends on.