

Natural Disaster Preparation Detailed by Hinderks in *Law360* Column

In the News

11.04.2022

[Mark Hinderks](#), Stinson LLP's chair of the Legal Ethics & Professional Responsibility practice group, authored a *Law360* column, "9 Legal Ethics Considerations In Natural Disaster Preparation," detailing ethical obligations legal professionals have in the wake of a natural disaster.

"For areas affected by a natural disaster, business as usual becomes business interrupted or even business wiped out," Hinderks writes. "Lawyers, law firms, and clients are not immune to these events. Some pre-disaster planning, coupled with post-disaster care can help avoid turning a natural disaster into an ethical disaster, and preserve or enhance the law firm's economic health as well."

Hinderks details nine business considerations concerning pre-disaster planning and the ethical duties attorneys and law firms have in the wake of a natural disaster impacting their jurisdictional area: business continuity planning; securing off-site redundant data and file back up; compatible remote access facilities; communication; billing and financial security; competence and diligence; multi-jurisdictional practice issues; withdrawal when necessary, and solicitation and advertising.

Natural disasters have the potential to uproot everything in their path, leaving destruction and chaos. However, Hinderks notes that since natural disasters do not relieve attorneys or law firms of their ethical obligations to clients. Preparedness efforts on specific areas that are crucial to the continuity of representation and ethics compliance should be the focus of attorneys and law firms.

Hinderks leads the firm's Legal Ethics & Professional Responsibility practice. He is the author of *Dear Ethics Lawyer*, a twice-monthly newsletter with questions and answers concerning legal ethics, and a co-founder and presenter of "Ethics for Good," a twice-annual stage show which uses humor, skits and real-world scenarios to teach legal ethics to lawyers. Hinderks has presented more than 125 programs on legal ethics over the past 30 years, has authored many articles and handbook chapters on legal ethics, and has

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been deeply involved in professional organizations with legal ethics and professional responsibility as their focus.

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