



NEWS RELEASE

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SMALL BUSINESSES SHOULD PREPARE AN EMERGENCY PLANNING CHECKLIST TO ENSURE BUSINESS CONTINUITY

FREDERICK, Md. – Small business owners should develop an emergency planning and recovery checklist to safeguard their businesses from potential emergencies that could include terrorist attacks, SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto and Staples, Inc. Chairman and Founder Tom Stemberg said today at a special town hall forum here Wednesday.

Hosted by the SBA and Staples at the Urbana Pike Staples store, the forum brought some 60 area business owners to learn how to protect their businesses.

“There is a lot of nervousness among many small business owners, given the soft economy and the current conflict our country faces. Having an emergency contingency plan can help you get your operations back on track a few days after a disaster occurs,” said SBA Administrator Barreto. **“Your importance to your local, state and national economy means that having a business continuity plan is essential. Preparedness is the key to survival.”**

“The cosponsorship between Staples and the SBA has made it easier for small business owners and home office users to obtain information they need to run their business,” said Tom Stemberg, chairman and founder of Staples, Inc. **“Staples continues to provide resources for customers and business owners to grow and succeed by conducting sessions on topics that are of interest to the Maryland small business community.”**

Among the recommendations offered by Barreto and Stemberg were that small businesses should establish digital and hard-copy back-ups of all data and store that data in a safe place off-site, share lists of contact names and addresses of employees, customers and suppliers with every employee, setting up a secure security system for both business space and computer systems, and create an off-site operating system that can start-up operations if the on-site system is destroyed.

Administrator Barreto also highlighted a new Web site containing information on business continuity and emergency planning. The SBA’s “Be Aware and Prepare” Web page is at <http://www.sba.gov/beawareandprepare/>.

The SBA/Staples partnership also includes an online newsletter, *SBA Solution*, which will soon begin carrying tips to assist small business owners with the risk management and information security of their businesses. For a free subscription to the *SBA Solutions* newsletter, go online to <http://web.sba.gov/list/>.

For more information about all of the SBA’s programs for small businesses, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800 U ASK SBA or TDD 704-344-6640, or visit the SBA’s extensive Web site at <http://www.sba.gov>.

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