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Manhattan: Many Businesses Lack Emergency Plans

By PATRICK McGEEHAN

Five years after 9/11 and a year after Hurricane Katrina, most small and midsize businesses in New York City are unprepared for emergencies, according to a survey to be released today by the American Red Cross and the Center for Catastrophe Preparedness and Response at New York University. Almost half of the 200 businesses surveyed (46 percent) said they lacked information about preparing for a disaster, and 41 percent said they did not have enough money or personnel to devote to devising an emergency plan. Bill Raisch, director of the university's International Center for Enterprise Preparedness, said business owners tended to focus on the likelihood of each type of disaster, like a blizzard or a terrorist attack, rather than the much greater likelihood that any one of them might occur. He urged the legal, insurance and credit-rating industries to reward businesses for making emergency plans that would limit their costs and losses.