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## Ripped up, but still in business

### RecordMax brought in cranes, lifts to help in damage recovery

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After a storm pulverized one corner of an ultra-secure RecordMax storage depot in northeast Jackson, responders faced a recovery that mirrors what many metro-area homeowners face, just on a jumbo scale.



A quick response can preserve a building's contents, especially important for a company like RecordMax, charged with protecting legal papers, medical documents, business histories and financial information.

While homeowners rented storage units and packed food into coolers after downed trees from the April 4 storms sliced into houses, RecordMax brought in two refrigerated tractor-trailers to store documents.

With wires down, storm victims fired up generators to supply power. Contractors at RecordMax drove up truck-size diesel powered units and special air-conditioning units to control temperature and humidity.

Contractors RecordMax managers k temporary v storms that

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Homes stripped of shingles got blue-tarp hats. Contractors for Jackson-based RecordMax dropped \$3,000 of heavy-gauge tarps and wrap to protect the building's contents.

Although RecordMax USA president Jim Teske said he and the local-branch owners pulled out all the stops, the rebuild will take some time.

"We're going to look for a secure space where we can set up racking and systems for checking inventory," Teske said. "We were removing debris from the southwest corner of the building. It's a slow process, and we've had to do it with cranes and lifts. And it's a dangerous process."

Within hours of the storm, an army of contractors, hired security, engineers and insurance company representatives descended on the building. Engineers barred workers from entering the building until a structural assessment could be completed.

That kept Teske from knowing the extent of damage to any documents and getting a total cost on rebuilding. With the building shored up, the debris can be removed, and workers will be able to get to the document racks.

"The ultimate goal, once the engineers allow us to re-enter the building, is to go in and inventory if there's any inventory that's been affected," he said.

Immediately following the storm, the company sent e-mails and faxes to customers.

"The have been very responsive and we just have to be patient," said Blake Wilson, president of the Mississippi Economic Council, which uses the facility for numerous items including banners for their annual meeting scheduled in May.

Wilson said the company believes MEC's items were not damaged, but they will have to wait until RecordMax can document what was damaged or lost.

From her medical-credentialing office across Northtown Drive, Joann Iacaboni said she knew something major was happening during the storm that Friday afternoon.

"We were in the closet under the stairs and could feel the walls move in and out. I heard a tremendous noise, not like the freight train people always describe, but we thought it was the roof of our building. Later on we figured it was the RecordMax building."

RecordMax brought in experts from BMS Catastrophe, a Texas company that specializes in recovery at industrial and commercial properties.

"Most companies don't really think ahead to those kinds of events. You don't plan on that happening to you. But the next morning a contractor was there, insurance adjuster, roofers, contractors, they had food set out and everything. They were there and on the ball," said Dennis McKinley, regional director for BMS Catastrophe.

He recommended companies have a disaster plan and run simulations.

"Companies will have power issues, water issues, security issues. You're going to need contractors, insurance personnel and you're going to need to make sure the area is safe for employees and customers," he said. "The idea is to get up and running, minimize damage and get back to what you do best."

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