

Tips for Handling Storm-Damaged Hard Drives and Other Removable Media

File corruption and data loss often occur when it's least expected -- as a result of a hurricane, flood, or other natural disaster. Yet even if business plans, financial spreadsheets or important emails are "lost" or appear to be "gone," they are most likely recoverable if the appropriate steps are taken from the outset. Ontrack Data Recovery™ operates data recovery labs equipped with cleanrooms to recapture data that has been corrupted or seemingly destroyed due to natural disasters like hurricanes.

Rain and seawater harm the data stored on hard disk drives, tapes and other storage devices in two primary ways. First, they cause electrical damage, which makes data inaccessible to the user. Secondly, when computer media is submerged in water, water may leak through the protective seal of the hard drive, spreading dirt and other contaminants onto the storage area.

When users find their computers submerged in water or buried under rubble, their first course of action should be to contact Ontrack Data Recovery (1-800-872-2599). The following tips provide the best chance for successful recoveries:

- Never assume that data is unrecoverable, no matter what it has been through;
- Do not attempt to power up visibly damaged devices;
- Do not shake, disassemble or attempt to clean any hard drive or server that has been damaged - improper handling can make recovery operations more difficult which can lead to valuable information being permanently lost;
- Do not use common software utility programs on broken or water-damaged devices;
- For mission critical situations, contact Ontrack before any attempts are made to reconfigure, reinstall or reformat;
- When shipping your hard drives, tapes or other removable media to Ontrack, package them in a box (we suggest a box twice the size of your media) that has enough room for both the media and some type of packing material that allows for NO movement. If the media can slide around at all, it is not ready to ship. The box should also have sufficient barrier room around the inside edges to absorb any impacts the box will take;
- Wet media should be placed in a container that will protect shipping material from getting wet. Wet boxes can break apart during transit causing further damage to the drive;
- If you have multiple drives, tapes or other removable media that need recovery, ship them in separate boxes or make sure they are separated enough with packing material so there will be no contact.

For additional questions, contact Ontrack Data Recovery at 1-800-872-2599 or visit www.ontrack.com.