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An important business continuity standard for employers of all sizes, public or private, is available in its new 2010 version free online from the National Fire Protection Association, which holds the copyright on the NFPA 1600 standard but has consistently made it available to the public. Consequently, it is one of NFPA's most widely implemented standards -- one that has been adopted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as the national preparedness standard and also designated by DHS as a "Qualified Anti-Terrorism Technology."

"Disasters and emergencies are so unpredictable that organizations must always be prepared to manage them before they occur," said James M. Shannon, president and CEO of NFPA.

"Organizations keep turning to NFPA 1600 because it helps them develop the best possible strategy for dealing with unforeseen issues."

NFPA 1600, Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs, has been reordered and expanded from its 2007 version. Technical requirements and definitions have changed, and the chapter on Program Elements now contains four chapters: Planning, Implementation, Testing and Exercises, and Program Improvement.

Work on the original standard began in January 1991, and the first version was presented to the NFPA membership in 1995.

For more information, visit www.nfpa.org.