



IAQradio+ Episode 739 Blog

General Overview

The podcast discussed the impact of recent hurricanes, particularly Hurricane Helene and Milton, on various southeast regions of the United States and industry sectors, with a focus on the challenges faced by roofing contractors and restoration companies. The panelists shared their experiences and observations from the ground, highlighting the importance of preparation, proper licensing, and the need for humanitarian efforts alongside restoration. The podcast also explored the challenges and solutions related to hurricane-resistant building codes, insurance policies, and roofing materials, emphasizing the need for better licensing for roofing contractors and the importance of hurricane straps.

Key Talking Points by the Panel:

- Restoration companies prioritized humanitarian efforts alongside restoration work in severely affected areas.
- Insurance agents were also supporting humanitarian needs (e.g., coat drives, food distribution) in addition to processing claims.
- Restoration contractors helped educate insurance agents and adjusters on distinguishing between flood damage and wind-driven rain damage.
- Restoration companies should ensure proper state licensing when working in affected areas, especially if traveling from out-of-state. This was apparent in the roofing sector where “trash & bag” type work was a common practice!
- Homeowners in hurricane-prone areas should consider upgrading to more resilient building materials (e.g., composite roofing, metal roofing) during repairs or renovations.

- Local authorities should review and update building codes to improve resilience against future hurricanes.
- Restoration companies should be prepared for logistical challenges of back-to-back hurricane responses, including equipment mobilization, demobilization, and remobilization!
- Challenges include situations where local county roads and interstate highways were completely washed out!
- Insurance companies should review and clarify flood insurance policies to address coverage gaps exposed by recent hurricanes.
- A question from an industrial hygienist live caller asked on the chat log for the panel to address their thoughts on mold testing after a hurricane. The general consensus that if testing was to be done, it should be after the demo, sanitization, and drying phase of a project before the rebuild.
- Paul Clark stated he is an advocate for testing and his goal is to provide education for stakeholders involved in a claim and to encourage more collaboration in the roofing and restoration sectors.
- Darren Hudema expressed a potential conflict of interest between companies that offer mold assessment and remediation services. He is not a fan of the “Spray & Pray” strategy for mold treatment!

Summary

Hurricanes' Impact on Naples and the I-75 Corridor

In the meeting, Pete Consigli discussed his experiences with the recent hurricanes, Helene, and Milton, particularly in the Naples and Bonita Springs area. He noted that although the 2 hurricanes made landfall in Florida, the damage was also significant in the Carolinas and Georgia, and that the unpredictable nature of hurricanes can have a significant impact for those not prepared.

Pete also emphasized the importance of evacuating early and having a place to go during hurricanes, as the power outages can last for several days. He mentioned that the beach communities were hit hard by the storm surge, and that the cities most affected in the Tampa Bay area were Sarasota, Venice, Beach, and Englewood.

The conversation ended with Pete expressing his hope that the economy and the Snowbird season would recover from the impact of the hurricanes.

Hurricanes' Impact on Roofing Contractors

Pete discussed the challenges faced by roofing contractors and restoration companies in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian in 2022 and Hurricane Helene. He highlighted the importance of preparation and having resources and support. Paul Clark, a roofing consultant, shared his observations on the ground, noting the difficulty in accessing some areas due to flooding and the need for proper licensing. Darren Hudema, from PuroClean, discussed the immense response from his company's franchises in Florida and the challenges faced due to back-to-back events. Tim Fagan, from the BELFOR Franchise group, echoed Darren's sentiments and mentioned the difficulty in insurance coverage and the need for mobilization and demobilization during the events. The panel also discussed the challenges faced by those in the mountainous regions, such as Asheville, North Carolina where rebuilding efforts are expected to take years.

Deployment and Humanitarian Efforts Discussed

In the meeting, Tim discussed the deployment of their team in Western Carolina, where they experienced a lot of commercial opportunities and some residential losses. He mentioned that they responded to about 600 claims but expected more. Tim also mentioned that they had not heard of any shortages with plywood or materials.

On the other hand, Joseph Morphis shared his experience in Florida, Georgia, and Western North Carolina, where he witnessed a humanitarian effort rather than a restoration one. He mentioned that there were material shortages, people living in tents, and a lack of food and water. Joseph's team prioritized the humanitarian effort over restoration, aiding those in need. He also shared his experience with the National Flood Insurance

Program (NFIP) and how they needed to provide evidence of why the rising water was a damage or loss.

Pete asked Joseph to clarify his comment about insurance agents stopping claims focusing on humanitarian efforts, which Joseph explained as a shift in priorities to help people in need. The conversation ended with the hope of getting Ken Siders back on the call, who had lost his signal.

Hurricane-Resistant Building Codes and Insurance

The meeting discussed the challenges and solutions related to hurricane-resistant building codes and insurance coverage (or lack of) in the wake of recent hurricanes. The panelists agreed that building codes represent a minimum standard, and homes can be built better than the minimum to withstand natural disasters. They also discussed the effectiveness of different roofing materials, such as composites and metal, in withstanding hurricanes. The panelists noted that newer construction homes fared better than older ones, and that insurance companies are increasingly scrutinizing roofing choices. The conversation ended with a discussion on the importance of hurricane straps and the need for better licensing for roofing contractors.

Industry Standards and Licensing

The panel agreed that compliance with local and state licensing is important, but at the end of the day, “consumer beware” are the watchwords for homeowners to protect themselves against unscrupulous service providers and/or unlicensed contractors.

The panel felt that educating potential customers on proper industry standards and best practices is important so sound and informed decisions can be made before hiring a roofer or restoration contractor.

Closing Comment by the Global Restoration Watchdog

Pete mentioned to the live audience that Andy Ask will be hosting his long-term Building Science Symposium in Southwest Florida next February 18-19th, 2025, at the Naples Hilton. Joe Lstiburek and John Straube will highlight the 2-day AABSS2025 event which is targeted at home builders, architects, restoration contractors and building assessors.

For More Information: <https://www.climatezoneone.com/>

Z-Mans Trivia Question

Name the hurricane having greatest windspeed ever recorded for a hurricane?

Answer: Hurricane Patricia (2015)

There were no correct Blog answers this week.

SPECIAL NOTES:

After the show Darren Hudema sent a great summary of show points & tips for those working in the Hurricane effected areas. The following is a link to the document.

<https://www.iaqradio.com/blogs/DarrenHudema.pdf>