

Headline News

Andrews Kurth LLP Stays Ahead of Hurricane Ike

Firm's Emergency Preparedness Plan Pays Off

September 19, 2008

Houston, Texas

(HOUSTON) - The Greater Houston area and the lawyers and staff at Andrews Kurth LLP weathered a huge storm. Hurricane Ike slammed into the Texas coastline last Friday night; the storm caused extensive damage and flooding and left more than 3 million in the Houston and surrounding areas without power. The firm was prepared for the worst.

Andrews Kurth implemented its Emergency Preparedness Plan the Monday before the storm hit. The program, which included significant training and well-defined procedures, enabled the firm to successfully complete the following:

- Protect all client confidential materials, including computers and documents prior to evacuation
- Maintain all computer operations and support services throughout the loss of power
- Resume client services the first business day after the storm by establishing alternative work sites for lawyers
- Respond to the media in a timely manner

The JP Morgan Chase Tower, headquarters for Andrews Kurth, was hit the hardest in the downtown area by Hurricane Ike. Occupying floors 36, 38-46; the firm suffered significant damage in 8 offices with windows blown out including wall and ceiling damage. A few offices had the outer window pane of the double pane window broken. In addition to providing client services from alternative work sites, the firm was back in the JP Morgan Chase Tower by 7:00 am Wednesday morning.

"Hines Interests, the building management, has done an extraordinary job of marshalling resources and contractors to safeguard each office," says the firm's Executive Director, Bill Livesay. "There were several hundred contractors on-site since the storm working to repair the damage to the Chase Tower and Chase Center Parking Garage so we could get back to work quickly. We are thankful for their responsiveness and professionalism in helping us return to normal operations."

The major law firms in Houston reached out to Andrews Kurth; Bracewell & Giuliani was the first. Within hours of the storm, Bracewell & Giuliani had offered for more than 40 Andrews Kurth lawyers to set up temporarily in their Houston office.

The firm kept in touch with the staff and lawyers by leaving messages and updates on a firmwide emergency voicemail system, messages on the firm's website and through the firm's email system. The building never lost power, so all firm systems remained operational, including Blackberrys.

"While we know that many of our lawyers, staff and their families have been adversely affected by the storm, we are thankful for their safety," says Bob Jewell, Managing Partner. "The time we have invested in the emergency preparedness program enabled us to return to work quickly and continue serving our clients with minimal disruption."

About Andrews Kurth LLP

For more than a century, Andrews Kurth has built its practice on the belief that "straight talk is good business." Real answers, clear vision and mutual respect define the firm's relationships with clients, colleagues, communities and employees. With more than 400 lawyers and offices in Austin, Beijing, Dallas, Houston, London, Los Angeles, New York, The Woodlands and Washington, DC, Andrews Kurth represents a wide array of clients in all areas of business law. For more information about Andrews Kurth, please visit andrewskurth.com.