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Your Computer Is Infectious

You've read the stories. An employee contracts a computer virus or malicious code on his company-owned laptop. After pressing "send" in an e-mail to several of your firm's most valuable customers, he infects their networks. Those networks crash, costing them thousands of dollars in lost productivity and repairs. After investigating, their IT guys are pointing the finger at you.

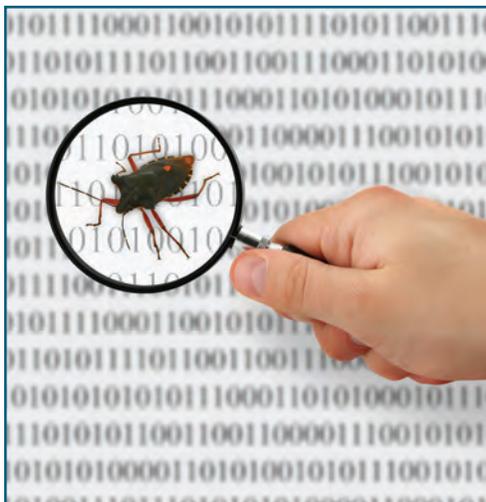
In another example, a company laptop is stolen and hacked by a thief who sells personal and financial information to identity thieves. The breach is investigated and traced back to a computer owned by your

firm. Victims are expecting compensation.

In the wired world, such claims are not far-fetched. The problem is that many firms with such exposure rely on typical general liability insurance to pay the bill. Unfortunately, most general liability policies will not cover these data-related losses.

It may be possible to amend an existing general liability policy to offer some coverage. In most cases, however, a separate and specialized liability insurance policy is required.

For more information on protecting your firm from claims arising from damage to others' data, call our service team today.



Damage to Another's Auto

If you have a large tractor or another piece of heavy equipment that you plan to take with you from site to site, you should check your insurance before hauling it. Your commercial general liability (CGL) insurance will cover your use of the tractor and pay if you injure someone or damage property at the worksite.

But what happens if the tractor becomes dislodged while in transit and causes a car accident?

While the CGL will cover damage or

injury caused by your use of the equipment, it will not cover losses caused by the equipment while it's being transported. Only a business auto policy that covers liability will help pay for such a loss. Additionally, damage to the equipment that came loose might also not be covered outside of a business auto policy.

Before transporting your equipment, make sure you have the proper insurance in case an accident occurs.

Power Outages and Equipment Breakdown



Would a loss of power or lack of access to heating or cooling equipment cause your business to suffer? Could it cause damage to your building or leave you with spoiled inventory that would be costly to replace?

Standard property insurance is designed to cover many types of potentially damaging losses, but it typically will not cover damage to your building or its contents resulting from a lack of power supply or broken-down equipment. Many such losses are insurable by amending your business's property insurance policy. Other exposures must be addressed by a separate insurance policy.

Have you considered what this exposure could cost your business? Our service team will help you identify the breadth of your business's exposure and offer the best solutions to minimize a loss's overall impact on your bottom line. For more information, call today.

Business Auto Policy Symbols

Your business auto policy includes coverage symbols. These are numbers that signify the type of vehicles that are covered by your firm's auto policy.

Coverage symbols also signify how a vehicle that is newly acquired by your firm will or won't be covered. While some coverage symbols indicate that your existing policy allows coverage for these newly added vehicles, others indicate the opposite.

For example, a very common coverage symbol is "7." This symbol indi-

cates that the only vehicles the insurer is required to cover are those specifically named on the policy. This means that, unless the newly acquired vehicle has already been disclosed to the insurance company and added to the policy, the insurer has no obligation to cover it if involved in an accident.

Some business auto policies will make exceptions. However, such exceptions are minor and should not be relied upon as a substitute for notifying the insurer that you are adding the vehicle to the policy.

Trees Can Be 'Falling Objects'

With the approach of winter, the weather can be expected to bring some strong winds and, in many places, ice and snow, making falling tree limbs a hazard.

At all times of the year, dead boughs can break off and cause serious structural damage to your business or vehicles in your parking lot.

Not all commercial property insurance policies will cover damage caused by falling objects. Lack of insurance coverage means the cost of fixing any damage will be paid directly by your firm.

Does your business's property policy cover damage caused by falling objects? If not, there's good news. Most policies can be easily amended to do so. If you are in a wooded area or have exposure to overhanging or nearby tree limbs that could cause property damage or injury, it is worth reviewing your options on such an amendment.



Scout Out Deeper Damage

Damaging winds are just one example of something that can cause significant structural damage to your business's building.

Chronic water leaks, erosion around the perimeter of the building, and earth movement are some of the other common causes of structural damage. Unfortunately, much of the most serious damage can be masked for quite some time, manifesting months after the causal incident.

Though you may not be a contractor, you may be surprised by how much you can learn about your building with your own eyes. Look for the following:

Walls

Are there cracks you don't remember seeing in the past? Even small cracks could be an indication of shifting or settling. Areas around windows and doors are especially susceptible. Also look for yellowing or discoloration of walls and ceilings, as this may indicate leaking.



on faucets, flush toilets and take a look at all exposed pipes. If you see discolorations at pipe joints or on floors or ceilings, try wrapping a paper towel around the nearby pipes to see if a leak is causing the problem.

Remember that hidden spaces in the building can harbor important signs of structural damage. Check out-of-the-way places, such as closets, parking garages, storage rooms, and crawl spaces.

Most property policies have reporting deadlines for losses. Any time your business experiences a significant event, such as a severe storm or heavy snow, run an internal damage check or hire an inspector to do one for you. You can report anything that you think is associated with the event as an insurance claim.

Foundation

Does cracking in the foundation seem worse than before? If so, it could be an indication of impending structural damage. Uneven floors, even if only slightly skewed, are another sign.

Plumbing

Look for signs of leaking. Turn

Building Codes Are Changing

If your business's premises are damaged by a covered loss, you might run into a surprise cost that isn't covered under your current insurance. Today's building codes set significantly higher and costlier standards, and rebuilding after a covered event, such as fire or wind, could mean incorporating new materials or even tearing down undamaged portions of an affected building. In fact, local ordinances in many communities require that a building which is more than 50% damaged be torn down and rebuilt from the ground up.

It all depends on the codes in your locale. In some areas, earthquake-resistant or wind-resistant materials and engineering are

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required. In others, certain environmental codes must be observed.

Ordinance and law insurance is an endorsement that can be added to

your commercial property policy. It provides payment for exactly such circumstances. Some commercial property insurance policies may include ordinance and law insurance; many others will not. If your district requires environmental upgrades, you might need more than ordinance and law coverage; you might need a "green" policy, which are now widely available.

For help in determining how your policy would cover the costs to repair or rebuild to code in your jurisdiction, please give our office a call.



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Covering Payroll

An important expense that your firm could face after a damaging loss, such as a fire or windstorm, is payroll.

If your firm is insured under a business owners policy, there's good news and bad news when it comes to payroll. The good news is that the business income coverage offered by that policy will continue to compensate employees for up to 60 days after the loss. Unfortunately, many losses take longer than 60 days to resolve, especially if there is heavy damage or widespread destruction of multiple businesses in a region.

Many business owners policies offer the opportunity to increase ordinary payroll coverage beyond 60 days. These enhancements can often be added before your policy renewal, so if you think your business should boost its business income payroll coverage, give us a call to talk about the possibility of amending your policy.



Have we got you covered?

Fill out this form and fax it in.

Or give us a call today.



We'd like to provide you with further information about your business insurance needs and other special coverages. And don't forget your friends! We'd be happy to provide them with the same great service.

Name of someone you'd like us to contact:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Business to Business

My name: _____

E-mail: _____

My preferred number: (____) _____

Best time to call: _____

Please call me about:

- Insuring improvements and betterments
- Business interruption coverage
- Disaster planning
- My business insurance policy
- Employment practices liability coverage