Court Technology Conference

Court Security & Continuity Planning:
We Lived the Nightmare

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Harris County District Courts
Houston, Texas

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We Lived the Nightmare

Tropical Storm Allison—June 8, 2001

Harris County, Texas

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Storm Damage

At least 22 people died

More than 40,000 homes flooded

Total damage over $5 billion

Harris County Criminal Justice Center closed for 10 months

Data networks relocated for 2,500 County employees

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Allison Disaster Chronology

- June 4, 2001—Tropical Storm Allison comes inland, then turns back over the Gulf of Mexico.
- June 8—Allison comes ashore again. Within 24 hours, 36+ inches of rain falls on Houston
- June 9—County government closed (except for public safety operations)
- June 10—Rain subsides / Initial damage assessment

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Allison Disaster Chronology (con't.)

- June 11—Courts set up emergency operations
- June 12—Criminal Detention hearings are conducted in the Harris County Jail
- August 8, 2001—Criminal Courts re-open
- May 1, 2002—Criminal Justice Center reopens.

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Geography

Downtown Houston is bounded on the west and north by Buffalo Bayou.

Many buildings are interconnected by underground tunnel system.

The new Criminal Justice Center, with a subterranean tunnel and basement, is located two blocks from the bank of the bayou.

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Harris County, Texas

Welcome to the Harris County District Courts

- County Court Complex consisted of 7 buildings
- 59 District Courts / 19 County Courts-At-Law / 4 Probate Courts / 2 IV-D Masters / 13 Associate Judges / Justice Courts / County and District clerk (1,200 employees)
- County Government Administrative Offices
- County Jail housing over 7,000 inmates

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Criminal Justice Center
First Floor Devastation

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Criminal Justice Center Basement Files Under Water

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Where can I go to get out of the rain?

- The oldest buildings in the county complex were the only facilities that stayed on line and operational throughout the flood.
- "Move toward the light…."
- Establishing a base of operations:
  - A folding table
  - A cell phone

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Allison Disaster Chronology
Civil and Family Courts - Roommates

- Moved the 9 family courts and the 5 civil courts from Congress Plaza into the civil courts buildings.
- Multiple courts and staff shared courtroom space for approximately two months.

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Allison Disaster Chronology
Juvenile and Criminal Courts

- Juvenile Courts - relocated to outlying juvenile holding facility to conduct hearings.

- Criminal Courts – Starting from scratch. Urgency because of court mandated 24-hour hearing process.

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Temporary home for 47 courts. A little crowded…but it's DRY !

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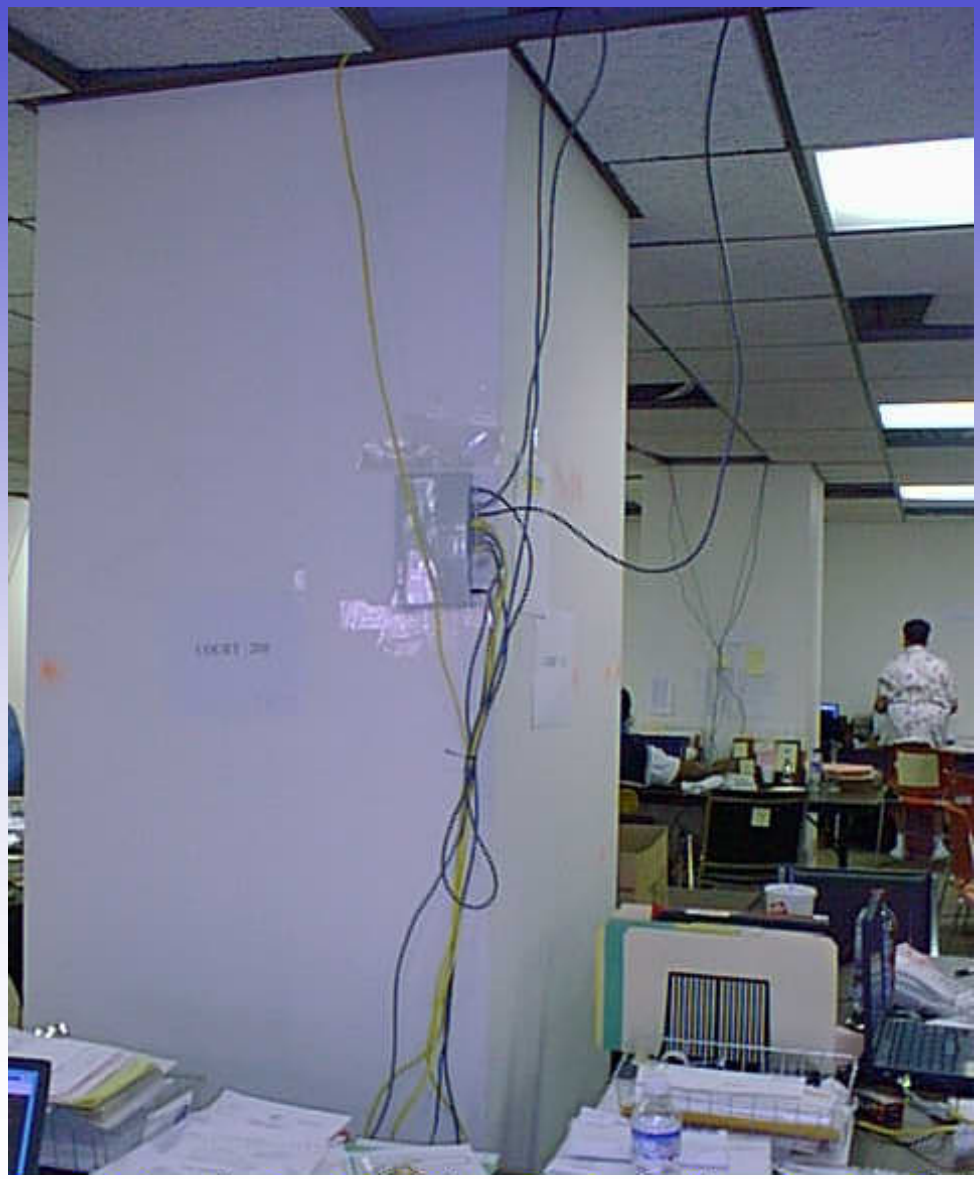
A data network—quick and dirty…



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…and techies get the courts back on line.

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Courts open for business !

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Cases are filed in one corner …

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…and set for court across the room.

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Support staff work from boxes

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How do you respond if you have no facilities?

Do YOU have a plan?

✓ – We had a disaster plan for recovery of data

✗ – No plan for disaster recovery to physical plants or plan for alternate staff facilities

✗ – No alternate facilities or procedures for holding court

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Anatomy of a Disaster
Stages of Disaster Recovery

- Disaster Planning
- The Emergency
- Initial Damage Assessment
- Meeting of the Managers
- Short-term Recovery (24—48 hours)
- Interim Recovery (48 hrs.—1 mo.)
- Long-term Recovery (1 mo.—1yr.)

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Anatomy of a Disaster

Planning

It's hard to imagine the extent of a potential disaster until it actually happens.

Information Systems Recovery Plan

- Offsite data backup
- "Hot Site"
- Business Recovery Plan
- Reviewed Annually
- Tested Twice a Year

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Anatomy of a Disaster
Planning (con't.)

- Communications Plan
  - –Media Alert-broadcast communication channels
  - –Chains of Command—Avoiding the Alexander Haig effect
  - –Currency of information— Personnel contacts and systems recovery

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Anatomy of a Disaster
Planning (con't.)

- Facilities Contingency Plan
- Operations Plan
  - Critical Operations
  - Manual procedures for automated processes

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Anatomy of a Disaster
The Emergency

- Events handled primarily by professionals (Trans-Star/Red Cross/Police/Fire Dept.)
- Safety is the overarching concern.
- Determining when the emergency is over.
  - When can people come back to work?

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Anatomy of a Disaster
Initial Damage Assessment

"Standing in the water."

- Stop the Bleeding
  - Identify continuing life/safety issues
  - Identify Public Safety Risks
  - Address critical needs (water, toilets, food) for key recovery personnel and others (ex. jail prisoners).
- Inventory Resources
  - What facilities are still functional?
  - What personnel are available?

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Anatomy of a Disaster
Meeting of the Managers

The REAL Disaster Plan

- Involve managers familiar with operations needs
- All business areas should be represented
- Identify leadership personnel-a field general for each area
- Begin to communicate plans and information through broadcast channels
- Schedule status meetings

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Anatomy of a Disaster
Short-term Recovery (24—48 hours)

- Identify facilities for command center and critical operations
- Identify immediate information needs
- Identify key personnel
- Establish procedures for critical operations and duty rosters for key personnel
  - Overcoming shock and paralysis
  - Avoiding the "Headless Chickens" Syndrome
- Rumor control—*"The building is leaning!"*

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Anatomy of a Disaster
Interim Recovery (48 hrs.—1 mo.)

- Identifying minimal information needs.
- Reestablishing communications—phones, mail delivery
- Identifying facilities for continuing operations—look "outside the box"
- Identifying purchasing needs
- When the party wears on—Dealing with…
  - Loose Cannons
  - Whiners
  - Prima Donnas

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Anatomy of a Disaster
Long-term Recovery (1 mo.—1 yr.)

- Responsibility of facilities professionals
- Advocate to address needs
- Manage executive stress

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Data Systems Recovery Planning

- Plan to plan.
  - Identify resources
  - Develop an approach
  - Integrate disaster planning into schedule
- Develop a plan.
- Test the plan.
- Refine the plan.

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Data Systems Recovery Planning
Harris County Data Environment

- OS/390 (IBM Mainframe)--Justice Information Systems
- Unisys—Emergency Dispatch (911)
- AS/400—Justice of the Peace Courts
- RISC/6000—Financial System
- [Microsoft NT—Internet Services]

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Data Systems Recovery Planning

A DISASTER is defined as an event or occurrence, which directly or indirectly impacts the processing capabilities of Information Services.

An event causing a loss of service for a period in excess of 72 hours would be classified as a disaster resulting in the decision to restore operations at a pre-determined Alternate Facility.

Data Systems Recovery Planning

The following situations may lead to the declaration of a disaster for Harris County:

- Extended Power outage
- Fire/Smoke Damage
- Water or Structural Damage
- Acts of Nature
- Sabotage
- Loss of access or use of Information Services

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Data Systems Recovery Planning

- Harris County's Data Recovery Plan
- Contract with IBM for 'Hot-Site'
- Living Disaster Recovery Planning System (LDPRS) -- A Strohl Systems software tool that manages continuance plan information through a relational database. It is the mechanism by which the Recovery Plan is managed.

Data Systems Recovery Planning
Components of the Data Recovery Plan

- Recovery Organization Structure
- Backup Procedures
- Recovery Procedures
- Implementation Plan
- Test Plan
- Maintenance Plan
- Relocation / Migration Plan

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Data Systems Recovery Planning
Recovery Organization Structure

Damage Assessment Team Members

- Insurance Management
- Information Systems
- Facilities

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Data Systems Recovery Planning
Recovery Organization Structure (con't)

- Identify Key Decision Makers (Escalation Planning)
- Definition of Responsibilities
  - Pre-Disaster
  - Disaster
  - Post Disaster
- Notification Procedures
  - Emergency Contact Info (Up to date)
  - Damage assessment checklist

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Data Systems Recovery Planning
Data Systems Backup Procedures

- Tape Vaulting
- Tape Rotation
- Off-Site Backup Inventory

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Data Systems Recovery Planning
Data Recovery Procedures

- Identify what operating systems need to be available
- Identify what data volumes need to be restored
- Identify what network services need to be restored
- Documentation of boot and restore procedures

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Data Systems Recovery Planning Implementation Plan

- ***ESCALATION PLAN ONE: "PROBLEM"***

  Less than 6 hours
- ***ESCALATION PLAN TWO: "EMERGENCY"***

  Greater than 6 but less than 12 hours
- ***ESCALATION PLAN THREE: "DISASTER"***

  Can be declared if the interruption is estimated to be **12 HOURS OR LONGER**

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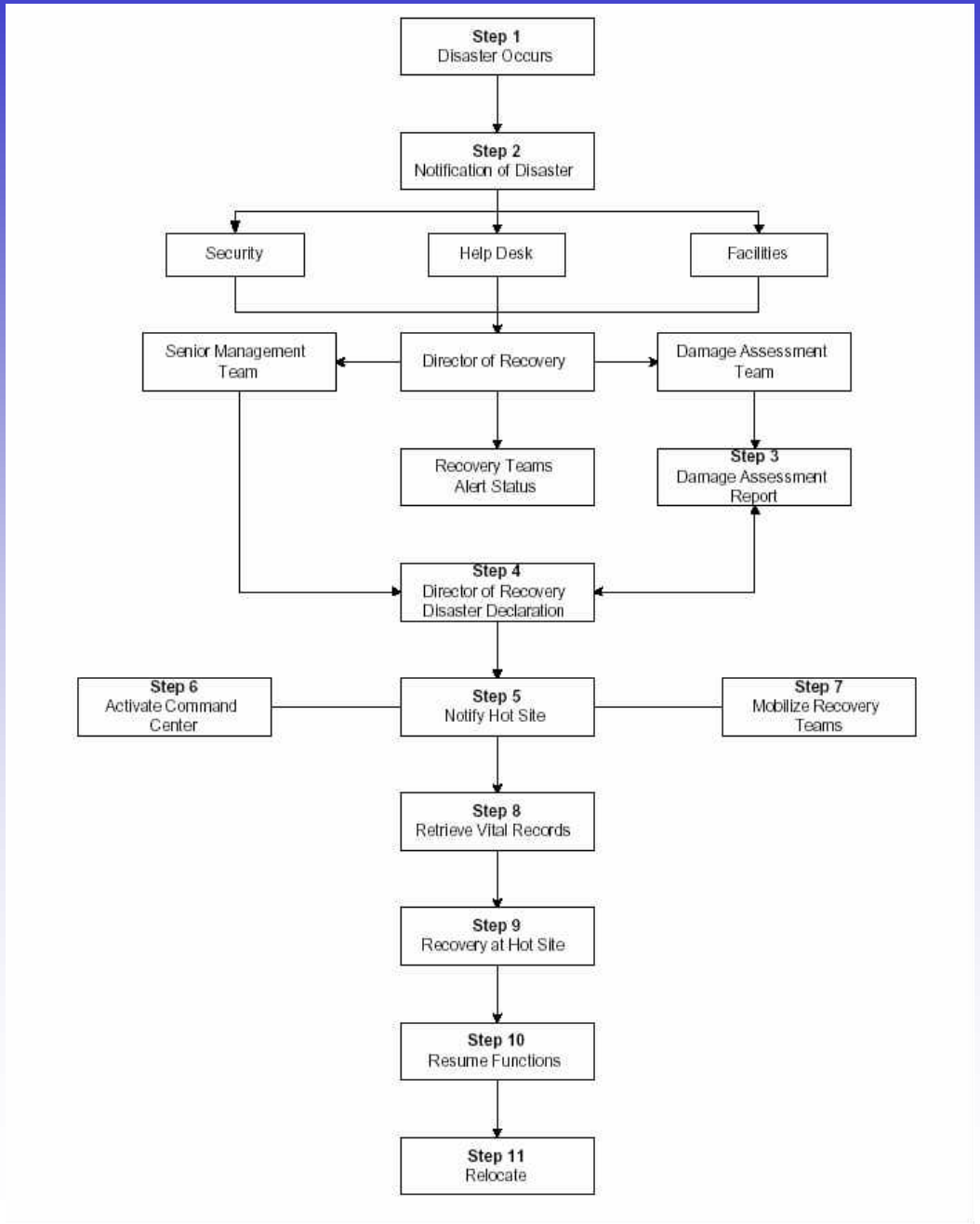
Implementation Plan



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Data Systems Recovery Planning
Test Plan

Types of Tests

- **Table-Top Exercise**
- **Live Exercise**

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Data Systems Recovery Planning
Maintenance Plan

Periodic reviews of the Recovery Plan are conducted at least semi-annually. Items to be reviewed include:

- Personnel changes
- Mission scope and/or objective changes
- Priority changes
- Backup procedures
- Recovery procedures

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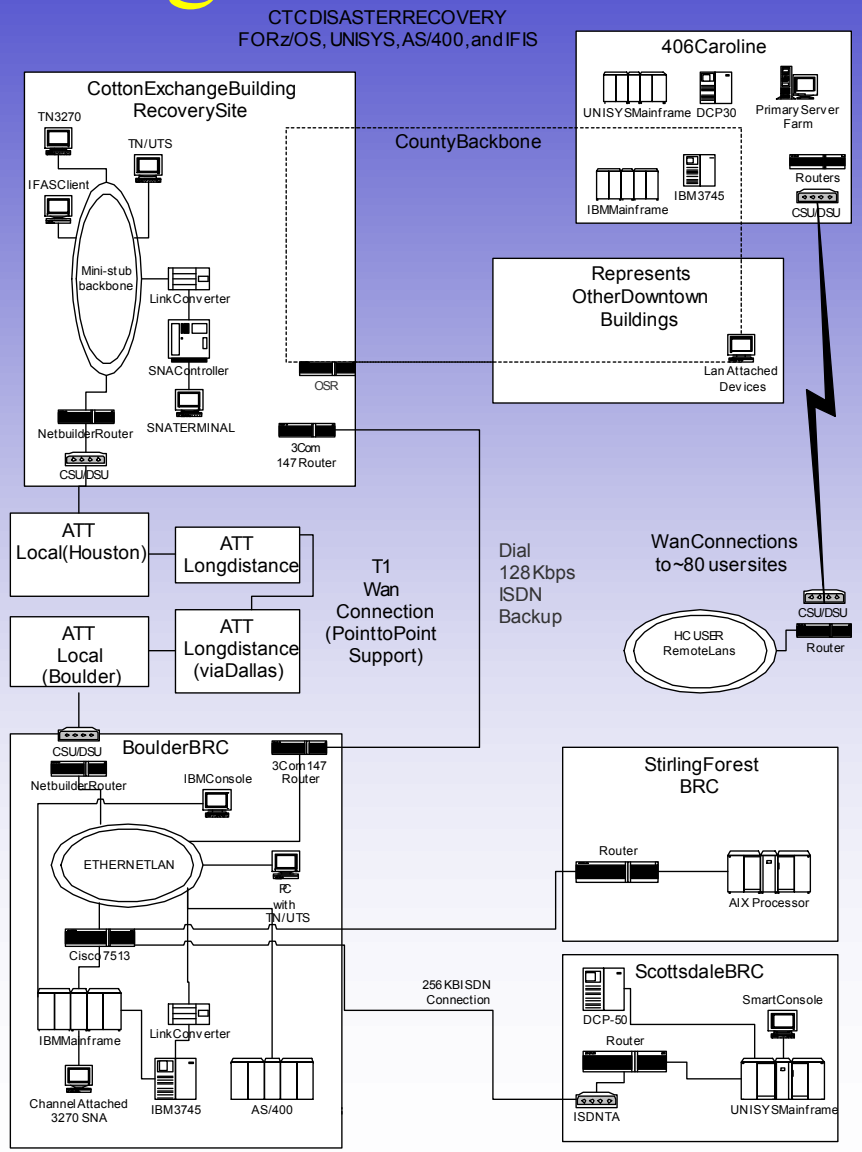
Data Systems Recovery Planning
Relocation / Migration Plan

2003/07/11



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Data Systems Recovery Planning

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We Lived the Nightmare
Lessons Learned

- Identify essential personnel / emergency strike team
  - *Who ya' gonna call?*
- Identify alternate physical facilities (schools, federal facilities, stadiums)
  - *"Not in my building, you don't." (The prisoner problem)*
- Obtain legal authorizations

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We Lived the Nightmare
Lessons Learned (con't.)

- Communication with the public and other agencies
- Establish baseline operations
  - *What absolutely has to be done?*
- Consider media reactions
  - *When courts went to the jails, the media was upset that the proceedings weren't "public."*
- Anticipate a protracted recovery
  - *10 weeks to get our **old** building back in operation*
  - *10 months to get our **new** building back*

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We Lived the Nightmare: Conclusion

Canoeing down Interstate 59 near Compaq Center

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