



Final - Case Study I

Hurricane Sandy's catastrophic water damage requires emergency services for Coilhose Pneumatics
By Malcolm Stone

In late October 2012, Paul Davis National, the large loss specialists for Paul Davis, responded to an emergency services call for structural clean-up, water damage restoration, stabilization, and drying services at Coilhose Pneumatics in East Brunswick, New Jersey. The 100,000-square-foot, Class A office and warehouse space experienced devastating water and structural damage in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, followed by another storm with snow and melting water just one week later. The catastrophic winds during Hurricane Sandy peeled the roof off of the building, allowing water to pelt the exterior and pour into interior areas. The second storm caused even further damage to the building as a result of more rain and melting snow. Paul Davis National completed the initial stabilization work within one week to keep the air tool accessories and air line controls manufacturer and distributor running with little downtime. The customer's administrative teams and IT departments were able to operate almost immediately. While Paul Davis crews worked 24/7, the Coilhose employees and equipment were relocated to alternating sides of the building until restoration work was completed.

According to J. Murphy, co-owner of Paul Davis National, the firm served as the general contractor with 35 crew members, technicians and local subcontractors. The Paul Davis team worked with Coilhose Pneumatics' President Marvin Aaron, as well as key staff and insurance adjusters to provide restoration and emergency mitigation services in the aftermath of this historic event.

According to Murphy, the local Paul Davis office received the emergency call from Aaron almost immediately after the initial devastation to his family business. Aaron was referred to Paul Davis by his insurance carrier and from there contacted the large loss experts at Paul Davis National. Murphy responded immediately to assess the damage. The company had long-time vendors who normally helped with renovations, construction and HVAC work. However, since Hurricane Sandy impacted everyone living and working in the area, tradesmen were unavailable and equipment was in short supply. The business had immense structural damage, as well as other problems caused by high winds, rains and flooding, making the need for repair immediate.

Paul Davis' crews and equipment converged on the job quickly for emergency services, repairs and restoration. Areas with the most damage included the front office, IT, and shipping and receiving. Specifically, high winds during Hurricane Sandy tore large sections of the roof off of more than 40 percent of the building, mostly over the office areas. The building was without power for approximately one week. During this time, the rains during Sandy along with a "nor'easter" snow storm that followed a week later caused 50 percent more damage with extensive water throughout the offices and large portions of the warehouse. Tractor trailers and hundreds of pieces of equipment were housed on-site and used to mitigate the damage. Murphy directed his team to bring in equipment including desiccant drying equipment, LGR dehumidifiers, air movers, portable extractors, trash pumps, HEPA vacs, air scrubbers, and more.

Mitigation crews started immediately after the storm and worked 24/7 on both the inside and exterior of the building simultaneously. Roofing crews started temporary coverings and board-ups while contents crews started disassembling all furniture and pack-out of interior office contents. "Paul Davis immediately brought in an extensive team of skilled and highly motivated people," recalled Aaron. "They worked night and day to secure the building and prevent further water damage in those critical early days."

Murphy decided that emergency services work could be done with Coilhose staff operating in offices in sections with less damage, while crews and technicians completed the mitigation and reconstruction

functions in the heavily damaged areas. After crews completed the front half of the building, contents crews moved all furniture from the back area to the newly completed areas, allowing work to begin in the less damaged sections. Once sections of the building were completed, workers moved all furniture and reinstalled all office partition panels as originally positioned. The reconstruction functions took approximately two months to complete and included sheetrock, drywall, carpet replacement and painting.

According to Aaron, the Paul Davis team quickly assuaged his concerns about hiring a new team of contractors, especially during such a critical and devastating occurrence. “We are so pleased with Paul Davis and the extra effort and time they provided on the job. In one instance, J. manually hauled a water pump onto the roof when the second storm hit so the melting snow would not continue to pour into the building after the initial clean-up and drying activities were in progress. This was a super-human feat and went above and beyond your typical service in our estimation. We are very grateful,” he said.

After the reconstruction work was completed, Paul Davis cleaned and sterilized 100 percent of the building to contain and control the microbial growth and ensure a healthy and safe environment.

“This was a challenging project during a historic storm event in our country. We had to quickly assess the damage to start the work and complete critical parts of the job immediately to keep the business up and running,” said Murphy. “To add to the complexity of the job, accessing local equipment was difficult and we had to transport most of the equipment from outside of the market area due to local business and supply constraints,” he said.

The situation was brought under control quickly and effectively through emergency response support. Murphy added, “This type of unexpected loss is not predictable and a response strategy had to be organized and managed immediately. There were many times when the situation was critical, and innovations were required. Paul Davis has a tremendous advantage with its expertise and problem-solving abilities during critical stages of the job,” Murphy said. “The documentation we provide ensures efficient cost containment. Our objective is to operate the loss site proficiently and utilize the latest methods available before implementation.”

According to Aaron, he was satisfied that all parties involved were aware of the proposed actions and cost estimates to implement the proposed restoration plan to stabilize and restore the structure. “Time was critical for us and the course of action had to be implemented immediately to prevent additional facility and operational problems. Having a close relationship with our insurance company assured us that effective and efficient decisions were made, and Paul Davis made sure resources were there to meet the demands of the situation,” he said.

For more information, contact J. Murphy at (281) 358-4077 or email jmurphy@pdnational.com. Visit the website at www.pdnational.com.

About Paul Davis National:

Paul Davis National specializes in large loss and is part of the Paul Davis franchise network. Paul Davis is a franchise system made up of more than 320 full service emergency service and restoration contractors providing site stabilization, emergency water mitigation, fire restoration, mold remediation, document restoration, contents cleaning, and remodeling services. Paul Davis National owns numerous tractor trailers and support equipment that are deployed throughout the U.S. to support their national clients as well as their fellow franchisees in the case of a major disaster. The company is headquartered at 2010 South 4th Street in Milwaukee, Wis.

About FirstService:

FirstService Corporation is a global leader in the rapidly growing real estate services sector, providing a variety of services in commercial real estate, residential property management and property services. As one of the largest property managers in the world, FirstService manages more than 2.3 billion square feet of residential and commercial properties through its three industry-leading service platforms: Colliers International, the third largest global player in commercial real estate services; FirstService Residential Management, the largest manager of residential communities in North America; and Property Services, including Field Asset Services, one of America's largest providers of property preservation and distressed asset management and FS Brands, one of North America's largest providers of property services through franchise networks. FirstService generates over US\$2.2 billion in annual revenues and has more than 20,000 employees worldwide. More information about FirstService is available at www.firstservice.com.

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