

## **Super Storm Sandy Provides Further Proof; an Insured Safe Deposit Box is Vital for Disaster Preparation**

**From the California wildfires to the tornado that leveled Joplin; from New Orleans's nemesis, Katrina, to the floods that deluged the Midwest, and now Super Storm Sandy, which recently devastated the East Coast, Americans are sadly collecting the fragments of shattered lives. While the emotional distress is hard to measure, the amount of uninsured property losses adds to what seems to be an impossible recovery for many, leading to the all too frequent and often tearful lament, "We have lost everything!"**

**Past disasters have proven that we are all vulnerable to natural as well as man-made catastrophes; there really isn't much we can do to avoid them. But what we have learned is everyone should have a well-designed disaster preparation plan before it is ever needed to help reduce their losses.**

**One vital component of that plan should be a safe deposit box. Your local bank or credit union provides these secure boxes to house irreplaceable items such as estate documents, gold and other precious metals, cash, jewelry, treasured memorabilia, heirlooms, rare stamps, coins or limited editions. Almost any valuable item that is stored in your home will be more secure in a safe deposit box. This level of protection and the peace of mind it affords may be purchased for a nominal cost - \$30 to \$75, depending on box size. Considering its many benefits, this is a modest fee for guarding valuables against damage or destruction and avoiding the resulting pain and anguish.**

**Safe deposit boxes are infinitely preferable to home safes. Homes are much more likely to be damaged or destroyed by floods, fires, or intense winds than are financial institutions. When placed in a more controlled environment, such as a bank or credit union, items are housed in a reinforced vault, complete with security safeguards and alarm systems. Should you ever be forced to abandon your home, there is a strong possibility that you could be displaced for an extended period of time and unable to access your domicile or contents. An unsecured home safe is subject to loss, further damage or theft. Following the tsunami that rocked Japan in 2011, home safes were seen floating into the surf. Some were salvaged, but many are now resting on the bottom of the ocean.**

**Even financial institutions are not impervious to damage from catastrophes. To have the best protection and most flexibility in preparing for a serious situation, a safe deposit box should be insured. Contrary to a commonly held belief, neither the FDIC nor NCUA insure safe**

deposit box contents. Should an event compromise a safe deposit vault and its boxes, the financial institution is not liable for any loss or damage to the box contents, unless there is proof of reckless or improper handling by the institution. Not only that - most standard homeowner's policies provide little or no coverage for valuables placed in those safe deposit boxes.

There is now a unique product available to safe deposit box renters - an innovative insurance program from SDBIC which requires neither box content disclosure, nor appraisals. Without compromising their privacy and confidentiality consumers can now easily obtain an insured safe deposit box and use it as an integral tool in their disaster plan. All of the contents are covered under the same policy so throughout the year, items can be added or removed from the box at will. If a catastrophe appears imminent, items can be added to the box where they will be covered under the insurance policy.

Early estimates indicate thousands of safe deposit boxes were damaged by Super Storm Sandy. But the amount of damage and loss to the property in those boxes would have been much greater if the items had been left in a home along the coastal area of New York or New Jersey. And if those boxes had been insured, the resulting economic loss would have been reduced or eliminated.

“Having a safe deposit box should be as natural as brushing your teeth – almost automatic, and definitely essential. But to avoid a painful root canal, don't skip the dentist; and to avoid a painful monetary loss, don't skip the insurance,” says Jerry Pluard, President of SDBIC.

Renting a safe deposit box at a financial institution and insuring that box with SDBIC ([www.SafeDepositBoxInsurance.com](http://www.SafeDepositBoxInsurance.com)) is an easy, affordable way to enjoy the priceless tranquility of knowing your valuable personal property is insured against damage or loss.