

Samaritan's Purse sending its Disaster Relief Unit to New Brunswick in response to flooding, evacuations

Christian relief organization will recruit volunteers and assist with flood recovery

CALGARY, AB – March 24, 2012 — Samaritan's Purse Canada is sending its specially equipped Disaster Relief Unit to northern New Brunswick and will recruit volunteers to clean up homes and businesses in response to flooding in the village of Perth-Andover, sparked by an ice jam along the St. John River.

"We have begun a rapid assessment of the situation to gather information about the damage, and we are in contact with churches and other non-government partners in the area to form a coordinated response," said Fred Weiss, Samaritan's Purse Canada's executive director.

The Christian relief and development organization, in preparation for the clean-up, will begin meeting with local homeowners, recruiting and training volunteers, and preparing to drive its Moncton-based Disaster Relief Unit to Florenceville, about 210 kilometers northwest of Moncton, near the border with Maine.

The Disaster Relief Unit is a truck and trailer outfitted with essential disaster recovery equipment including generators, pumps, hand tools, and safety gear for volunteers. It also serves as a volunteer coordination center, and is equipped with a self-contained office, communications system, and other supplies.

Samaritan's Purse must wait until the flood waters recede before the clean-up work in Perth-Andover, where 500 of the village's 1,700 residents have already been evacuated, can begin. Meanwhile, the province has issued high water level warnings for several other areas, including the Fredericton area, the Nashwaak River north of Fredericton, and the community of Clair in northwestern New Brunswick.

Samaritan's Purse has another Disaster Relief Unit based in Calgary. In recent years, the two units have responded to other flooding in New Brunswick; to flooding in Quebec and British Columbia; to forest fires in Slave Lake, AB; to a tornado in Leamington, ON; and to Hurricane Igor in Newfoundland. Samaritan's Purse also responds to international disasters – including Hurricane Ida in Nicaragua in 2009, the enormous earthquake in Haiti in 2010, and the devastating earthquake/tsunami in Japan last year. The Calgary-based charity is continuing to assist in Haiti and Japan.

Donations Needed

To support Samaritan's Purse's disaster relief efforts, please visit www.samaritanpurse.ca (click on "Donate") or call **1-800-663-6500**.

About Samaritan's Purse Canada

Samaritan's Purse Canada is an international Christian relief and development organization working in about 60 countries to help victims of war, disease, disaster, poverty, famine, and persecution. The Christian charity also operates the well-known Operation Christmas Child program that sends gift-filled shoe boxes to needy children around the world each year, and the Turn on the Tap initiative that raises funds for life-saving BioSand Water Filters in the developing world. Go to www.samaritanpurse.ca.

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